



Rail Freight Corridor
North Sea – Baltic



ANNUAL REPORT

2018



Co-financed by the Connecting Europe
Facility of the European Union

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Photo on the title page: Deutsche Bahn AG/Bartłomiej Banaszak

List of Abbreviations

AB – Allocation Body
AG – Advisory Group
ASR – Action Status Report
CEF – Connecting Europe Facility
CID – Corridor Information Document
CIP – Customer Information Platform
CIS – Charging Information System
CNC – Core Network Corridor
C-OSS – Corridor One-Stop-Shop
EC – European Commission
EEIG – European Economic Interest Grouping (EZIG in Polish),
ELETA - Electronic Exchange of ETA information
ERTMS - European Rail Traffic Management System
ETA – Estimated Time of Arrival
EU – European Union
ExBo – Executive Board
FCA - Framework for Capacity Allocation
FTE - Forum Train Europe
GA – General Assembly
ICM – International Contingency Management
IM – Infrastructure Manager
INEA – Innovation and Networks Executive Agency
IP – Implementation Plan
KPI – Key Performance Indicator
MB – Management Board
MCV - Multi-Corridor View (functionality in Customer Information Platform)
MoT – Ministry responsible for transport
NExBo – Network of Executive Boards
OM – Other Measurement
PaP – Pre-arranged Path
PCS – Path Coordination System
PIM – Project Implementation Manager
PMO – Project Management Office
PRIME - Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe
PSA - Programme Support Action
RAG – Railway undertaking Advisory Group
RC – Reserve Capacity
RFC – Rail Freight Corridor
RFC NS-B - Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Baltic
RFC RALP – Rail Freight Corridor Rhine – Alpine
RFC ScanMed – Rail Freight Corridor Scandinavian Mediterranean
RFC OEM – Rail Freight Corridor Orient/East-Med
RNE – RailNetEurope
RU – Railway Undertaking
SCI – Study on Capacity Improvement
SERAC – Single European Railway Area Committee

TAG – Terminal Advisory Group
TCR - Temporary Capacity Restriction
TEN-T – Trans-European Network – Transport
TIS – Train Information System
TMS – Transport Market Study
TPM – Train Performance Management
TT – Time Table
TTR – Timetable Redesign Project
ToR – Terms of Reference
WG – Working Group

FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

it now has been over three years since RFC North Sea – Baltic is operational and became part of the European rail network of corridors in November 2015. The year 2018 was an important year of further strengthening the harmonization among RFCs and cooperation of the Infrastructure Managers within the Corridor.

In 2018 a significant milestone was achieved towards the reliability of rail with the publication of the 'RFC North Sea – Baltic re-routing scenarios' providing in one place information on coordinated deviation routes. We perceive this document as an important, but only first step. Our efforts will continue to implement and improve the processes of international contingency management described in the "Handbook for international contingency management" in terms of deviation routes coordination and exchange of information between all stakeholders. We are also pleased to inform that the consultation with the customers has brought a valuable input to the discussion on the re-routing scenarios. We believe that efforts taken by all involved parties will bring us closer to the resilient network.

An important milestone in the Corridor development will be the extension of the Corridor to Riga and Tallinn in November 2020. We have launched the preparations already in 2017, intensified our activities in 2018 starting with the update of the Transport Market Study. We would like to express our gratitude to our partners from Latvia and Estonia for their efforts made for the Corridor extension to become a success.

We would like to conclude by thanking our Advisory Group spokespersons: Ms. Eva Eckert and Mr. Friedrich Stuhrmann for their dedication to present and openly discuss with the Management Board feedback and input received from the Advisory Group members, not only during Advisory Group meetings. Our aim to shift more international traffic on rail by making our customers more competitive on the freight transport market cannot be achieved without their support.

We are looking forward to a continued exchange with all stakeholders on future challenges being confident that our work will contribute to strengthen the positive developments we could see during 2018.

We wish you a pleasant reading.



Oliver Sellnick
Chairman of the Management Board



Weronika Karbowiak
Managing Director

INTRODUCTION

The annual report of RFC North Sea – Baltic provides the reader with information on main aspects of the development of the Corridor and its achievements in the year 2018, including governance, main activities, funding and cooperation with other stakeholders.

RFC North Sea – Baltic is operational since November 2015 and currently runs through 6 EU Member States, starting in the North Sea ports of Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Wilhelmshaven, Bremerhaven and Hamburg spreading into central Germany through Aachen, Hannover, Berlin to Warsaw, Terespol and Kaunas with a southern branch from Falkenberg to Prague and the vicinity of Katowice. It is foreseen to extend the Corridor by 2020 to Latvia and Estonia and intended to further extend it towards Medyka (Polish – Ukrainian border) and the ports of Ghent/Terneuzen and Zeebrugge.

The current description of RFC North Sea – Baltic in number is as follows:

- Over 3.600 km of principal lines,
- Over 2.100 km of diversionary lines,
- Over 530 km of connecting lines,
- 167 terminals,
- 6 sea ports: (Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Wilhelmshaven, Bremerhaven, Hamburg).

More detailed information on the Corridor's routing and its development can be found on the Corridor's website (<http://www.rfc-northsea-baltic.eu>) and in the Customer Information Platform (https://cip.rne.eu/apex/f?p=cip:65:::::P65_CORRIDOR:8).



Latvian railway locomotive at Šķīrotava marshaling yard

Photo: Latvian Railway

1. GOVERNANCE

The governance structure of RFC North Sea – Baltic is divided into the following levels: the Executive Board (ExBo), the Management Board (MB) and the Advisory Groups (AGs).

The **ExBo** is composed of representatives of Ministries in charge of rail transport of the cooperating countries and is responsible for defining the general goals of the Corridor.

The **MB** as the decision-making body of the Corridor consists of representatives of the cooperating Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Body of the six countries involved. Since 2016 the MB has the legal form of a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG).

In order to meet the requirements of Regulation (EU) 1316/2013, amending the Annex of initial corridors of Regulation (EU) 913/2010 and extending the Corridor to Riga and Tallinn from November 2020, representatives of the Latvian Infrastructure Manager (SJSC “Latvian railway”), the Latvian Allocation Body (LatRailNet) and the Estonian Infrastructure Manager (AS Eesti Raudtee), continued in 2018 to participate in the Management Board as observers.

The **Advisory Groups** consist on the one hand of representatives of Railway Undertakings (RAG) and interested non-RU applicants, and on the other hand Terminal owners/operators (TAG).

The governance structure of the Corridor is illustrated in the below organigram.



1.1 EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board of RFC North Sea-Baltic, as referred to in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 913/2010 (hereinafter “the Regulation”), was established on 20th of March 2012 by signing a Mission Statement, which was then replaced by the Agreement regarding the Executive Board of RFC North Sea-Baltic, adopted on 8th October 2014.

The Executive Board takes its decisions based on mutual consent of the representatives of the authorities of the Member States. The Executive Board takes legally binding and directly applicable decisions within the scope of its powers defined by the Regulation. They are signed by all members of the Executive Board and are published. In 2018, the Executive Board was chaired by Germany.

The Executive Board is composed of the following representatives of the authorities of the Member States concerned:

- Valérie Verzele, for the Minister for Mobility of the Kingdom of Belgium;
- Jindřich Kušnír, for the Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic;
- Wolfgang Küpper, for the Federal Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure of the Federal Republic of Germany;
- Paulius Martinkus, for the Minister of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Lithuania;
- Peter Hondebrink, for the State Secretary of Infrastructure and Water Management of the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
- Jakub Kapturzak, for the Minister of Infrastructure of the Republic of Poland.

The above-mentioned members can be represented by their alternates or by proxy. In 2018 meetings were joined by representatives of the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications of the Republic of Estonia in view of the Corridor extension to Riga and Tallinn by November 2020.

Meetings in 2018:

- 28th of February in Berlin; common ExBo and MB meeting followed by RAG/TAG;
- 10th of July in Prague; common ExBo and MB meeting followed by ExBo Strategy meeting;
- 10th of October in Warsaw; common Executive and Management Board meeting followed by RAG/TAG.

1.1.1 Key activities

The key activities in 2018 were the following:

- Preparing the extension to Latvia and Estonia: agreement on a text for a 'Joint Declaration of Intent' in November 2018 to integrate Latvia and Estonia as members of the ExBo;
- Delivery of the report according to article 22 of the Regulation (EU) 913/2010 to the European Commission: the Report according to art. 22 of this Regulation (covering the period 2016-2017), of which the basic structure had been discussed in 2017, was finalized in 2018 and presented to the EC on 6th April 2018;
- Focus of the ExBo on the realisation of a 740 meter compliant Corridor with regular reporting from MoTs on national endeavours;
- Regulatory Bodies' cooperation;
- Discussion to develop milestones in order to boost the Corridor development. A first proposal was discussed in fall 2018. Further discussions will take place in 2019;
- Discussion of the roles of ExBo and MB in implementing the Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2017/2075 of 4 September 2017 replacing Annex VII to Directive 2012/34/EU;

- Start of pilot concerning border issues – Bad Bentheim, on the initiative of the Dutch MoT. The facilitation of cross-border traffic was a topic regularly addressed during Executive Board meetings in 2018. Further steps on this topic are being taken in 2019;
- Finalization of the text for a letter to the EC concerning RFC's extension to Medyka;
- Analysis of the extension request of the ports of Ghent / Terneuzen and Zeebrugge;
- Concerning the problem with construction works in the Elbe Valley, a short term solution for 2018/19 has been found.

1.1.2 Program Support Action

On the 2nd of July 2018 the Grant Agreement (Program Support Action) was signed by the MoT of Poland (representing RFC North Sea – Baltic) and INEA (under the powers delegated by the European Commission). The grant will support the corridor related activities of the Ministries of Poland, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Latvian IM and AB and has two major aims:

- support RFC North Sea – Baltic governance;
- support joining RFC North Sea – Baltic by Latvian IM and AB.

1.1.3 Cooperation at EU level

In 2016 the Network of the Executive Boards of RFCs (NExBo) was established. Among others, these issues were discussed in 2018:

- Definition of a new set of KPI's;
- TEN-T parameter compliance;
- Discussion of Graz declaration initiated by the Austrian Presidency focusing on decarbonisation and digitalisation and including a part on rail freight;
- Discussion regarding the Political Progress Statement on the Rotterdam declaration concerning rail freight during the Austrian Presidency;
- FCA revision (in particular to enable pilots, testing the rolling planning/TTR);
- Recommendation on digital exchange of data (ETA);
- Discussion on Vienna declaration from 6th of December 2018.

The NExBo made a recommendation concerning the adoption of the revised FCA by all ExBos, even those not concerned by the TTR pilots, and the revised FCA was adopted by the Executive Board of RFC North Sea – Baltic on 18th December 2018. The NExBo adopted also two other recommendations on the data exchange (ETA) and on the implementation of a new set of KPIs.

1.2 MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Management Board is the decision-making body of the Corridor, which is chaired by Mr. Oliver Sellnick from DB Netz AG since 2014. It is composed of the following Members representing the Infrastructure Managers and Allocation Body of the six countries of the Corridor and representatives of the Latvian IM, AB and Estonian IM acting as observers.

**GUUS
DE MOL**



ProRail

**MICHEL
GEUBELLE**



INFRABEL
Right On Track

**OLIVER
SELLNICK**



DB NETZE

**RADEK
ČECH**



SZDC
Správa železniční dopravní cesty

**JAROSŁAW
MAJCHRZAK**



PKP POLSKIE LINIE KOLEJOWE S.A.

**DONATAS
KALVAITIS**



LIETUVOS GELEŽINKELIAI

**GEDRĖ
IVINSKIENĖ**



**VALSTYBINĖ GELEŽINKELIO INSPEKCIJA
PRIE SUSISIEKIMO MINISTERIJOS**

Observers:

**JUSTINA
HUDENKO**



LATRAILNET

**MARTINS
KUBLINS**



LATVIJAS DZELZCEĻŠ

ERIK PUNGER



EESTI RAUDTEE

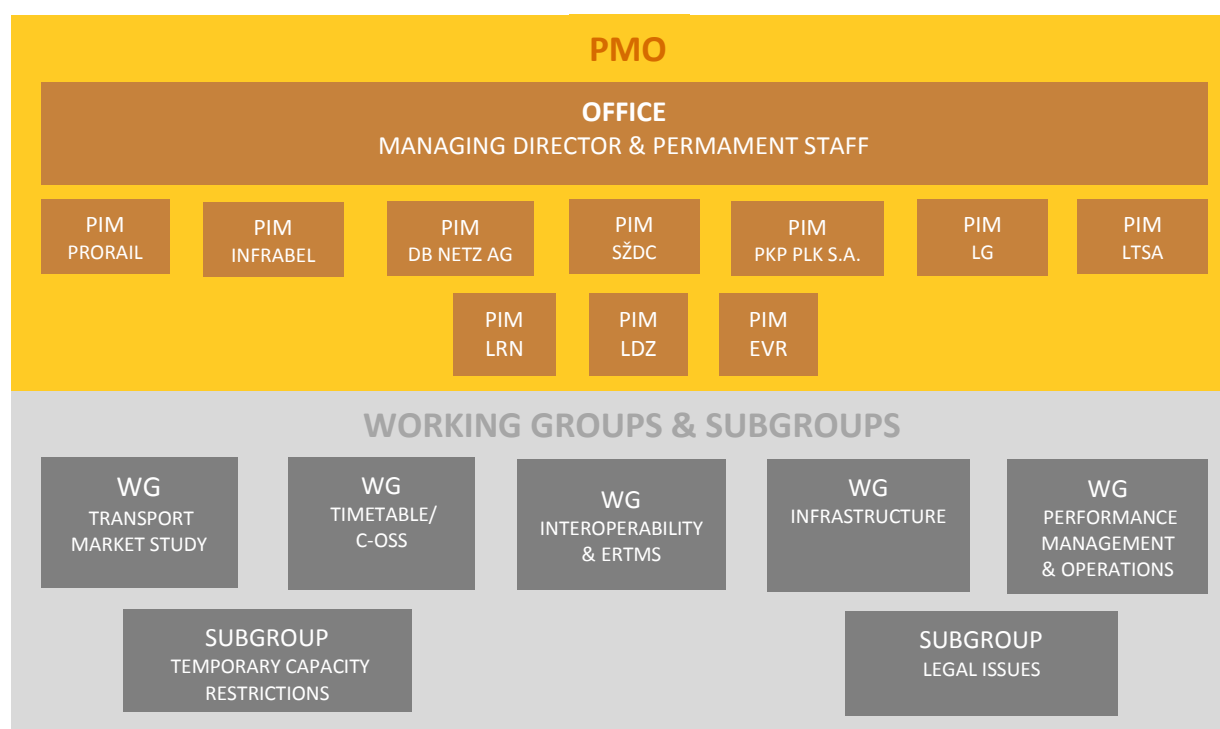
In 2018 the Management Board met seven times. The activities of the Management Board in 2018 are further described in chapters 2-5.

The Management Board is supported by the Project Implementation Managers (PIMs) and the RFC Office with its permanent staff and Managing Director, Weronika Karbowiak.



**WERONIKA
KARBOWIAK**

The Project Management Office met eight times in 2018. The below organigram illustrates the structure of the Project Management Office and the different working groups:



1.3 ADVISORY GROUPS

Each Advisory Group serves as a platform to facilitate the exchange of information, finding solutions and mutual understanding in a non-discriminatory way. As advisory body each group issues opinions on decisions by the Management Board which have direct consequences to its members or issues own-initiative recommendations, which shall be taken into account by the MB.

The AGs are represented by Speakers who act as the contact person between the MB and the AG. The TAG is chaired by Mr. Friedrich Stuhrmann from MSC Gate Bremerhaven GmbH & Co. KG. In March 2018, Ms. Eva Eckert from DB Cargo AG was elected as RAG Speaker; until her appointment vice Speaker Lieven Goethals from Lineas acted as spokesperson.



FRIEDRICH
STUHRMANN

EVA ECKERT



Two Advisory Group meetings were held during 2018 with representatives of railway undertakings, terminals, infrastructure managers, Ministries and Regulatory Bodies:

- 1st of March in Berlin;
- 11th of October in Warsaw.

Both meetings were attended by in total around 40 participants.

During the first RAG/TAG meeting in Berlin participants were provided with information on the train performance management on the Corridor, the aim of which is to monitor the punctuality of the freight trains on the Corridor and elaborate on measures for punctuality improvements. RUs were invited to participate in the common meetings with Working Group Performance Management & Operations to analyse the Corridor punctuality reports based on Train Information System data. The WG Leader presented an example of a report which serves to analyse the train performance.

Following the discussion on train punctuality and various reasons of delays, attention of the participants was brought to the topic of estimated time of arrival and the ELETA project presented by Ad Toet, the ELETA project coordinator. IMs and RUs agreed that making information on estimated time of arrival available (under the protection of confidentiality clauses) to contracting partners, including terminals and intermodal operators is an essential step towards railway reliability.

Discussion on some main topics continued during the second RAG/TAG meeting organized in Warsaw in autumn. The main focus was on the capacity offer of the Corridor. Main challenges recognized during the discussion are possibilities to fulfil the applicants' requests from the expression of capacity needs and aligning train parameters to applicant's needs, which the Corridor will take up as one of the main tasks for 2019.

In both meetings a great interest was expressed towards the information on infrastructural and operational developments on the Polish-Belarusian border delivered by the representative of the Polish Ministry of Infrastructure. The presented plans were appreciated

by participants of the meetings as the need of capacity improvement on this stretch of the Corridor running to China was several times discussed during AG meetings.

More information regarding other topics raised during AG meetings in 2018 can be found in different chapters of this Annual Report. The summaries and the documents of the above meetings can be found on the [Corridor's website](#).



RAG/TAG meeting in Warsaw

Photo: RFC NS-B

2. MAIN ACTIVITIES

2.1 CORRIDOR ONE-STOP-SHOP AND CORRIDOR OFFER

The Corridor One-Stop-Shop (C-OSS) facilitates train path management for international rail freight along the RFC North Sea – Baltic. It serves as a single contact point where to request and receive answers regarding infrastructure capacity for international freight trains along the Corridor.

On 1st of March 2018, Ms. Felicia Riedl took over as the C-OSS Manager of RFC North Sea – Baltic.



FELICIA RIEDL

In order to put the Corridor, its products and the C-OSS in the spotlight and to support the applicants, the C-OSS Manager participated in several international customer events such as:

- Bilateral customer conference between DB Netz AG and PKP PLK S.A.;
- Customer conference of ProRail;
- Forum Train Europe Conference (FTE) in Ljubljana.

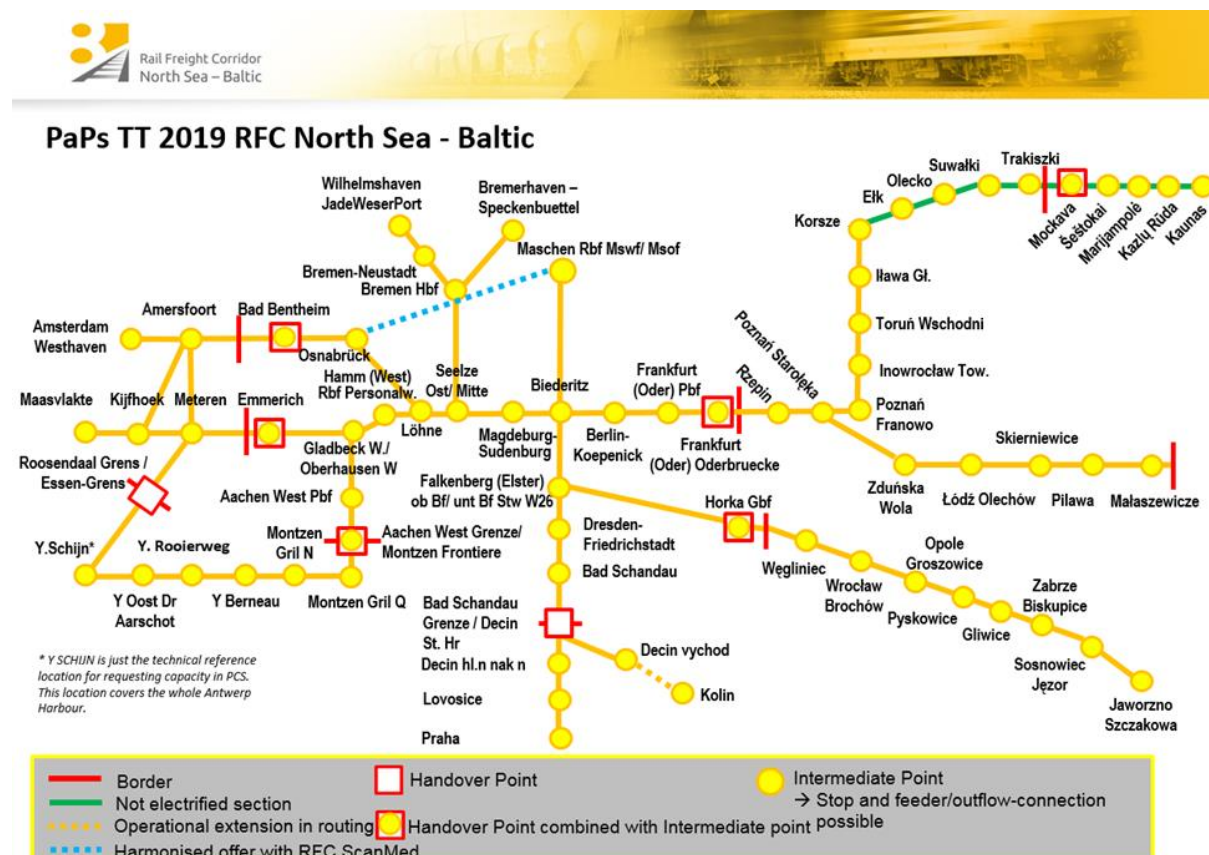
Further important events were the PCS training organized together with RFC Rhine – Alpine and RFC Scandinavian-Mediterranean and RailNetEurope (RNE) as well as the RNE Working groups for the development of PCS.

On top of these common meetings in 2018, four individual customer meetings were organized by the C-OSS Manager, where RUs were informed about the RFC North Sea-Baltic capacity offer and shared their needs. This approach ensured an enhanced and customer-oriented PaP offer in terms of quantity and quality.

2.1.1 Pre-arranged Paths

Publication of the offer for TT 2019

On 14th of January 2018 the catalogue of Pre-arranged Paths (PaP) for timetable 2019 was published, offering applicants around 15 million path kilometres of among IMs coordinated and dedicated paths for international traffic.



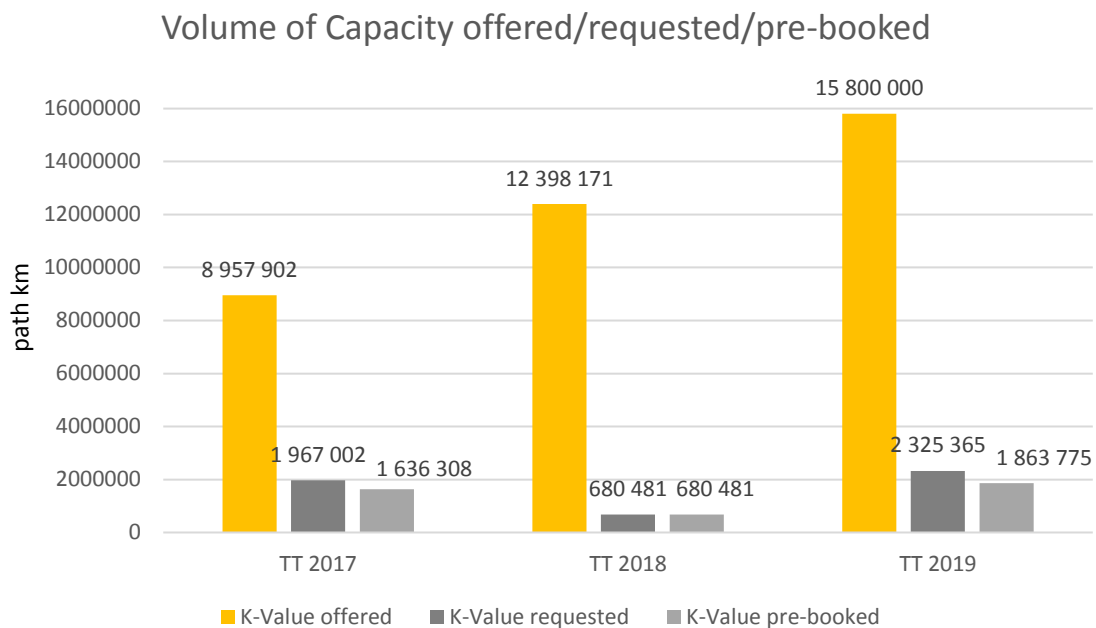
To make sure that the offer would meet the market needs to the highest possible extent, the following innovations were implemented in the offer for TT 2019:

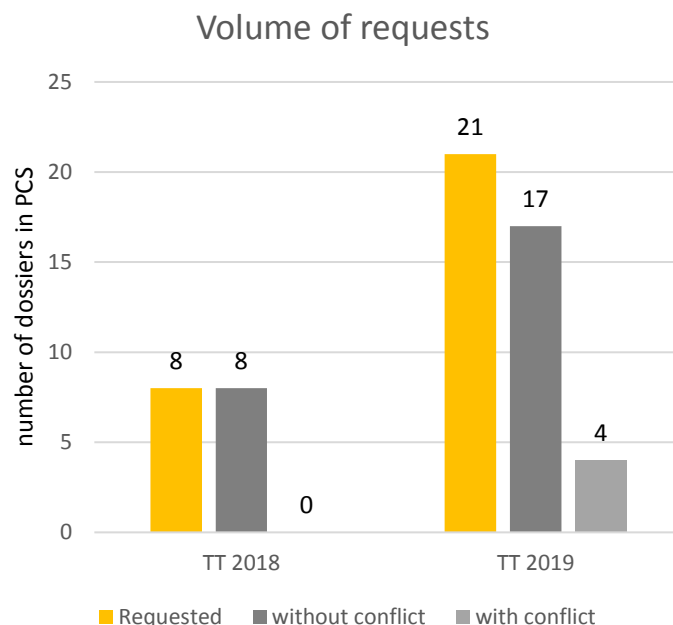
- One harmonized offer per day and direction between Osnabrück and Maschen connecting RFC ScanMed and RFC North Sea-Baltic;
- PaPs offered on the electrified section between Knappenrode (Falkenberg) and Horka;
- Path offered for an operational extension between Děčín Vychod and Kolin connecting RFC North Sea-Baltic with RFC Orient/East-Med.

Allocation of PaPs for TT 2019

Until 9th of April 2018, which was the deadline for placing international path requests, the C-OSS Manager had received 21 requests for TT 2019, which is a considerable increase in comparison to the 8 requests placed for TT 2018. In total 15% of the published capacity was requested. 4 dossiers in conflict were positively solved. After the pre-allocation phase, the draft and final offers were provided to the applicants in PCS.

The graphs below present the comparison of the volume of capacity offered/requested and pre-booked and the number of requested dossiers where RFC North Sea-Baltic C-OSS Manager was in the lead.





Preparation of the PaP offer for TT 2020

After the pre-allocation phase, the evaluation process started with the goal to identify improvements to be implemented for TT 2020. The most crucial improvements are enhancement of the TCR planning and coordination process, as well as communication with RUs, and further development of IT Tools. Some steps towards improvement in these fields have been already made and the Corridor will continue to work on and cooperate with other stakeholders on these issues, but due to the complexity of those topics the improvement may only be seen in the medium to long-term.

In May 2018, for the second time, and in order to provide applicants a PaP offer which is more suitable to their needs, RFC North Sea – Baltic together with all other RFCs circulated a harmonized expression of capacity needs among all potential applicants to collect their capacity needs, with the deadline to fill out this list by 1st of August 2018. Seven applicants responded for RFC North Sea – Baltic.

On the basis of the experiences obtained from the individual customer visits and RAG/TAG meetings and partially from the information provided in the expression of capacity needs and the analysis of the requests submitted for TT 2019, the elaboration of the offer for TT 2020 started in September 2018.

Some of the improvements and novelties which have been introduced and may bring a positive effect on the short-term development are as follows:

- operational extension from Rostock Seehafen to Dresden-Friedrichstadt,
- PaP offer from/to Ústi nad Labem,
- harmonized PaP offer for diversionary route from Poznań Franowo – Małaszewicze,
- PaP offer from/to Gądky,

- harmonized path offer from/to Ghent,
- harmonized path offer from/to Roosendaal-Kijfhoek.

The “Improved flex PaP” which was already offered for TT 2019 and found applicants approval will also be offered on part of the Corridor for TT 2020. The concept should give more flexibility to the applicants. Applicants have the possibility to adjust the running times of the published PaP according to their individual needs within a certain bandwidth. The most important change is that also “handover times” may be adjusted by applicants.

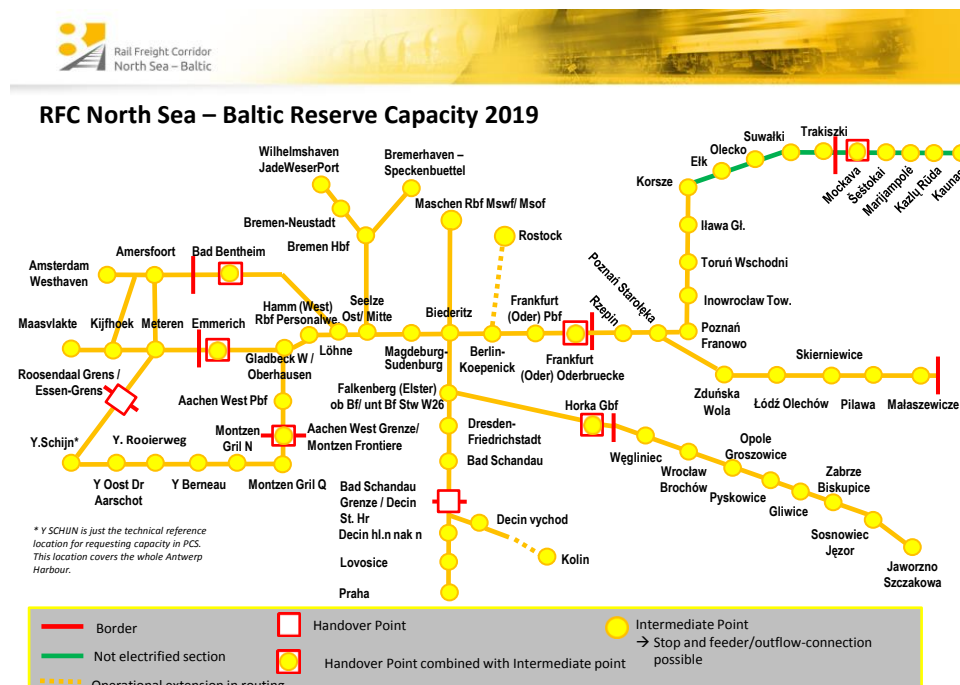
The PaP construction was completed in December 2018 and the PaP catalogue for TT 2020 was published on 14th of January 2019.

2.1.2 Reserve Capacity

Reserve Capacity on RFC North Sea-Baltic is published as a flexible approach, in the form of capacity slots per day and direction which applicants may request up to 30 days before train run. The offer for TT 2018 was available for applicants to request from the beginning of November 2017, but with no requests being placed.

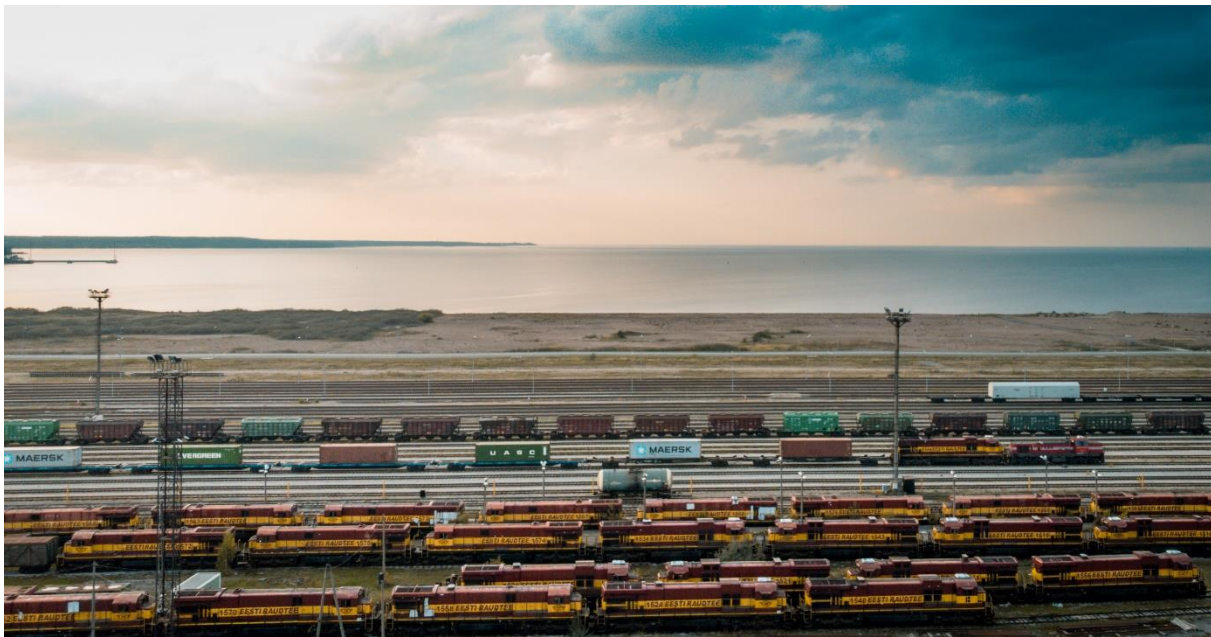
In October 2018 around 4 million path kilometres were offered for TT 2019 with the same approach (0.2 million path kilometres more than for TT 2018), one request for TT 2019 has been placed so far.

Capacity slots for TT 2019 have been provided for the following sections:



2.1.3 Cooperation with Orient/East-Med Corridor

The extension of RFC Orient/East-Med (RFC OEM) to Germany in 2018 which is required by the amended Regulation (EU) 913/2010 leads to long overlapping sections with RFC North Sea-Baltic. In order to optimize the usage of the scarce capacity in the bottleneck sections and to avoid negative competition between the corridors, a collaborative model was chosen to regulate the workflow of both C-OSS Managers: the C-OSS of RFC North Sea-Baltic is in charge of the capacity offer north of Prague and Kolin, while the C-OSS of RFC OEM manages the capacity offer south of Prague and Kolin including section Prague – Kolin. To enable this solution, the operational extension to Rostock and to Kolin has been implemented.



Marshalling yard in Estonia

Photo: Eesti Raudtee

2.2 CORRIDOR INFORMATION DOCUMENT

The harmonization of the Corridor Information Document is one of the Sector Statement's priorities and great progress has been made so far with the harmonization of CID Book 1, 2 and 4 in terms of structure and common content. In 2018 RFCs Rhine-Alpine, North Sea – Mediterranean, Atlantic and North Sea – Baltic decided to take another step toward unification by elaborating a single Book 1 for TT 2020 which was published in January 2019. Also simplification of the structure of the Implementation Plan (Book 5), which has been started in 2017 was successfully finalized in 2018 and the new simplified structure will be used by RFC North Sea – Baltic with the next update of the Implementation Plan. Further harmonisation of the Customer Information Document will continue in 2019 with planned digitalization of Book 2 and harmonisation of Book 3.

2.3 EXTENSION TO RIGA AND TALLINN

Preparations for the Corridor extension to Latvia and Estonia to be established in 2020 continued in 2018. Special attention at the beginning of the process was paid to the governance and legal aspects of the extension which were analysed by the Legal Issues Subgroup during its meeting on 6th of November 2018. The Latvian IM and AB and the Estonian IM became observers in the Management Board and ultimately in the future will become members of the EEIG. Second activity of high importance was the launch of the update of the Transport Market Study which will include also the traffic flows to Latvia and Estonia. Moreover, to guarantee a smooth extension process, experts from Latvia and Estonia have joined some working groups of the Corridor. Already in 2018 attention has been placed on the capacity offer topic which will continue in 2019 with the review and comparison of capacity allocation processes and deadlines.

2.4 TRANSPORT MARKET STUDY

According to Regulation (EU) 913/2010 the MB regularly has to update the Transport Market Study (TMS) to investigate the observed and expected changes of the traffic on the Corridor. The executive summary of the first TMS of RFC North Sea – Baltic was published in 2015 and already in 2016 the Management Board had foreseen an update due to the requirement of extending the Corridor to Latvia and Estonia and possibly other Corridor extensions.

After successful issuing a tender and awarding the contract to an international consortium, the kick-off meeting of the WG TMS took place in November 2018. It is important to highlight that according to earlier announcements customers were consulted from the beginning of the process. First information about the scope of the study, approach and timeline were presented by the WG TMS Leader on the occasion of RAG/TAG meeting in March 2018. RAG/TAG were also invited and participated in the kick-off meeting with the consultant proposing solutions and improvements, which will be further analysed by the WG TMS and the consortium. Final results are expected in autumn 2019.

2.5 CUSTOMER INFORMATION PLATFORM

The Customer Information Platform (CIP) is used by the RFC North Sea – Baltic since 2015. This interactive information tool is operated by RailNetEurope (RNE), in order to provide customers and users of the Corridors with information regarding the exact corridor routing, corridor terminals, basic track properties and documents. In 2018 RFC Mediterranean and RFC Orient/East-Med joined the platform and it is foreseen that two more RFCs will join till the end of 2020. For the time being CIP displays information on railway infrastructure in 24 European countries.

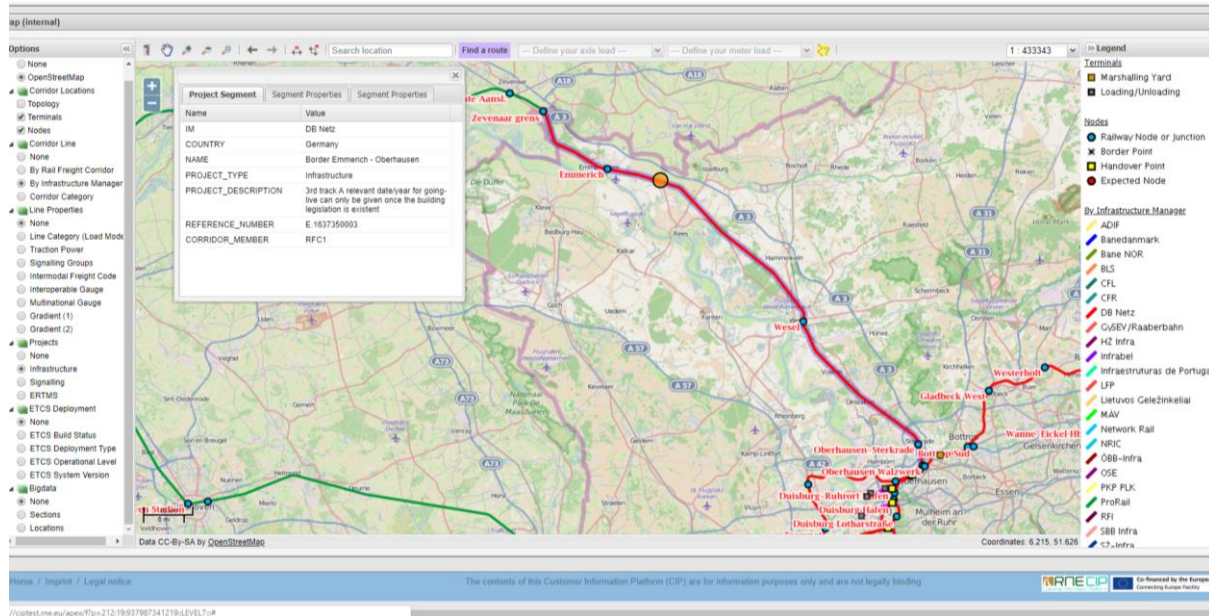
RNE in cooperation with RFCs are working on the development and new functionalities of CIP. The main developments implemented in 2018 are:

- implementation of the information on infrastructure and ERTMS projects;
- implementation of the details along the route tool.

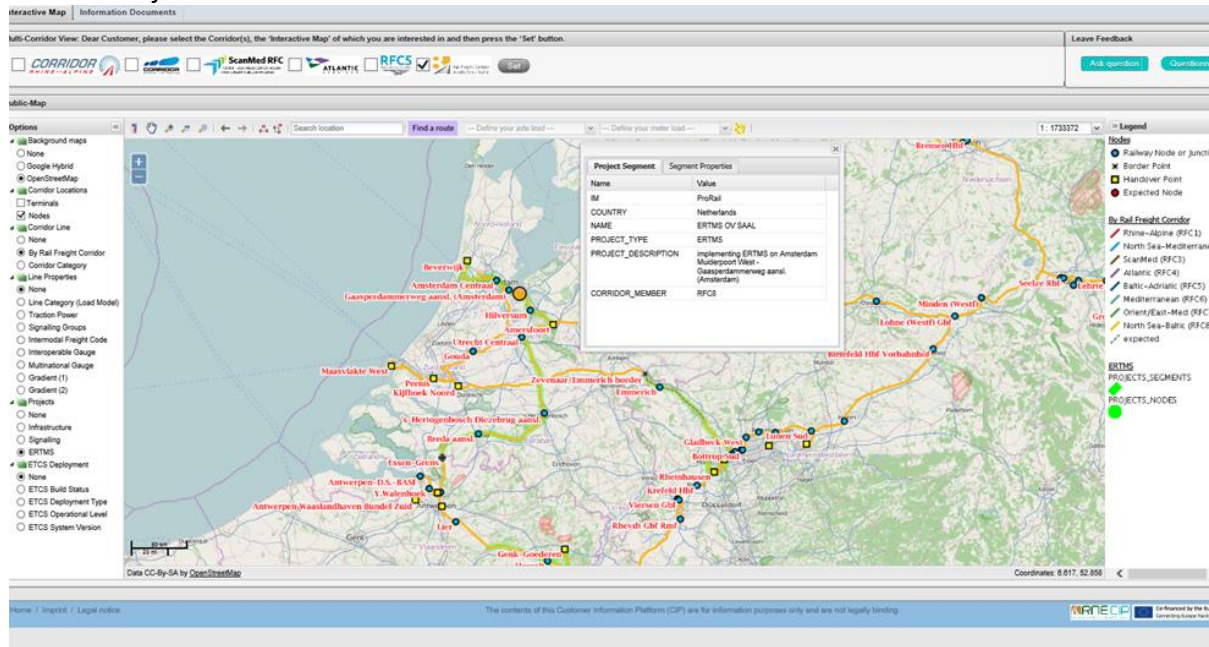
2.5.1 Infrastructure and ERTMS Projects

Inclusion of the new functionalities and additional data in 2018 resulted in the visual indication of information on infrastructure and ERTMS projects in CIP. The detailed information is provided in a pop-up window as is shown on the below print screens.

Infrastructure Projects



ERTMS Projects



2.5.2 Details along the route tool

In 2018 the tool was introduced in CIP to increase the usefulness of the map and to support customers in traffic planning. The extended route-finding functionality enables the users of CIP to search for their preferred connection by filtering the corridor routes based on the available axle and/or meter load.

CIP can be accessed via the RFC North Sea – Baltic website or via the link: https://cip.rne.eu/apex/f?p=cip:65::::P65_CORRIDOR:8 without registration and free of charge.

2.6 USER SATISFACTION SURVEY

As in previous years, the Corridor conducted a User Satisfaction Survey under the RailNetEurope umbrella with a consultant responsible for the technical side of the project along with almost all other RFCs. Out of 37 invitations sent on behalf of RFC North Sea-Baltic, 15 respondents took part in the survey, which is a relatively small sample size. However the response rate remains at the same level over the years, therefore results provide a reliable basis for monitoring the Corridor performance. The RFC North Sea-Baltic appreciates all the effort customers put in to complete the survey. The results of the 2018 survey clearly show the appreciation of the C-OSS Manager as once more business know-how and availability of the C-OSS were among the best rated aspects. On the other hand, the bottom aspects confirm the conclusions and feedback of the various meetings with the customers: low satisfaction was given to the results of Temporary Capacity Restrictions and involvement of the RUs in relevant processes and PaP offer in terms of parameters and flexibility. Both satisfaction ratings and individual comments given by the respondents are used to elaborate measures which will be presented to and discussed with RAG and TAG in the beginning of 2019 and will serve for the Corridor's improvement.

Marks from 1 (very unsatisfied) to 6 (very satisfied). The RFC North Sea – Baltic satisfaction ratings are displayed below:



The RFC North Sea-Baltic specific results can be found on the RFC North Sea – Baltic website under the link: http://rfc8.eu/files/public/USS/RFC8_Survey_2018.pdf.

The overall results of the User Satisfaction Survey 2018 can also be found on the RNE website: http://www.rne.eu/rneinhalt/uploads/RFC_User_Satisfaction_Survey_2018_Overall_Results_final.pdf.

2.7 CORRIDOR PERFORMANCE

According to Article 19 (2) of the Regulation the Management Board of RFC North Sea – Baltic monitors the performance of rail freight services on the freight corridor and publishes the results of this monitoring once a year.

In 2018, the Performance Report of RFC North Sea – Baltic for the year 2017 was published on the Corridor’s website:

http://rfc8.eu/files/public/user_upload/Performance_Monitoring_NSB_2017pdf.pdf

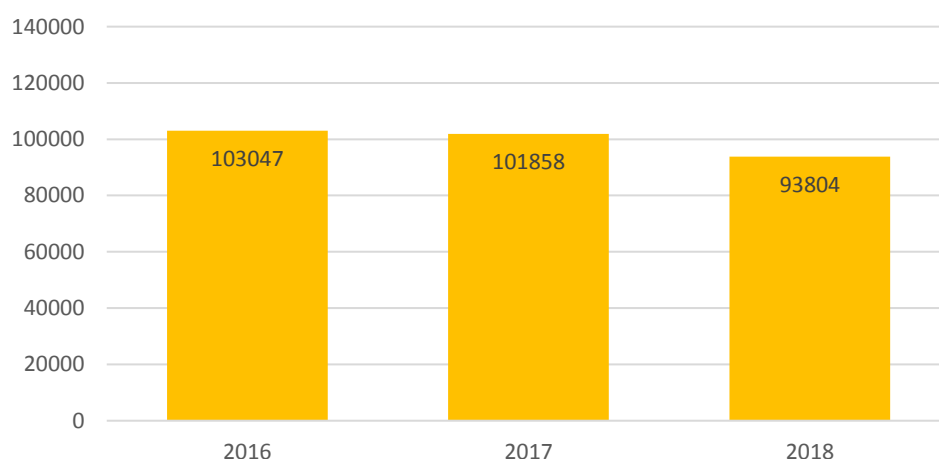
The report provides information on the Corridor Key Performance Indicators in terms of capacity and operations and the results for the year 2018 will be published mid-2019 on the “Corridor’s performance” subpage, but are already included here.

Operations

In 2018, two KPIs for Corridor traffic were measured: Total Corridor Traffic and Corridor Punctuality.

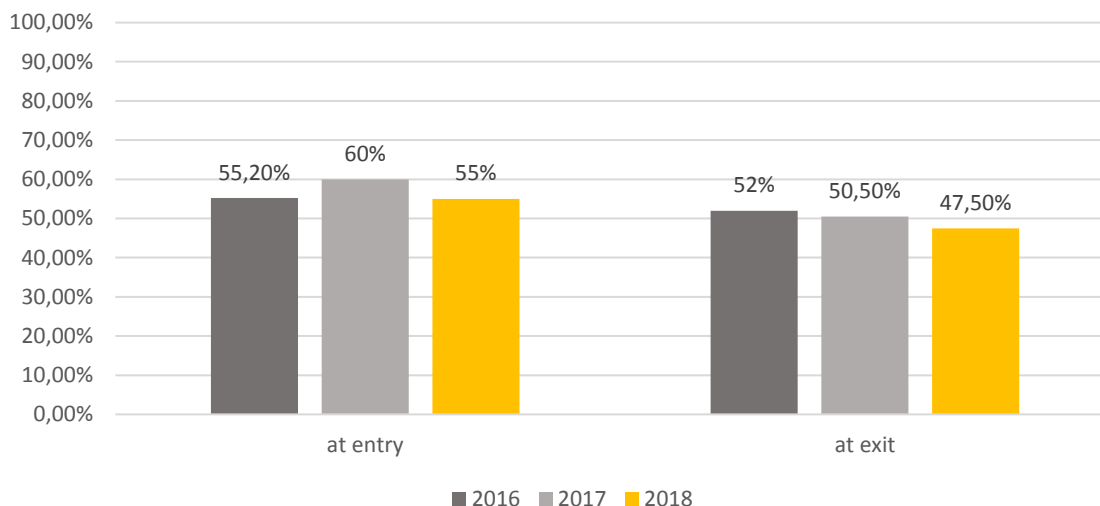
The KPI Total Corridor traffic displays the number of all international trains running on RFC North Sea – Baltic infrastructure, crossing at least one border on the Corridor. The total amount of trains for 2018 was 93 804.

Total Corridor Traffic



Second KPI represents the average punctuality of trains running on the Corridor at entry and exit of the Corridor (or departure/arrival if this is a point on the Corridor). Calculation is based on the data from Train Information System (TIS).

Punctuality of freight trains (%) (delay ≤ 30 minutes)



Starting in 2018 RFC North Sea – Baltic publishes Monthly Punctuality Reports on the Corridor website where the information is provided on the punctuality development over a period of 12 months accompanied by the amount and distribution of delays. These reports will serve as the basis for discussion with the customers on the measures needed for the improvement of performance.

Capacity

RFC North Sea – Baltic has published information on the following capacity KPIs:

- Volume of offered capacity (at X-11);
- Volume of requested capacity - PaPs (at X-8);
- Volume of pre-booked capacity (at X-7.5);
- Volume of requests (at X-8);
- Number of conflicts (at X-8);
- Volume of offered (at X-2) and requested capacity - Reserve Capacity.

The development of those KPIs, including data for 2018, is displayed in chapters 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.

Additionally for the first time two new KPIs which were commonly agreed with the customers and described in the Guidelines for Key Performance Indicators of Rail Freight Corridors¹ are published for 2018.

Ratio of the capacity allocated by the C-OSS and the total allocated capacity

This KPI presents the percentage share of number of trains allocated in the yearly timetable by the C-OSS per RFC border in comparison to the total number of allocated international

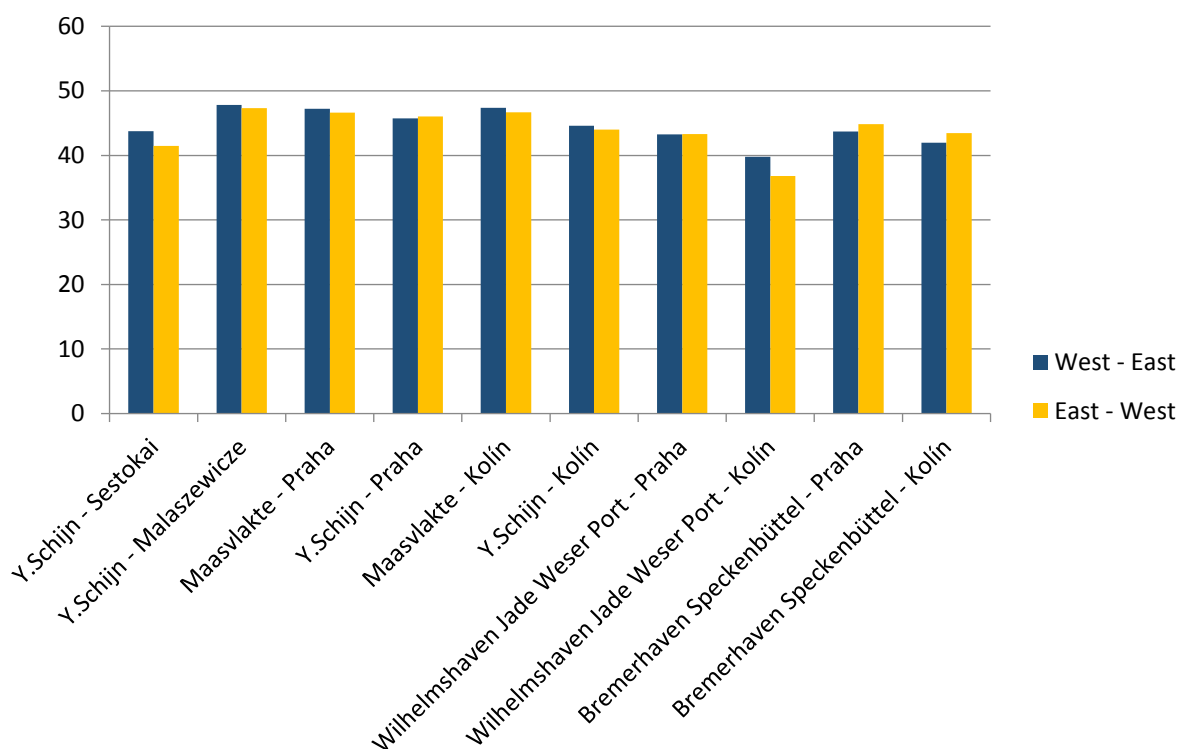
¹ http://www.rne.eu/rneinhalt/uploads/RNE_Guidelines_KPIs_of_RFCs.pdf

freight trains in the yearly timetable per RFC border. It has to be noted that trains allocated by other RFCs are not excluded from the IM sample in case of overlapping border crossings.

Border crossing	Ratio of the capacity allocated by the C-OSS
Essen – Roosendaal	12,91%
Montzen – Aachen	1,46%
Oldenzaal - Bad Bentheim	8,54%
Zevenaar – Emmerich	3,71%
Bad Schandau - Děčín	5,04%
Frankfurt (Oder) Oderbrücke-Rzepin	18,15%

Commercial speed of PaPs

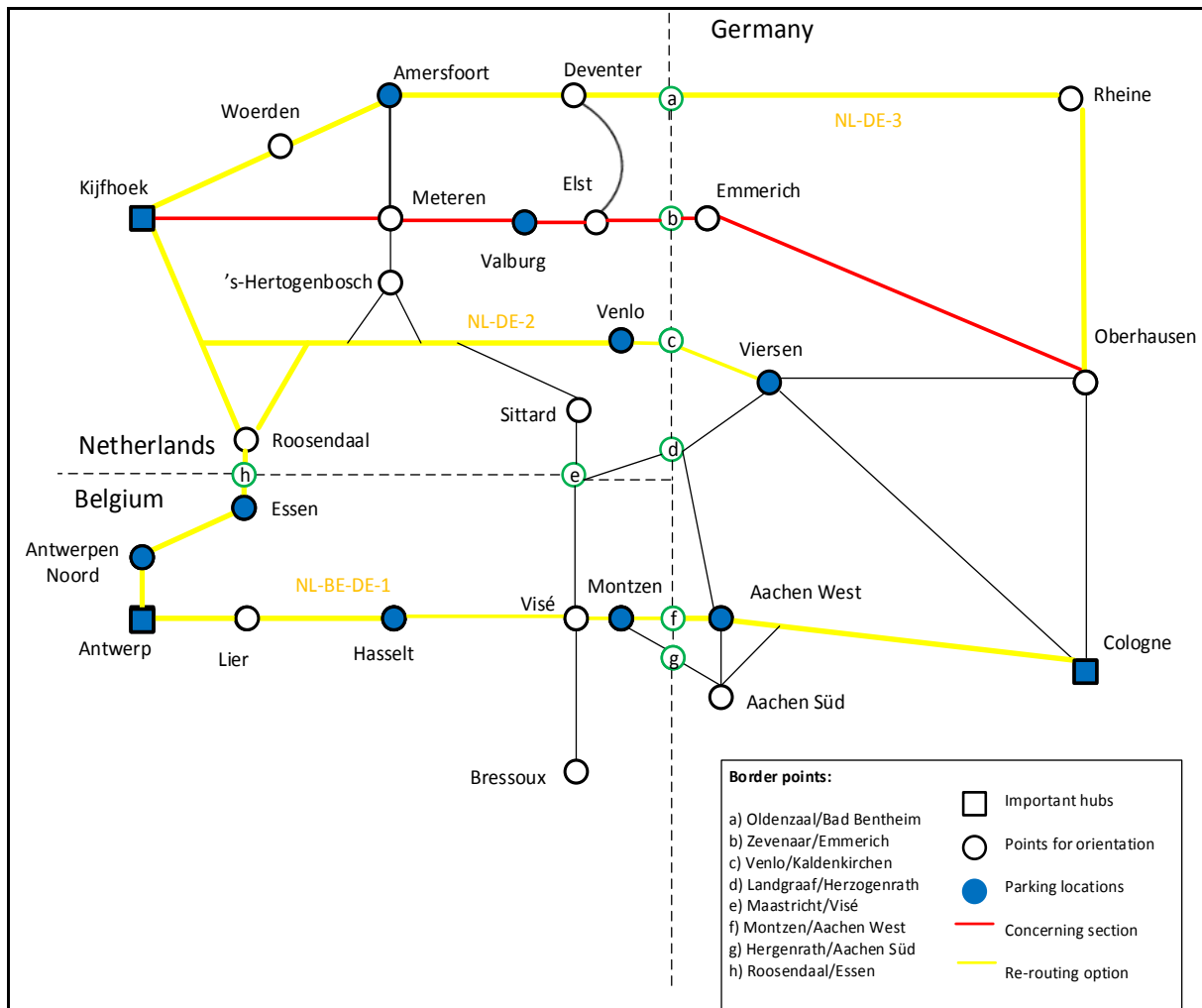
This performance indicator shows the average of the commercial speed of the PaPs on the Origin/Destination pair concerned per direction for TT 2019 (published in January 2018). O/D pairs were defined by the Corridor for the most important sections on the Corridor.



2.8 INTERNATIONAL CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

After the Rastatt disruption on RFC Rhine – Alpine (RALP) in 2017, RFC RALP together with other stakeholders proposed a draft Handbook for International Contingency Management which was further consulted and refined by the sector and afterwards approved by the RNE General Assembly in May 2018 and endorsed by PRIME (Platform of Rail Infrastructure Managers in Europe) and other stakeholders. The MB of RFC North Sea-Baltic approved the implementation of the handbook on the Corridor on its meeting in June 2018.

On 7th of December 2018, the Re-Routing Scenarios of RFC North Sea-Baltic and the overview of parameters were published on the Corridor website under the link: <http://rfc8.eu/customer/international-contingency-management/>.



Example of the re-routing scenarios for the interruption on the section Kijfhoek – Zevenaar / Emmerich - Oberhausen

The publication was announced on the RAG/TAG meeting in October 2018 with the information on the subsequent consultation phase. During that meeting the MB presented short and long-term improvements foreseen in the contingency management process. In particular, an emphasis has been placed on the analysis of available scenarios and preparations on the RUs side. Discussion on the updates in the documents and further Handbook's implementation will continue in 2019.

2.9 STRATEGY WORKSHOP OF THE RFC NORTH SEA – BALTIC

The second Strategy Workshop of the Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Baltic took place on 19th of June 2018 in Prague with MB, PIMs and Working Group Leaders. The aim of the workshop was to identify the priorities of the RFC North Sea-Baltic and to indicate the related work and next steps to be taken in order to fulfil goals set for the RFC.



Strategy Workshop in Prague

Photo: RFC NS-B

The below topics were discussed during the meeting:

- Product improvement;
- TCR coordination;
- Cross-border operations;
- Improvement of the punctuality;
- Infrastructure improvements;
- Contingency Planning and re-routing options;
- Silk Road Approach (traffic to China).

The identified actions and proposed measures will be included in the Corridor working group work plans for 2019.

2.10 EVENTS

2.10.1 TEN-T Days in Ljubljana

RFC North Sea-Baltic together with all RFCs participated in the TEN-T Days 2018, which took place on 25th – 27th of April 2018 in Ljubljana. All RFCs shared a common stand in the exhibition hall, where a dedicated event was organized in order to present RFCs and the Customer Information Platform. For RFC North Sea-Baltic it was a great opportunity to get in contact with potential customers, investors, EU institutions and partners from other modes of transport and thus opening new possibilities for partnership and cooperation. We were pleased that Director General of DG Move, Mr Henrik Hololei and the CNC Coordinator, Ms Catherine Trautmann, joined our stand.



*CNC Coordinator, Ms Trautmann, and Director General of DG Move, Mr Hololei, together with corridor representatives at the common RFC stand during the TEN-T days
Photos: RFC RALP*

2.10.2 EU Rail Freight Day in Vienna

The fifth European Rail Freight Day took place on the 6th of December 2018 in Vienna. The event was organised by the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and RailNetEurope. The 2018 Rail Freight Day provided a platform for debate on all major aspects of the rail freight sector.

The Programme was divided in five panel sessions with the Chairman of the Management Board participating in the closing session:

- Challenge 1 Rail freight: How to improve competitiveness in a challenging environment;
- Challenge 2 Providing high-quality capacity for rail freight traffic;

Challenge 3 Solving technical and operational barriers for rail freight;
Challenge 4 Strengthening rail freight in the multimodal transport system;
Closing session: The way forward for rail freight.



RFC NS-B MB Chairman during Closing session

Photo: RFC NS-B

During this event participating RFCs again shared one common stand. The event served as platform for fruitful discussion between the stakeholders of European rail freight and the European Commission in order to develop directions regarding challenges emerging for European rail freight.

The master presentation, conclusions and photos from the Rail Freight Day 2018 can be found on the RNE website: <http://www.rne.eu/news/rail-freight-day-2018/>.

3. EUROPEAN FUNDING - CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY (CEF)

In 2018 RFC North Sea - Baltic continued the implementation of the CEF action “Establishment of Rail Freight Corridor „North Sea-Baltic“ and its further development aiming at improving conditions for international rail freight transport” (2014-EU-TM-0217-S) with the EEIG as beneficiary of the project. The action progressed according to schedule. In March 2018 the Action Status Report (ASR) for 2017 was successfully delivered to INEA.

4. COOPERATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

4.1 RAILNETEUROPE

RFC North Sea-Baltic is an associate member of RNE and continued to cooperate closely with other RFCs in view of harmonization and development of services under the RNE umbrella. RFC North Sea-Baltic applies RNE services and guidelines as well as the RNE IT tools: PCS (Path

Coordination System), TIS (Train Information System), CIP (Corridor Information Platform) and CIS (Charging Information System).

In 2018, RFC North Sea-Baltic representatives participated in two RNE General Assembly meetings and two RFC/RNE High Level Meetings. RFC North Sea-Baltic was also actively engaged in a number of RNE initiatives:

- Further harmonisation of CID;
- Development of the Path Coordination System;
- Further development and testing of Empty Envelope Concept;
- Improvement of traffic and train performance management;
- Discussion on updated TCR Guidelines;
- Participation and coordination of the User Satisfaction Survey;
- Development of the Customer Information Platform;
- Participation in the RNE/RFC KPI Working Group.

4.2 RFC NETWORK – COOPERATION OF RAIL FREIGHT CORRIDORS

The RFC Network is a platform for cooperation of all Rail Freight Corridors. It consists of the Managing Directors and Chairpersons of the Management Board of RFCs with RNE representatives invited to participate as observers. From 2018 RFC Network is supported by an Assistant. 4 RFC Network meetings were held during 2018 in which RFC North Sea-Baltic participated. Among the topics which RFCs worked on in 2018 were elaboration and implementation of the Handbook of International Contingency Management, the corridor's role in the TCR coordination in the light of the Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2017/2075 of 4 September 2017 replacing Annex VII to Directive 2012/34/EU (hereinafter 'Annex VII'), further harmonization of common activities such as CID or User Satisfaction Survey.

4.3 DG MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

The European Commission organises the Single European Railway Area Committee (SERAC) Working Group on Rail Freight Corridors, which aims at facilitating exchange of views with all ministries, infrastructure managers and regulatory bodies involved in all RFCs. The following topics were addressed in the two meetings which took place in 2018 (13th SERAC WG meeting on 15th of May and 14th meeting on 23rd of October):

- Capacity offered and requested in 2018;
- Short-term capacity pilots and TTR pilots;
- Contingency management and re-routing catalogue;
- ERTMS: state-of-play of the European Deployment Plan and Action Plan;
- EU Rail Locations Portal;
- Evaluation of Regulation (EU) 913/2010, summary of Art. 22 reports by Executive Boards;
- Results of the user satisfaction surveys;
- Interoperability Issues Logbook.



Train running to Zawiercie

Photo: Deutsche Bahn AG/Bartłomiej Banaszak

4.4 NORTH SEA-BALTIC CORE NETWORK CORRIDOR

In 2018, RFC North Sea-Baltic continued to work with its corresponding North Sea-Baltic CNC in the framework of the model for cooperation between Rail Freight Corridors and TEN-T Core Network Corridors. This model ensures achievement of the objectives of both the RFCs and CNCs and avoiding duplication of work through effective exchanges of information and consultations.

In 2018 one meeting of the North Sea-Baltic Core Network Corridor Forum was held on 26th of November 2018. The main subjects discussed were the 3rd phase of studies on TEN-T CNC and support of CNC Coordinators, information on the Coordinator's activities including implementation of the decision on Rail Baltica provided by Ms Catherine Trautmann. Furthermore, reports from INEA on projects selected under the blending call and future developments under horizon 2020 were presented and discussed. A panel during the conference of the TEN-T Days in Ljubljana was also dedicated to the North Sea-Baltic CNC.

4.4.1 Rail Baltica project implementation

Rail Baltica is a new fast conventional double track electrified railway line which is an integral part of the North Sea - Baltic Core Network Corridor. In future it will become part of the RFC North Sea-Baltic and is expected to play a crucial role in ensuring its functioning via interoperable and efficient connections of the Baltic States with Poland and on to Finland, as well as multimodal connections between sea, rail and road transport.



Kaunas Intermodal Terminal

Photo: LG

In October 2018 the European Commission has adopted the Implementing Decision of the Rail Baltica project, reinforcing the commitments of the European Commission and EU Member States, also establishing a more detailed timetable for the project's implementation²

A significant milestone in the implementation of Rail Baltica project in 2018 was the initiation of construction works in the Kaunas node which will extend the currently existing European (1435 mm) standard gauge railway between Poland and Lithuania to Kaunas (Palemonas) Intermodal Terminal, the intermediate end point of the RFC North Sea - Baltic.

These construction works are set to be completed in 2020, making Kaunas (Palemonas) Intermodal Terminal the first intermodal centre in the Baltic States to connect the European (1435 mm) and Russian (1520 mm) standard gauges and creating a transport link between East and West as well as North and South axis.

4.5 REGULATORY BODIES

As in the previous year, a common meeting with the Regulatory Bodies was organized by RFC North Sea – Baltic and RFC Rhine-Alpine upon the request of the Regulatory Bodies along both RFCs which took place on the 21st of November 2018 in Frankfurt am Main. During the meeting the C-OSS Manager provided information about the results of the allocation process for TT 2019 and about planning of the capacity offer for TT 2020. RFCs informed RBs about current procedures on harmonisation of works, state of play on contingency planning and KPI's implemented by the Corridors.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1557382734814&uri=CELEX:32018D1723>

5. ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE

5.1 STUDY ON CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT

The MB decided in 2016 to carry out a Study on Capacity Improvement (SCI) which is a logical continuation of the “Study on the Corridor's infrastructure characteristics” conducted and finalized by the Working Group Infrastructure in 2014. In 2018 the MB approved simplified Terms of Reference, and at the end of 2018 the EEIG launched the tender. Selection of the consultant and awarding the contract is foreseen at the beginning of 2019 with the final study being available at the beginning of 2020.



Train running in Estonia

Photo: Eesti Raudtee

5.2 TCR COORDINATION

With the implementation of the Annex VII and the update of the RNE Guidelines for Coordination/Publication of Planned Temporary Capacity Restrictions for the European Railway Network approved by RNE General Assembly in December 2018, the role of the RFCs in the coordination and publication processes has been reassessed. The process started in 2018 and will continue in 2019 with the aim to detail the obligations of the RFC TCR Coordinator responsible for monitoring the results of coordination performed by IMs. As providing proper information and need of involvement of the customers in the process of TCRs coordination are one of the key findings of the User Satisfaction Survey and exchanges during various meetings extra efforts will be put on the TCR coordination topic.



Project "Establishment of Rail Freight Corridor "North Sea - Baltic" and its further development aiming at improving conditions for international rail freight transport" number 2014-EU-TM-0217-S is co-financed by the European Union's CEF programme. The sole responsibility of this publication lies with the author. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.