



Brussels, 01 February 2016

CER RAIL FREIGHT NOISE STRATEGY

CER Rail freight noise strategy

Executive summary

Key messages for the policy makers:

- CER acknowledges that rail freight noise is an important issue. Its members are putting the highest effort into addressing the problem and have set themselves goals to effectively reduce rail noise in the upcoming years while maintaining the competitiveness of the rail sector vis-à-vis other modes.
- CER is also aware of specific noise problems in passenger traffic such as aerodynamic noise for high-speed trains or parking noise.
- Although noise is a local externality, rail freight noise is a European issue. Some Member States are more concerned than others but freight transport is international and traffic in and through noise-sensitive Member States accounts for an important essential share of the EU's total rail freight traffic volume. If no European solution is taken this will be a major threat for rail freight business along the most busy rail freight corridors in Europe.
- EU policymakers should ensure that measures leading to less rail freight noise do not have a negative impact on the rail freight competitiveness. It is proven that rail freight provides an environmentally friendly solution to achieve the goals of the 2011 Transport White Paper. Policymakers have to take into account that measures such as unilateral vehicle or circulation bans must comply with the EU legal framework. Otherwise they would go against the principle of free movement of goods and would lead to significant weakening of rail freight in Europe with a reverse modal shift to road.
- Therefore only European-wide solutions shall be taken into account. Measures on the European level shall be appropriate and they shall take into account the specific situation of rail freight.
- The most effective measure to reduce rail freight noise is to equip freight wagons with low-noise brake blocks. Where appropriate, a mix of policy measures (combination of abatement at source and mitigation at receiver) shall be taken into account. Noise-differentiated track access charge systems, where installed, have to be kept simple and shall not create any additional bureaucratic burden for the sector.
- Retrofitting of wagons leads to huge additional costs for the sector. As long as noise is not subject to the polluter-pays principle across both road and rail in a balanced and effective manner, any measures to reduce railway noise emissions should be accompanied by public financial support measures that cover the full cost of the measures imposed.



Contents

Executive summary	2
1. Introduction.....	4
2. The legal basis for noise at EU level	4
3. Noise mitigation strategy of the rail sector	6
4. Ideas for developing an action plan by the sector	9
5. Message for the policy makers.....	10
Annex 1	13
Annex 2.....	22