



The Voice  
of European  
Railways



Press Release

Brussels, 28 February 2012

## **Working the switches for the European Railway Agency to becoming the single railway authority in Europe**

**The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) and the Association of the European Rail Industry (UNIFE) presented their joint vision on the future role of the European Railway Agency (ERA). In light of the DG MOVE consultation of stakeholders taking place today, CER and UNIFE highlighted their position that ERA should become the single issuing authority for safety certification and authorisation as well as authorisation for placing in service of all vehicles.**

Today, ERA's mandate is to support the creation of a competitive European railway system by **removing cross-border obstacles** and in parallel **ensuring interoperability**.

The 2011 Transport White Paper, published by the European Commission in March 2011, proposes two highly important modal shift targets: 30% of overland freight should go by rail or inland waterways by 2030, 50% by 2050; and rail should account for the majority of intermediate-distance passenger travel by 2050. In order to be prepared for these challenges, the European rail market, as well as its **supervising authorities, have to be transformed** to accommodate increasing market volumes.

As a first step, the European Commission has to push member states to **effectively implement the existing safety & interoperability directives**. Moreover, CER and UNIFE highlighted in their joint vision 2022, that **ERA should become the single issuing authority for safety certification/authorisation and authorisation for placing in service of all vehicles**. ERA will evolve towards having a central directorate supported by national or multinational offices, allowing ERA to benefit from their competences, the local knowledge and their influence in the regions.

Following the vision of CER and UNIFE the European Railway Agency should, as part of implementing the fourth railway package, firstly act as a **one-stop shop for authorisation** of vehicles for which the operation is sought in several member states. Secondly, the agency will act as a **one-stop shop for granting of safety certificates** (Part A) to railway undertakings, and through its supervisory role over the National Safety Agencies, supervise the Part B certification process carried out by National Safety Agencies. Thirdly, the ERA will have decision-making power in the event of disputes about vehicle authorisation and/or safety certificates. At the end of the transition the European Railway Agency should become be the single railway authority in Europe.

**CER Executive Director Libor Lochman** concluded: *“Heading for a single railway authority in Europe, in the framework of the fourth railway package, will require technical harmonisation, streamlining of administrative procedures as well as removal of superfluous national regulations. It will finally lead to a competitive and transparent European railway market supported and supervised by a lean, competent and effective European administration.”*

**Philippe Citroën, UNIFE Director-General**, said: *“We hope that the strengthening of the role of ERA will be a*



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*priority for the Commission and EU Member States in the fourth railway package, also with view of endowing the agency with the necessary budgetary scope to develop its activities.”*

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The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together more than 70 European railway undertakings and infrastructure companies. CER represents the interests of its members towards the European institutions as well as other policy makers and transport actors. CER's main focus is promoting the strengthening of rail as essential to the creation of a sustainable transport system which is efficient, effective and environmentally sound. For more information, see [www.cer.be](http://www.cer.be)

UNIFE

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UNIFE represents the European Rail Industry in Brussels since 1992. The Association gathers more than 70 of Europe's leading large and medium-sized rail supply companies active in the design, manufacture, maintenance and refurbishment of rail transport systems, subsystems and related equipment. A further one thousand suppliers of railway equipment partake in UNIFE activities through 13 national rail industry associations. UNIFE members have an 80% market share in Europe and supply more than 50% of the worldwide production of rail equipment and services.

[www.unife.org](http://www.unife.org)