

Summary from the RAG/TAG meeting of Rail Freight Corridor North Sea - Baltic

Date:

15.09.2016 09:00 – 14:00

Venue:

SŽDC Headquarters
Dlážděná 1003/7
110 00 Prague
Room: Knights hall (2nd floor)

1) Welcome

a) Management Chairman

Oliver Sellnick welcomed the participants and then introduced agenda of the meeting (*Agenda RAGTAG meeting 15.09.2016*).

b) TAG spokesperson

Jörg Schulz (JS) shared comments on the UIRR organised meeting in Vienna on 10th of June, where all RFCs TAG spokesmen were present. JS was satisfied with the information received from RFC NS-B MB. JS agreed that coordination of the work between TAG and GA is a good initial step. Ad Toet (AT) suggested that TAG Members should have a more active role.

c) RAG spokesperson

Andreas Pietsch announced that a new RAG spokesperson is to be elected and RAG Members left the room for the election. Upon their return AP announced that Dirk Oelschläger was elected as new RAG Spokesperson. Lieven Goethals, spokesperson for the RAG of RFC North Sea – Mediterranean, was introduced as temporary vice-spokesperson for RFC NS-B.

2) Introduction of the new RAG Spokesperson

AP introduced DO, who thanked RAG Members for his election. OS greeted the new RAG Spokesperson and wished him lots of success in his new role.

3) Progress report from the Management Board

a) Evaluation of the pre-allocation results RFC North Sea - Baltic TT 2017 and preparations of PaP offer for TT 2018

Florian Müller presented the subject (*Evaluation of the pre-allocation results RFC North Sea - Baltic TT 2017 and preparations of PaP offer for TT 2018*). A number of comments were raised: ratio of capacity requested was well received by participants, generally running times and stops are too long, flex paths are supposed to address this issue. Customers were consulted in this matter and expressed different opinions, even contradicting.

FM gave explanation on preparations for TT2018. List of construction works has been prepared by IMs. All IMs would meet at the beginning of October to construct the PaPs and then discuss on possessions in order to present harmonized works for RFC NS-B. FM stated

that is it important to make sure that construction works do not interfere with paths or have been taken into account in preparation of paths. Participants asked how TCR guidelines are implemented by IMs experts. WG SWAP leader will inform RAG/TAG members in the next meeting how TCR can contribute to the presentation of harmonized works/possessions for RFC NS-B in preparations for TT2018 and on. AT asked how the figures of capacity ratio compare to those of the previous years. FM answered that the first reference year is 2016 thus FM is able to provide first information in 2017. To shed some light on this question, OS said that all PaPs at border sections on RFCs in Germany for TT2017 would count for about 1/3 of the international trains that crossed borders on RFCs to/from Germany in 2015.

FM also pointed out that customers asked that only unused/free capacity should be used for PaPs and existing traffic as such should not be transformed into PaPs, because in their opinion, they are not very attractive.

In the end it was concluded that FM presentation left a positive picture.

b) Presentation of Customer Information Platform

Patrycja Urbańska presented the subject (*Presentation of Customer Information Platform*). RUs admitted that CIP tool is new for them, but it may be helpful especially when construction works will be displayed. PU explained that TCR display is in the development stage.

c) RFC User Satisfaction Survey 2016

PU presented the subject (*RFC User Satisfaction Survey 2016*). RFC NS-B Office will send information to the RAG/TAG members on who in their companies was sent an email with the survey. PU invited the RAG/TAG members to send her remarks on the survey and encourage RUs to respond. OS concluded that same questions in a single survey were asked by all RFCs and RNE coordinates this project.

d) RNE project "Europe-wide analysis of European freight traffic flows"

Zuhal Nalbant (ZH) presented the subject (*Presentation Europe-wide analysis*) and informed RAG/TAG members about the ongoing consultation of the RAG/TAG members.

4) Cross-border issues

OS explained the table (*Cross border interoperability overview RFC 8 ExB NSAs*) and a discussion started. An example of Polish-German border crossing at Oderbrücke was given as co-existing two solutions to language requirements: Language Skills B1 /Triebfahrzeugführerscheinverordnung – TfV/ (DE) and existing bilateral border crossing agreement (PL). RUs explained that they wish that bilateral agreements are to be respected in the future. At the moment loco drivers are able to communicate only with dispatcher. Stefan Nagel was asked to clarify this issue at the Polish-German border crossing and review the table for Germany if needed. OS assured RAG/TAG members that bilateral agreements will be respected.

Jan Ilik stated that the table is a right start for improvement as the table conveys status quo. RAG/TAG members asked for support to preserve bi-lateral agreements regulating cross-border issues especially when it comes to language requirements. Julie Buy informed that EC is already aware of the RUs concerns. Therefore ERA will set up a special Working Group to address issues of cross-border operations. Bernard Swartenbroekx will keep RFC NS-B updated on any developments in this matter. Additionally, OS asked ministries to check the status of derogation/recast of the Directive and possible delays in implementation of the Directive. Eventually, any feedback will be sent by RFC NS-B Office to RAG/TAG members.

Additionally RAG/TAG members recommended to expand the table with issues which are important to their daily business for example – safety, ERTMS. OS asked for feedback from RAG/TAG members for any issues they would like to include in the table.

Right after the official closure of the RAG/TAG a group of ministries, IMs and RUs developed an additional proposal: For each border crossing one RU should volunteer to analyze the situation with the two respective ministries and IMs. Once all barriers and problems are described, the responsible NSAs and ERA will be involved to help solving them.

If RU face problems at a border station and would like to volunteer, get into contact with Jan Ilik and Oliver Sellnick, please, who will bring the responsible IMs and ministries together.

5) Points added by RAG/TAG

a) Follow up to the 21 June Rotterdam Sector declaration

AT gave an extensive explanation of the Sector declaration, which was produced during the Dutch presidency in EU. Dutch presidency focused inter alia on rail sector. Experts were asked to identify objectives and activities that are important to increase rail freight traffic. Evaluation of their work resulted in a Sector Declaration and a Declaration of the Member States which encompass broad consensus on what should be done. In order to carry work forward with the Sector Statement a Sector Action List was generated which in principle prioritize the required actions and objectives. OS noted that action list addresses a wider spectrum of issues that are not only RFC related. OS continued that the Sector Action List contained, e.g. action items to intensify the dialogue between RAG/TAG and MB/ExB. The Office will forward the action list and kindly requests for feedback to be sent to the Office and OS.

AT stated that ETA (Estimated Time of Arrival) is a revolutionary step which will make train operations more attractive to its customers. AT continued that deployment plan of ERTMS is another important issue which might impact the corridors and it is really important how it will be implemented on RFCs. AT pointed out that the Time Table Redesign project is also very important as it constitutes core business of RFCs and poses a major challenge to RFCs.

b) Report by the EU court of Auditors 'Rail freight in the EU: still not on the right track'

AT stated that the report contains a lot of valuable statements. AT listed some key issues:

- rail freight promotion – modal shift hasn't changed much,

- big criticism from auditors,
- rail freight is needed for future,
- revitalize modal shift policy, which has failed so far due to lack of interoperability and competitiveness,
- track access charges raise, what should be compared with road traffic and result in finding balance between rail and road,
- funding of infrastructure is not sufficient,
- more attention should be paid by EC regarding rail freight,
- EC has already started to draft conclusions from the report.

OS stated that this will help EC to set priorities. JI noted that transport policies and investment plans should be coordinated more closely.

6) AOB

a) Feedback after consultations of Terms of Reference for the CIS (Capacity Improvement Study)

Comments/Questions derived from the consultation with RAG/TAG members were answered by the WG Infrastructure. RFC NS-B Office will send answers and explanations of the WG to the RAG/TAG members.

b) Harmonization of CID

OS presented the subject (*Harmonization of CID*).

The subject will be discussed extensively during RFC Talks on 29th of September.

Book 2&4 will be harmonized for TT2018.

Book 1&3 will be harmonized later.

RFC NS-B Office will send invitations directly to RAG/TAG members about next meeting on 30th of March in Berlin.

Prepared by Jerzy Turkiewicz

RFC NS-B Office

List of Annexes:

1. Annex 1 List of attendance