



Press release

Date: 20 March 2014

Re: Inauguration of the opening of the Rhine - Alpine and North Sea - Mediterranean corridors

FPS Mobility and Transport - in collaboration with the transport ministers of the Netherlands, Germany, France, the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, Italy and Switzerland on the one side and the infrastructure managers and railway capacity allocation bodies of these countries on the other, organised a conference at Oude Vismijn in Ghent on 20 March 2014 to inaugurate the opening of the European rail freight corridors n°1 and n2. These corridors, also called respectively Rhine-Alpine and North Sea-Mediterranean, facilitate the organisation of traffic and allow easier interconnection by rail of the most important European logistical and industrial hubs.

In the introduction to the conference, the State Secretary for Mobility, Mr Melchior Wathelet, and his Dutch counterpart, Ms Wilma Mansveld, welcomed the creation of this new type of railway product, which makes freight transport by rail more effective and more competitive.

The rail freight corridors represent one of the main innovations in the European rail freight sector over the last few decades. Corridors n°1 and n°2 bring major changes in international freight services. In this way, railway undertakings and other candidates are not required to consult the network statements by each infrastructure manager, as they now find all useful information concerning the corridor in a single network statement. To reserve and order capacity, they can now consult a catalogue of pre-established train paths, allowing them to reserve and order their train paths from the corridor one-stop shop. They are also better and earlier informed about infrastructure works, which are then better coordinated along the corridor by the infrastructure managers.

The management structure of these corridors allows ministers to meet as an executive board, and infrastructure managers and capacity allocation bodies as a management board. This management board has two advisory groups, one bringing together the railway undertakings and the other bringing together the ports and terminals on the corridor. Thanks to this client-oriented approach, these corridors now possess all the tools to give European rail freight its chance and thus provide a major modal transfer to rail. The key factor in this success remains and will remain the good collaboration between actors on the corridor on the one side as well as between the corridors.

The conference of 20 March brought together political actors, infrastructure managers and capacity allocation bodies, regulatory bodies, railway undertakings, ports and terminals as well as their clients. The participants were given an overview of the products and services offered by the corridors as well as their future objectives. Some of these railway undertakings and/or major rail users present also had the opportunity to express their vision, their needs and expectations, in particular thanks to the organisation of business corners.

Finally, the two new European coordinators in charge of the TEN-T multimodal corridors, Ms Palacio for the Rhine-Alps core network corridor and Mr Bálazs for the North Sea-Mediterranean core network corridor demonstrated the multimodal vision of these major highways, the backbone of which is clearly the rail freight corridors.

All the documents showing the products and services offered by these railway corridors are available on the following websites: www.rfc2.eu and <http://www.corridor-rhine-alpine.eu>

The Federal Public Service Mobility and Transport is responsible for preparing and implementing a concerted federal policy for mobility and transport for the population, businesses and the economy. It comprises 4 directorate-generals: DG road transport and road safety, DG sustainable mobility policy and the railways and the Belgian Civil Aviation Authority. You will find more information on FPS Mobility and Transport by going to the site www.mobilit.belgium.be



All the documents presented at the conference will soon be available on the following website: <http://www.railfreightcorridors1and2.eu/index.html>

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