

Brussels, 26th May 2013

PRESS RELEASE

ERFA re-elects its President, elects new Vice-president and welcomes Vice-President Kallas of the European Commission For a Keynote speech

During the 12th General Assembly Meeting of the European Rail Freight Association on 16th May in Brussels, the members re-elected Mr. François Coart from Europorte and elected Mr. Frank Schuhholz from ERS Railways as Vice-President.

The President and Vice-President reminded that ERFA supports the 4th Railway Package to be adopted in its entirety during this European legislative mandate. Further they emphasized to focus on the speeding up all necessary processes for enhancing full rail market opening!

After the General Assembly Meeting was closed ERFA members joined in for the public part of the event where ERFA traditionally welcomes its members, interested market players, political stakeholders on European level as well as representatives of the press for a seminar debate with high level guest speakers :

Shippers/logistic operators MM. Nielsen, CEO SAMSKIP and Hermand, Logistics Manager TOTAL

Infrastructure Managers MM. Lallemand, CEO INfrabel and Wendel, MD Corridor 1

Manufacturers Mr. Citroën, Head of UNIFE

Regulators Ms. Walker, Head of IRG-Rail

European Commission Mr. Paquet, Director DG MOVE

During the introduction of the debate ERFA President Coart raised a few but decisive points in order to strengthen ERFA's message coming from this years General Assembly:

ERFA supports the new European single safety certificate

ERFA further supports the enhanced role of ERA

ERFA also supports the future concept of putting into service rolling stock but points out to clarify certain issues in the proposals of directive and regulation and to facilitate the approval of pre TSI second hand rolling stock. This all with the aim to not hamper competitiveness of new entrants and private RUs

ERFA continues to argue for a simple structural model in the respective member states, which generates the least conflicts of interest, namely the separation between operational and infrastructure entities. ERFA acknowledges that traditional holding models still exist in Europe but at the same time claims that strong Chinese walls will be in place for these organizations.



ERFA wants to see efficient thus empowered regulators implemented which will be particularly taking care of holding structures and their shortcomings, which are detrimental to the existence of a competitive rail freight sector

ERFA sees in the upcoming Public Service Obligation (PSO) an opportunity to keep mixed (freight & passengers) secondary lines in service.

ERFA also supports adequate social and working conditions for staff of its members.

ERFA pledges at the same time that in case social rules will be unified that this has to happen on a European level in order not to disfavor anybody.

Vice-President Kallas introduced his keynote speech as: “Believe in Europe and speed up full market opening in rail” – I could not agree more with the chosen theme! And it’s really my pleasure to attend the 12th annual event of ERFA”

Vice-President Kallas also declared: “ ERFA’s message based on the return on experience of your Members is very important I would like to thank ERFA for its effective cooperation in the operational launch of rail freight corridors Our proposals are coherent and closely inter-related in a package. ERFA needs to be vocal and fully take part to this debate!”

Finally, the President Coart reminded “ ... We as ERFA want to see that the European market opening is speeding up. ERFA was created when the 1st Railway Package was set up and we will continue to exist for as long as the market is not fully open!”

Contacts:

ERFA (European Rail Freight Association) was set up with the 1st Railway Package in Brussels in July 2002 to represent the interests of the new independent and private ‘open access’ rail freight operators. ERFA is EU Representative Body. Today, the association comprises 29 members (20 rail freight operators, wagon keepers, service providers, forwarders as well as 9 national rail freight associations) from 16 countries in wider Europe. ERFA represents more than 800 locomotives and 55.000 freight wagons. ERFA's main objective is to make the rail freight market fit for competition so that rail freight can expand its market share, attract new investments, become more innovative and create jobs. By doing so, ERFA contributes to a highly competitive EU rail freight market.

ERFA’s key mission to achieve its objective is to remove all legal, technical, social and administrative barriers that prevent its members from rapidly establishing international cross-border freight services, using all rail infrastructures regardless of who manages them, and to encourage any developments likely to enable all rail companies to flourish on this market, regardless of their size or age.

ERFA asbl
Pierre Tonon
Secretary General
+32 475235348
pierre.tonon@erfa.be
François Coart
President
francois.coart@eurotunnel.com