



Press Release – Evolution of ERTMS governance needed to move deployment forward

20 April 2026

The ERTMS 2026 Conference is about to start! We, the European associations representing rail rolling stock lessors (AERRL), private and independent rail freight operators (ERFA) and independent railway companies (ALLRAIL) see this as the perfect opportunity, the right place and time to discuss the evolution of ERTMS governance and deployment. Central coordination and sufficient human resources at EU level, together with a stronger dialogue among manufacturers, ERTMS users and infrastructure managers (IMs) are indispensable to keep the promises of ERTMS deployment alive. Let's kick-off this discussion in Valenciennes!

More than three decades after its launch, ERTMS deployment is still advancing at a very slow pace, with only 17% of the TEN-T Core Network currently equipped together with only 19% of the existing fleet, according to the most recent figures gathered in the Third ERTMS Work Plan. Furthermore, once the deployment occurs, ERTMS users still face a complex environment created by instable specifications, divergences at national level and a weak business case.

We cannot wait any longer for Member States to coordinate with their neighbours on their own, for technical harmonisation to happen by itself every time there is a new specification, and for IMs to carefully listen to ERTMS users without strong monitoring, guidance and support at EU level.

That's why AERRL, ALLRAIL, and ERFA endorse the recommendations made by the ERTMS Coordinator Matthias Ruete in his Work Plan:

- Establishing a central coordination body within DG MOVE,
- Establishing an EU-level deployment manager, and
- Continuing public-private partnership for rail via a dedicated joint undertaking.

We will also closely be following the discussions in the dedicated workshops, particularly on operational rules for ERTMS, controlling ETCS costs and FRMCS deployment challenges.

We are convinced that that alongside sufficient financial support, a stable standard and a stronger EU-level ERTMS governance with a clear focus on coordination are essential to ensure consistency, harmonisation and cost reductions. Representatives of AERRL (Carole Coune and Aurélie Csizmazia) and ERFA (Josselin Petit), together with their member companies, will actively contribute to the discussions throughout the ERTMS 2026 Conference, alongside the wider rail sector. Let's have this conversation and move together forward!

AERRL Secretary-General, Carole Coune, highlighted: *“ERTMS must become the backbone of a truly unified European railway system, built on a single, stable and interoperable standard across all Member States. Continued fragmentation is putting the 2030 targets increasingly at risk, which is why resources should be prioritised for coordinating deployment, particularly along the corridors.”*

ALLRAIL Secretary General, Nick Brooks, said: *“As the backbone of interoperability and cross-border operations, it is essential that all stakeholders are able to build upon ERTMS stability going forward. There needs to be greater clarity and predictability on the future of ERTMS, and for deployment strategies to carefully consider the impact on the whole sector.”*

ERFA Secretary General, Maria Price, concluded: *“As users of ERTMS we urge decisionmakers and stakeholders to rethink the approach towards EU-wide standardized specifications development and deployment plan, and ensure that innovation stays true to the original purpose of ERTMS.”*