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PRESS RELEASE

THE POWER OF RAIL REGULATORS MUST BE EXTENDED TO ROAD

The President of the very independent French regulator, ARAF, is currently exploring the idea of having his agency's power extended from rail to road.

The idea of this enlargement stems from an effort to protect new rail entrants from predatory pricing by low cost bus operators belonging to rail incumbent operators who are keen to protect their home market.

ERFA, which represents stakeholders who have an interest in the liberalisation of the European rail freight market, supports this idea. It must of course also include road freight, because the biggest competitor of rail is road. It is no longer acceptable that some historic rail operators are investing in road haulage against rail instead of opting for inter-modality.

François Coart, President of ERFA: *"It is up to the member states to define their rail policy in accordance with the EU guidelines, laid down in the 4 railway packages. Some states are severely lacking in rail strategy, and rely on their historic operators. This situation is not acceptable. It is up to an elected parliament to define its transport policy and to control the historic operator and not the other way around. It is a matter of basic democracy!"*

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 30 members (21 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.

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