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PRESS RELEASE

ERFA urges UK and the European Commission to work together in the best interests of European Rail Freight

ERFA is disappointed at the legal challenge the UK is taking against the Connecting Europe Facility regulation and believes this is counterproductive to the interests of European rail freight.

ERFA has always strongly supported the CEF, a major investment programme for transport infrastructure, which will get more investment into strategic rail connections across Europe.

The final agreement on the CEF regulation saw these strategic rail connections aligned with the all-important rail freight corridors.

“Ensuring access for international freight to these key European rail routes was a major victory for rail freight and this legal challenge by the UK is unhelpful to say the least,” said François Coart, ERFA President.

François Coart added “All EU countries have an interest in remaining fully and competitively connected to the global economy, also for the sake of growth and jobs.”

Freight today cannot be restricted to trading within national borders. This is why ERFA has long campaigned for better rail infrastructure across Europe, for fair and non-discriminatory access to that infrastructure for all operators, and for greater coordination and efficiency on the network to ensure adequate slots and capacity for freight trains.

ERFA urges the UK Government to work with the European Commission and its EU neighbours to find interoperable solutions for the development of strategic transport connections in the UK, which also ensure that the whole of the UK is fully connected with its main trading partners via a high performing rail connection to and from the continent as well as inside the UK.



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 31 members (22 rail freight operators, wagon keepers, service providers, forwarders as well as 9 national rail freight associations) active in 18 countries in wider Europe. ERFA represents more than 70 Railways Undertakings and 55.000 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.

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