

Easier, faster, safer



RFC NORTH SEA - MED 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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Message from the Presidents and Managing Directors



The year 2019 was a mixed year for RFC North Sea - Mediterranean in terms of both volume and punctuality.

In this year 2020, when the whole planet is hit by Covid-19, when the world economy has stopped, when we are all living the same existential experience with its uncertainties and anxieties but also its new solidarity, the year 2019 seems far away.

However, 2019 has seen upheavals with a serious impact on traffic, leading to a 4% decrease in total traffic on the Corridor compared to 2018. We can highlight for example the floods that led to long line closures, interrupting traffic to Spain, or the strike in France of a rare intensity that generated a drastic drop in traffic at the end of the year and a strong loss of credibility of the railways.

However, following the pandemic, rail freight has regained its rightful place, a strategic position. Once this pandemic ends, will continues to irrigate the continent. It will depend only on us to anchor in time this new status acquired during the crisis.

Yet a few initiatives taken in 2019 to improve the performance of the Corridor, the effects of which should begin to be seen in 2020, could well help us to make progress in this direction.

The quality of the train paths : The performance of the train paths offered by the Corridor depends to a large extent on the alignment and coordination of work intervals between infrastructure managers (IMs). In 2019, this subject was taken in hand by the IMs with the facilitation of the the C-OSS and a new works coordination process was put in place. This process, presented to all the partners, should make it possible to identify the impact

of the works upstream and to anticipate alternative solutions with the RUs. The challenge is indeed to implement operationally the principles set out in Annex VII of Directive 2012/34/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council in its version of 4 September 2017. Reliable train paths are one of the credibility issues for the railways.

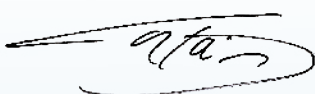
Punctuality: This is a major challenge, which often focuses on passenger punctuality. However, in 2019, following the Terminal Advisory Group (TAG) meeting in Lyon on 8 October, RFC North Sea - Med has launched a process to improve departure punctuality from terminals. It has thus identified the pre-departure processes, the critical milestones, the way to monitor these milestones and to feed operational information systems. One pilot was then initiated in the Port of Lyon; a second will be initiated in the Bettembourg terminal. It will then be necessary to disseminate the approach. Leaving on time to arrive on time, such could be the leitmotiv of the Corridor. Each player in the logistics chain has a role to play.

The loading gauge: Established in 2018, the works from the COOPERE group launched by SNCF Réseau, sped up in 2019 and moved forward as to reach conclusions that will allow to share the stakes, the constraints and the conditions of the implementation of this loading gauge between all the stakeholders. This is an important step in the decision making process of upgrading lines to P400 in France.

On the eve of major transformations, let us build on our successes, on the spirit of cooperation that motivates each of the partners in the Corridor, in order to re-establish rail freight at the heart of the lives of our European citizens.

This editorial would be incomplete without mentioning that in 2019, changes occurred within the different instances of the Corridor. For the permanent team: Mohamed Salimène handed over to Marie-Anne Menguy. As for Guillaume Confais-Morieux, he has handed over the reins of the EEIG to Yann Le Floch. Both will be keen to bring their operational know-how to all the Corridor's partners and international clients. Their satisfaction remains our sole raison d'être. Moreover, Pierre Bodiaux also replaced Peter Geens as substitute chair of the Executive board from June 2019 on.

**Guillaume
Confais-Morieux**
Managing Director
RFC North Sea - Med



Yann Le Floch
Managing Director
(From October 2019 on)
RFC North Sea - Med



Valérie Verzele
President
Executive board



Michaël Dierickx
President of the
Assembly
RFC North Sea - Med



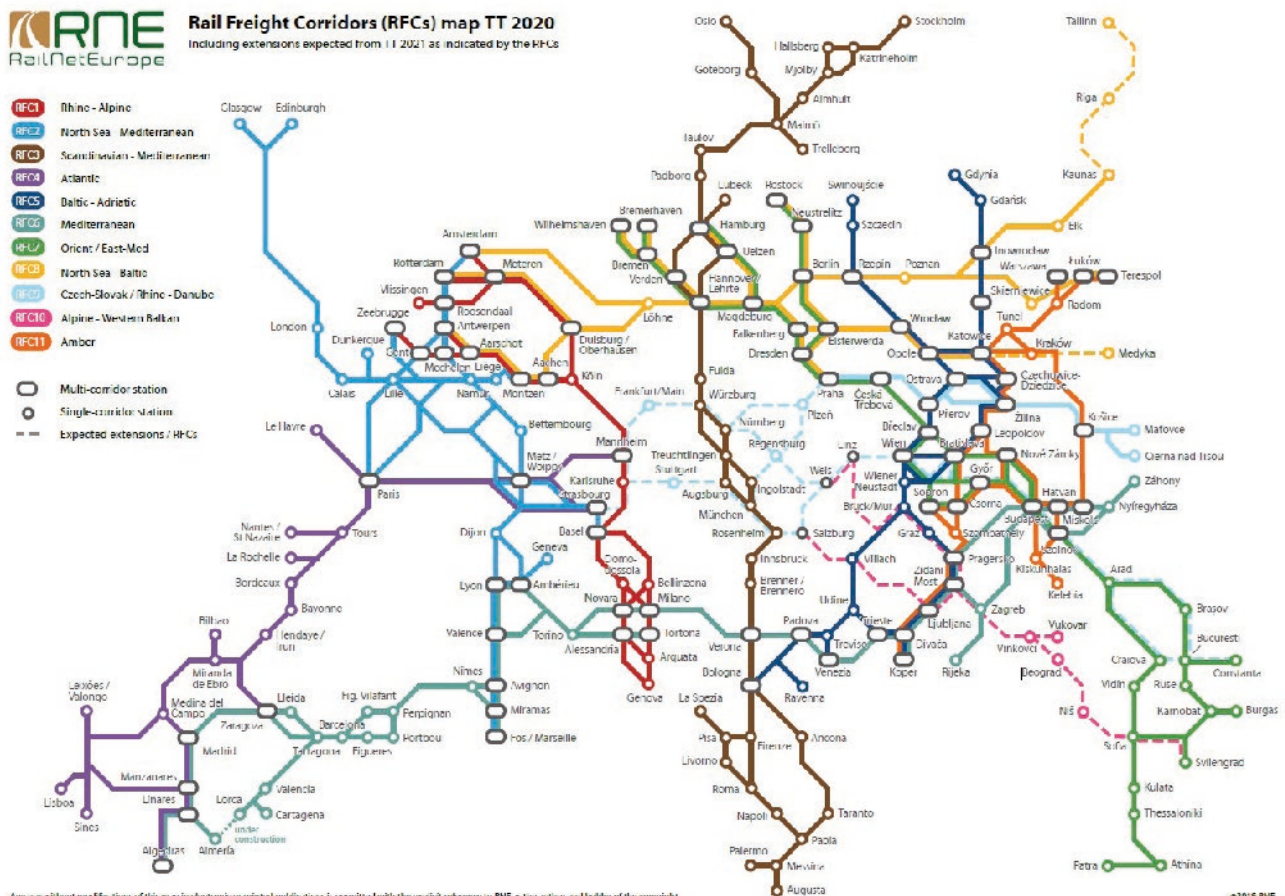
1. About the Corridor

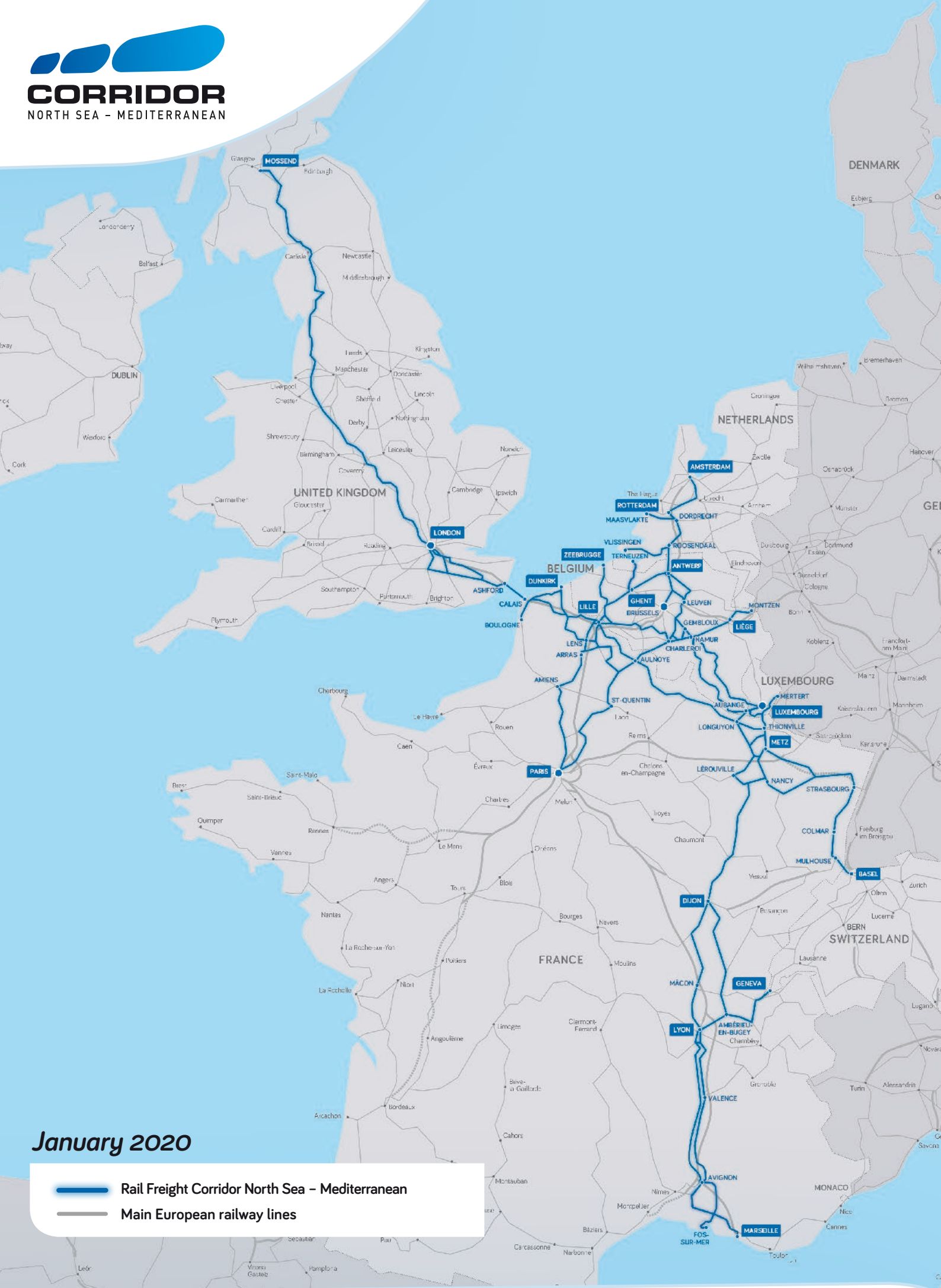
1.1. A major European rail freight route

Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean (RFC North Sea – Med) is a freight oriented route connecting the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, France and Switzerland. It links main European ports (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp, North Sea Ports, Zeebrugge, Dunkirk, and Marseille) to the industrial zones of Western Europe and to the gateways of Southern Europe, with more than 6000 kilometres of lines now. An extension beyond London was done for timetable 2019, and to Geneva for timetable 2020. Also, Terneuzen was connected to our RFC in timetable 2021.

The Corridor is also a gateway to the rest of Europe, being connected to the RFCs Rhine – Alpine, Atlantic, Mediterranean and North Sea – Baltic and building together with all corridors a European network of rail freight corridors.

RFC North Sea – Med is one of the most promising rail corridors in Europe, with already more than 40.000 international trains per year.





January 2020

- Rail Freight Corridor North Sea - Mediterranean
- Main European railway lines

1.2. *Easier, Faster, Safer*

Easier, with a single counter for the supply of quality paths

Railway undertakings and other entities, such as shippers, freight forwarders and combined transport operators, can request capacity for international rail freight traffic, through the corridor one-stop-shop (C-OSS) and by using the Path Coordination System (PCS) for international bookings.

This capacity takes the form of “off the shelf” paths, called Pre-arranged Paths (PaP's), reserved for international freight and that can either be requested for the next annual timetable or, for more flexibility, at short term notice.

These paths benefit from a high quality:

- they are defined after the yearly consultation of all our customers;
- they are reserved for international freight traffic ahead of booking time and benefit from a specific legal protection against cancellation;
- they are built on the basis of coordinated works along the Corridor;
- they are coordinated with the paths of other rail freight corridors.

Faster, with a high level of performance

In order to increase punctuality on the Corridor, train performance is measured and analysed. When a train deviates from its planned schedule, the European IT tool Train Information System (TIS) provides the relevant information on the delay. Railway undertakings therefore benefit from an international view of the punctuality of their trains, summarised in regular reports they receive from the one-stop-shop.

Safer, with an optimised network

By improving interoperability and exchanging information on investments across borders, the lines of the Corridor are optimised for international traffic.

RFC North Sea - Med is currently deploying the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) on its main lines following the European Deployment Plan (EDP) published by the European Commission. This system is designed to replace national ones, which requires specific equipment on engines running on several networks.

RFC North Sea - Med is one of the most advanced corridors in terms of ERTMS track deployment, as the system is fully deployed on most of the Corridor lines in Switzerland, Luxembourg, Belgium and partly in France on the pilot border sites.

1.3. *An initiative from the European Commission*

The Rail Freight Corridors

In order to promote rail freight transport and increase its modal share, the European Parliament and Council adopted Regulation (EU) 913/2010 concerning a European rail network for competitive freight, which entered into force on 9 November 2010. The network of Rail Freight Corridors now consists of 11 corridors across Europe, that regularly meet and coordinate their activities.

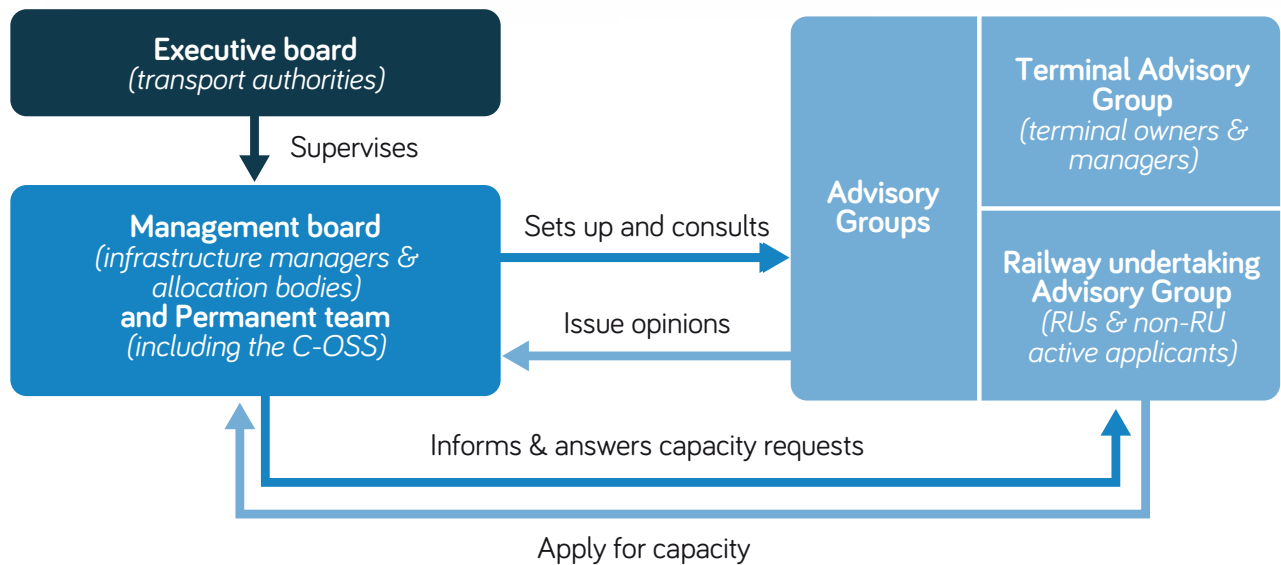
The Core Network Corridors

Regulation (EU) 1315/2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European Transport Network and Regulation (EU) 1316/2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, both adopted on 11 December 2013, have brought new challenges for the rail freight corridors. The first Regulation created nine multimodal Core Network Corridors (CNC). They are coordinated by nine European Coordinators and two horizontal coordinators: one for ERTMS and one for the Motorways of the Sea. The second Regulation renamed the rail freight corridors and extended their field. Rail Freight Corridor n°2 became Rail Freight Corridor North Sea - Mediterranean.



2. The governance of the Corridor, an ambitious collaborative approach

The governance of the rail freight corridors includes an Executive board, a Management board and two Advisory Groups. The coordination between these entities is shown in the chart below:



2.1. The Executive board



Mission and vision

The Executive board, through its cooperation at the level of the Ministries of Transport has the objective of improving the conditions for international rail freight transport. It has the general responsibility to implement Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 with regard to RFC North Sea - Med, and the equivalent Swiss measures.

According to the agreement establishing the Executive board, it has the following main responsibilities:

- to ask the Management board to report on any matter relating to the smooth functioning of the Corridor;
- to ensure that the extensions of the RFC North Sea - Med are duly established;
- to take decisions on general matters of common interest concerning the internal functioning of RFC North Sea - Med without prejudice to the competence of Member States and Switzerland regarding the planning and financing of rail infrastructure;
- to adopt the Framework for Capacity Allocation (FCA);
- to consider, and where appropriate to support, the requests of the Management board for European subsidies;
- to support the Management board's work, in particular if the latter encounters any difficulties in fulfilling its tasks.

2.1. The Executive board

It has the following cooperation responsibilities:

- to ensure, as far as it can, that the development and implementation of RFC North Sea - Med is conducted in a manner consistent with those of ERTMS Corridor C and in line with the EDP published by the European Commission;
- to work together where necessary with the European institutions and organisations, the National railway Safety Authorities, and the regulatory bodies of its members;
- to strive for good cooperation between rail freight corridors;
- to coordinate the work of the RFC North Sea - Med and the CNC North Sea-Med with the European coordinator and national authorities.

The Executive board of RFC North Sea - Med also assumes the responsibilities of the Executive board created by the Letter of Intent for the deployment of ERTMS on Corridor C “Antwerp – Basel/ Lyon” signed on 6 June 2006 by the Ministers of Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Switzerland¹.

The functions of the Board under this Letter of Intent include:

- the coordination of deployment of ERTMS along the former ERTMS Corridor C and ERTMS coordination along the Corridor in accordance with national implementation plans, as well as coordination of decommissioning of national systems in order to foster the implementation of ERTMS on Corridor.

Organisation

The Board is constituted on the basis of an international Agreement which was signed on 8 October 2014 by the Ministers of Transport of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

It is composed of representatives of the authorities of the Member States concerned and Switzerland. The Board takes decisions, which are provided for by Regulation (EU) 913/2010, on the basis of mutual consent. These decisions, signed by all the members of the Board and published, are legally binding on their addressees.

The Executive board meets four times a year. The following have a standing invitation to attend the meetings of the Board:

- the representatives of the Management board and permanent team;

¹For the purposes of the exercise of the functions of the Board under the above Letter of Intent relating to ERTMS Corridor C, the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is not considered to be a member of the Board.

- the representatives of the European Commission and of the Innovation & Networks Executive Agency (INEA);
- a representative of the Regulatory Bodies for the railway sector in the countries concerned.

And on invitation:

- the European coordinators for TEN-T;
- the representative(s) of the National Safety Authorities of the countries concerned;
- the representative(s) of the European Union Agency for Railways (EUAR/ERA);
- the Speakers of the Advisory Groups.

The Executive board is chaired by the Belgian Ministry of Transport. The chair is responsible for the secretariat, which provides the appropriate administrative support to enable the Board to carry out its work. It ensures that the tasks of the Board are properly coordinated and organises all other associated aspects of the work.

The activities of the Executive board are described in Chapter 4 - Results in 2019.



2.1. The Executive board

FULL REPRESENTATIVES



Valérie Verzele
Director-General
Federal Public
Service Mobility
and Transport of
Belgium



Jeannot Poeker
Principal Inspector
Ministry of Mobility
and Public works,
Grand Duchy of
Luxembourg



Pierre-André Meyrat
Deputy Director
Federal Office of
Transport of
Switzerland



Robin Groth
Director of Rail
Strategy
Department
for Transport
of the United
Kingdom

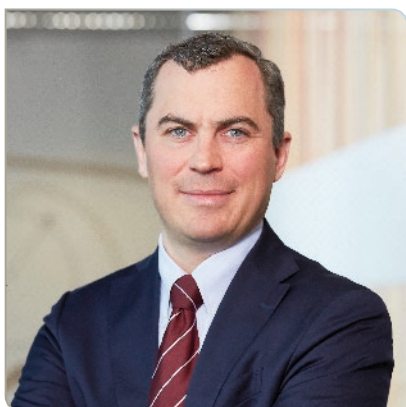


Rob Morsink
Program Manager
Rail Freight,
Ministry of
Infrastructure and
Water management
of The Netherlands



Joseph Lunet
Head of unit
National railway
network unit,
Ministry of
Ecological and
Inclusive Transition
of France

STAND-IN REPRESENTATIVES



Pierre Bodiaux
Replacing Peter
Geens from
September 2019
on Federal Public
Service Mobility
and Transport
of Belgium



André Bissen
Ministry of Mobility
and Public works,
Grand Duchy of
Luxembourg



Matthias Wagner
Federal Office of
Transport of
Switzerland



Bethan Stokes
Department
for Transport
of the United
Kingdom



Hinne Groot
Ministry of
Infrastructure and
Water management
of The Netherlands



Antoine Haouchine
Ministry of
Ecological and
Inclusive Transition
of France

2.2. The Management board

Mission and vision

The mission of the Management board is to offer a service to our customers which answers their needs and the need of the market. By doing this, we intend to increase the market share of rail freight by promoting measures to improve its efficiency and more specifically:

- to allocate capacity on behalf of its members and partners;
- to improve interoperability, inter alia by the deployment of ERTMS on the lines of the former Corridor C and according to the EDP published by the European Commission;
- to improve quality of service on the Corridor;
- to coordinate and monitor applications for financial support relating to the Corridor;
- to coordinate the corridor approach and action plan with the other RFCs;
- to check and evaluate the results obtained, with a view to implement further developments to progressively improve the quality offered.

Its vision is to make rail freight transport progressively more reliable, more accessible, faster and safer.

Organisation

The EEIG

The Management board takes the form of a European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), named Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean (in short RFC North Sea – Med). Its head office is located in Luxembourg and the office of its one-stop-shop in Brussels. It is composed of the infrastructure managers and allocation bodies of the Corridor, which either have the status of member or partner.



Members

The Netherlands:
ProRail

The logo for ProRail, featuring the word "ProRail" in a bold, red, sans-serif font.

Belgium:
Infrabel

The logo for INFRABEL, featuring the word "INFRABEL" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

France:
SNCF Réseau



Luxembourg:
CFL



United Kingdom:
Network Rail



France / United Kingdom:
Eurotunnel/Getlink



Partners

Luxembourg:
ACF



Switzerland:
Trasse Schweiz, SBB Infra



2.2. The Management board

The Assembly



Michaël Dierickx
President of the Assembly

Decisions on the strategy of the Corridor, its objectives, actions and any administrative and financial issues of importance are taken by the Assembly, with mutual consent.

The Assembly is chaired by Michaël Dierickx.

The Vice-President of the Assembly is Daniel Thull. At the start of 2020, he handed over the Vice-Presidency to Britta Schreiner.

The representative or stand-in representative of each member and partner, the Managing Director of the EEIG, the ERTMS technical advisor and the permanent team attend the Assemblies. The Assembly meets on average six times per year.

ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES



Pier Eringa
President Director
ProRail



Luc Lallemand
CEO,
Infrabel



Patrick Jeantet
President,
SNCF Réseau



Marc Wengler
General Director,
CFL



Marc Oestreicher
Director,
ACF



Jacques Boschung
Replacing Philippe Gaudron
Head of SBB Infrastructure



Jacques Gounon
Chairman and Chief
Executive Officer Eurotunnel



Thomas Isenmann
Managing Director,
Trasse Schweiz



Andrew Haines
CEO,
Network Rail

2.2. The Management board

STAND-IN REPRESENTATIVES



Guus de Mol
Head International
Logistic Affairs ProRail



Claire Hamoniau
Corridor Manager
SNCF Réseau



Michel Geubelle
Manager Corridor
Management, Infrabel



Daniel Thull
Head of external affairs,
Infrastructure management
department, CFL



Claude Lambert
Head of Path Division,
ACF



Rudi Achermann
Program Manager
SBB Infrastructure



Daniel Haltner
Head of Path
Capacity,
Trasse Schweiz



David Marteau
Head of
European affairs
Eurotunnel

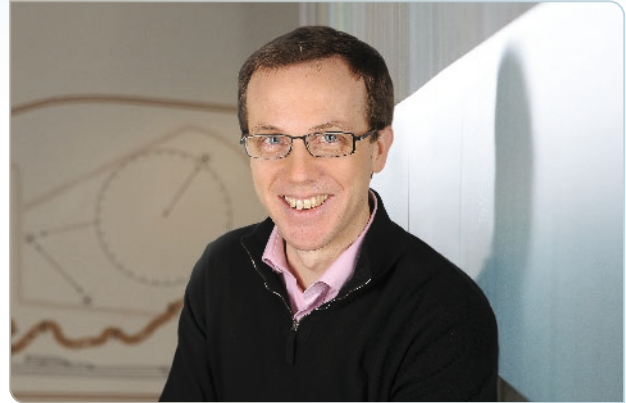


Matthew Dickerson
Regional Freight
Manager
(Southern)

The permanent team



Guillaume Confais-Morieux
Managing Director
(Till September 2019)



Yann Le Floc'h
Managing Director
(From October 2019 on)

The Management board has a permanent team which is responsible for the day-to-day business and the chairing of working groups. It consists of four people, all coming from the members of the EEIG. This streamlined structure allows the EEIG to react with promptness, flexibility and efficiency.

Yann Le Floc'h took over from Guillaume Confais-Morieux as Managing Director on 1st of October 2019.

The Permanent team, Management board and Executive board members want to thank Guillaume for his dedication and fruitful work during the years of his Directorship.



Thomas Vanbeveren
One-stop shop leader
Quality & Capacity Manager



Matthieu Maeselle
Communication & Finance
Manager advisory groups



Mohamed Salimène
Operations &
Investments manager
ERTMS coordinator



Marie-Anne Menguy
Operations & Investments
manager ERTMS coordinator
(from June 2019 on)

2.2. The Management board

Working groups and Committees

RFC North Sea - Med has implemented working groups and committees, which are composed of experts from the members and partners of the EEIG, as well as for some working groups, representatives from railway undertakings.

Working Groups and committees		
C-OSS WG leader Thomas Vanbeveren <i>RFC NSM</i>	Temporary Capacity Restrictions leader Thomas Vanbeveren <i>RFC NSM</i> Mohamed Salimène** <i>RFC NSM</i>	Train Performance Management WG leader Thomas Vanbeveren <i>RFC NSM</i>
Traffic Management WG leader Mohamed Salimène* <i>RFC NSM</i>	Corridor Information Document WG leader Matthieu Maeselle <i>RFC NSM</i>	Legal WG leader Guillaume Confais <i>RFC NSM</i> Yann Le Floc'h <i>RFC NSM</i> Daniel Thull <i>CFL</i>
Communication WG leader Matthieu Maeselle <i>RFC NSM</i>	GIS WG leader Matthieu Maeselle <i>RFC NSM</i>	Transport market study Committee leader Mohamed Salimène** <i>RFC NSM</i>
ERTMS Committee leader Marie-Anne Menguy <i>RFC NSM</i> Mohamed Salimène** <i>RFC NSM</i>		

* Temporarily not active

** Permanent team change

The activities of the Management board, including the permanent team and the working groups and committees are described in Chapter 4 - Results in 2019.

2.3. The Advisory Groups

The Railway undertaking Advisory Group (RAG) and the Terminal Advisory Group (TAG) were created in 2012 in order to comply with the Regulation (EU) 913/2010. These groups can issue an opinion on any proposal made by the Management board. They may also issue own-initiative opinions, which are to be taken into account by the Management board.

The Railway undertaking Advisory Group (RAG)

The RAG is composed of all railway undertakings interested in the use of the corridor. In addition, the following are also invited to take part in the activities of the RAG:

- four railway sector organisations: CER (Community of European Railways and Infrastructure Companies), ERFA (European Rail Freight Association), RFG (Rail Freight Group) and KNV (Royal Dutch transport federation);
- applicants who are active on the Corridor, but who are not railway undertakings.

The RAG is chaired by Lieven Goethals (Lineas).

Vice-Chairman of the RAG is Eric Lambert (CFL Multimodal).



Eric Lambert



Lieven Goethals

“Rail freight business is always challenging: we are moving goods a fully competitive market; to keep a freight train rolling on track we are depending on more people than only our (train) driver... When social climate is impacting this chain of human resources in our sector, we are confronted with the even bigger challenge to maintain the trust of our customers. 2019 was sadly not our best year in that matter, with our growth coming to a stop. Let us together work on Performance to turn the tide!”

Lieven Goethals, Chairman of the RAG

2.3. The Advisory Groups

Two RAG meetings were organized in 2019, which were each preceded by a pre-RAG meeting between railway undertakings:

- On the 20th and 21st of February in Brussels (Belgium). On the 20th of February, the RAG attendants visited on invitation of the RU's participating to the Noah's Train initiative, the Noah train event in Brussels. The meeting on 21st of February focused on news of the Corridor, the update of the Corridor Action plan and the performance report 2018. Also, the User Satisfaction Survey results of 2018 has been presented to the RAG members.



- On the 18th of September in Paris (France). This meeting focused on the update of the Corridor Action plan, a state of play concerning the International Contingency Management plans, the update of the Performance report of the 1st semester of 2019 and the update of the loading gauge in France regarding the study that was ordered by the RUs.



Outlook 2020: Two RAG meetings are scheduled in 2020: on 26th of February in Brussels, and in September on a to be defined place and date.

The Terminal Advisory Group (TAG)

All the managers and owners of terminals - such as combined transport terminals, river ports, multimodal platforms, maritime ports or infrastructure managers' marshalling yards - which belong to the Corridor, are invited to the TAG meetings. The Terminal Advisory Group members agreed on the nomination of a TAG Chair: Paul Kronenberger as Chair and Frédéric Buyse as Vice-Chair. As speakers of the TAG community, they represent and advocate the interests of the whole TAG community.

The tasks of the Chair of the TAG are the following:

- Chair the yearly TAG meeting organised by RFC North Sea - Med in order to coordinate the messages and expectations from the TAG members to the Rail Freight Corridor Management board & permanent team;
- Participate in the common TAG meeting organised by UIRR as a representative of the TAG community of RFC North Sea - Med;
- To participate, where possible in meetings and events organised by the European Commission (2 to 3 a year, such as SERAC, Rail Freight Day, TEN-T Days, ...) as speaker of the TAG community of RFC North Sea - Med.



Paul Kronenberger
Head of Freight
CFL-MultiModal
Chair of the TAG
community



Frédéric Buyse
Head of Freight
Terminals
Vice-Chair of the
TAG community

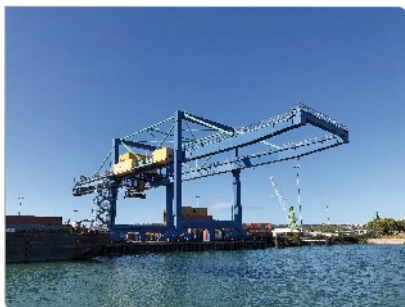
"The battle against the virus involves all our forces and logistical know-how, using all means to overwin this crisis. In this context, rail is the most stable system. Rail Freight Corridors are the essential link between Infrastructure Managers, Railway Undertakings and of course Terminals where rail freight trains have their origin and destination."

Paul Kronenberger

2.3. The Advisory Groups

A TAG meeting took place on the 8th of October 2019 in Lyon (France). In this meeting, the focus was put on the expectations of the terminals towards the Corridor with a discussion and input on the specific topic 'How to develop intermodality with Rail'. Also, the upcoming implementation of the Service facility implementing act by the European Commission was discussed during the meeting. Moreover, a pilot project on punctuality improvement has been agreed has been agreed: Lyon Terminal and Bettembourg will be involved in the pilot.

21 persons in total participated in the meeting, on the one hand representing the ports of Lyon, Marseille and Zeebrugge. UIRR as interest group took also part in the meeting. On the other hand the terminals of Lineas, CFL Multimodal and Lyon Terminal, hosting the meeting, took part, along with some Management board and Executive board members.



Outlook 2020: The next TAG meeting will be a joint TAG with RFC Rhine-Alpine and will take place in Ghent in November 2020.



3. Cooperation with stakeholders



The European Commission

The European Commission plays a major role in the Corridor. Sharing the common objective of improving the conditions for international rail freight, it acts as a facilitator for communication and coordination. It contributes also to the development of the Corridor through its financial support (see chapter 7. Finance).

- The European Commission organises the **Single European Railway Area Committee (SERAC) working group on Rail Freight Corridors** which aims at facilitating dialogue with the other ministries, infrastructure managers and regulatory bodies involved in the rail freight corridors.

The Permanent Team of the Corridor participated to the two meetings which took place in 2019. The following topics were addressed:

- **Meeting of the 3th and 4th of July 2019:**

- Capacity: quality & performance monitoring;
- Issues logbook and language train drivers;
- Evaluation of Regulation (EU) 913/2010;
- Rail Freight Locations portal;
- ERTMS;
- International Contingency Management.

- **Meeting of the 22th of October 2019:**

- National-level measures and instruments in support of (international) rail freight transport;
- Capacity for international rail freight – addressing key challenges;
- Improving the quality of multimodal rail freight by exchanging operational information;
- Evaluation of Regulation 913/2010.

- Also a the **3rd Meeting on International Contingency Management & Issues Logbook** (Brussels, 17 June 2019) was organised by DG Move. The launch of PSA call for priority topics Issues logbook was also discussed there.

The Rail Freight Corridors Network

The RFC Network intensified its common work in 2019 in organizing 3 RFC Network meetings and 2 telco's, and participating in 2 RNE/RFC High Level Group Meetings (preparation of the RNE General Assemblies), and to the Sector Statement Group meetings (hosted by CER, and composed of the sector rapporteurs and RFC managers).

This intensified cooperation intends to harmonize its methods and documentation, with the goal to facilitate the allocation of capacity for trains running on more than a single corridor.

The Managing Director and a representative of the Management board participated in all meetings of the RFC Network, mainly to discuss harmonisation between RFCs, common tools and studies.

This RFC Network also held a workshop on the evaluation of the Regulation 913/2010.



3. Cooperation with stakeholders

The Core Network Corridor

Coordination between the core network and rail freight corridors is required by Regulation (EU) 1315/2013.

In 2019, RFC North Sea - Med participated in the CNC forum on 17th of June and 19th of November. We presented the strategy from RFC North Sea - Med that was shared with the CNC.

Also, the CNC representative took part to the Executive Board meetings in 2019.

The Regulatory bodies

As required by Regulation (EU) 913/2010, the Regulatory bodies covering the networks of the Corridor coordinate in order to ensure non-discriminatory access to the Corridor for international rail services. They are also the appeal body under Art 56 (1) of Directive 2012/34/EU. In general, the Belgian Regulatory body represents all regulatory bodies at the Executive board meetings of the Corridor, except the ExBo meeting in Lyon (France) of September, where the French Regulatory body took part in the meeting. On top of that, the Permanent Team of the Corridor met once with the Regulatory bodies to provide insight into the working of the Corridor in the field of capacity management. The Regulatory bodies were also represented in the Advisory Group meetings.

Outlook 2020: RFC North Sea - Med stays in touch with the Regulatory bodies and continues its close cooperation with them.



RailNetEurope

RailNetEurope (RNE) is an association consisting of 35 rail infrastructure managers and allocation bodies in Europe to enable fast and easy access to European rail, as well as to increase the quality and efficiency of international rail traffic. RFC North Sea – Med, which is an associated member of RNE since May 2015, uses RNE services and guidelines as well as the RNE IT tools Path Coordination System (PCS), Train Information System (TIS) and the Corridor Information Platform (CIP).

The Management board or members of the Permanent Team also participated in the following RNE meetings, working groups and boards in 2019:

- RNE's General Assembly (with possibility to express its views, but with no voting rights);
- RNE / RFC High level group (which proposes and follows-up projects to be coordinated by RNE);
- Traffic management;
- Capacity working group:
 - Temporary Capacity Restrictions (TCR) coordination;
 - PCS Next generation;
 - Train performance management and Common KPI's;
 - International Contingency Management Planning (ICM);
 - Train Information System (TIS);
- Customer Information Document (CID) & Network Statement (NS) working group;
- User satisfaction survey working group;
- Customer Information Platform (CIP) Change Control Board.



4. Results in 2019

Actions of the Executive board

Apart from the activities related to the implementation of the Regulation 913/2010, the Executive board (ExBo) pursued in 2019 the implementation of the strategic objectives identified during the strategic meeting held in December 2018 and adopted in March 2019. Those strategic objectives outline the ambitions of the ExBo for the Corridor. They define goals and means by which the ExBo can move forward with them. They regroup objectives such as PaP quality, TCRs' coordination or long trains.

Further, the Executive board continued to monitor the orientations defined after the elaboration of the international contingency management handbook by the infrastructure managers, following the disruption of freight traffic at Rastatt between August and October 2017.

Regular topics addressed

In line with its strategic objectives, the Executive board focused on the improvement of the parameters of the Corridor, in order to make the RFC North Sea- Med and the RFC Rhine-Alpine cross compatible with each other, achieving the redundancy set by the Leipzig Declaration.

The ambition to make both RFC's cross compatible led the Executive board to discuss the general performance of the Corridor, from a quality and a quantity point of view. This discussion also aimed on focusing on how the Corridor can contribute to make freight traffic more competitive.

The loading gauge, long trains, temporary capacity restrictions and the ICM were therefore important topics in the 2019 Executive board's meetings. The Executive board's discussions helped to raise the awareness at EU and national level and to make progress on these issues.

Other topics were regularly addressed by the Executive board, such as the ERTMS deployment, the decommissioning of class-B systems, the evaluation of the Regulation 913/2010, the Brexit and the cooperation between RFC and CNC.

A joint RFC Rhine-Alpine and North Sea-Med meeting was held on 18 March 2019 in Brussels. This joint meeting reviewed the progress made since the adoption of the Leipzig Declaration.



European Cooperation

Following the decision set by the Leipzig Declaration to foster cooperation between the Rail Freight Corridors North Sea – Mediterranean and Rhine-Alpine, a “Joint Executive Board meeting” was held on the 18th of March 2019 in Brussels.

The objective was to assess the progress made since the adoption of the Leipzig Declaration on 23 May 2018. The need for resilience between both corridors was underlined. At the end of the joint meeting, it was therefore decided to foster the coordination between both Corridors by holding a joint meeting annually, as well as to set up a meeting twice a year between the chairs of ExBo, MaBo and the managing directors of both corridors.

At the invitation of the European Commission, the Executive board asked the railway undertakings to identify their priorities on infrastructure investments on the RFC. The listed priorities were presented during the CNC North Sea - Med forum (19 November 2019). Such priorities are subject to a follow-up during the year 2020. The Ministers of Transport and their representatives of the RFC North Sea - Med and RFC Rhine-Alpine participated in a conference on the performance of freight traffic on both corridors as a side event of the ITF Summit in Leipzig (22 May 2019). As the main outcome of this ministerial conference, the ExBo was invited to give a greater priority to the performance (punctuality) on the RFC.

The Ministries of the Executive board participated in the work of the Network of Executive Boards of RFCs (NExBo). In 2019, the NExBo focused i.a. on the withdrawal of capacity in case of deviation and decided to hold a workshop on the topic, as well as on TTR, in early 2020. It also focused on KPIs and launched a dedicated workshop.

4. Results in 2019

Railway undertakings cooperation

Continuing its policy to foster cooperation with the Corridor's customers set up since 2017, the Executive board invited the RAG speaker at each meeting to exchange respective views on most critical issues expressed by the RAG.

The input given by the railway undertakings' representatives during the strategic workshop of the Executive board held on 13 December 2018 was translated within the strategic objectives endorsed by the Executive board on 19 March 2019.

The Chair of the Executive board participated in the RAG meetings, held twice a year, to provide a concrete link between the Executive board and the RAG and ensure a follow-up of the problems raised during those meetings at the Executive board level.



Governance

The Executive board revised its working method in 2019, based on the conclusions of the strategic meeting held on 13 December 2018. For the year 2019, the Executive board decided to organise restricted sessions, between ministries only with the presence of the Managing Director and of the President of the Assembly, followed by a so-called “Plenary session”, regrouping both infrastructure managers and allocation bodies as well as the representatives of the European Commission and of the Regulatory Bodies, in addition to the ministries.

The Executive board made a first assessment of the strategic objectives during its last meeting of 2019. It was concluded that actions to be taken at the ministries level should be clearer. This assessment will be examined in more detail in 2020.



4. Results in 2019

Actions of the Management board



The Management board set up the ERTMS committee, composed of experts from infrastructure managers and railway undertakings, which has the mission to coordinate both the technical developments and the planning for implementing ETCS on the Corridor. In 2018, the committee worked on different operational and technical topics in an exchange approach with RUs. In 2017, the results of the working group have been shared with the RFC Network and the EUAR/ERA.

Deployment of ETCS on the Corridor

ERTMS deployment on the Corridor remains patchy depending on the investment choices of countries and infrastructure managers, despite the fact that the ERTMS concept and vision to enhance interoperability is not generally questioned by the rail sector.

Belgium:	all the principal lines of the former Corridor C were deployed in 2016 (level 1 version 2.3.0d and level 2). Some trains are already running on these lines with ERTMS equipment;
France:	ERTMS (level 1, version 2.3.0d) was deployed on the two pilot sections, Zoufftgen - Uckange and Longuyon - Mont-Saint-Martin, in 2017. On the Longuyon - Saint Louis section, SNCF Réseau started the civil works;
Luxembourg:	all routes are equipped and certified since 2017 (level 1 version 2.3.0d);
Netherlands:	in the Netherlands, the Rosendaal border point will be equipped in 2026. ERTMS implementation between Kijfhoek and Roosendaal border is planned between 2026 and 2028;
Switzerland:	The entire Swiss network is equipped with ETCS L1LS which is designed for BL3 vehicles.

Capacity and Temporary Capacity Restrictions

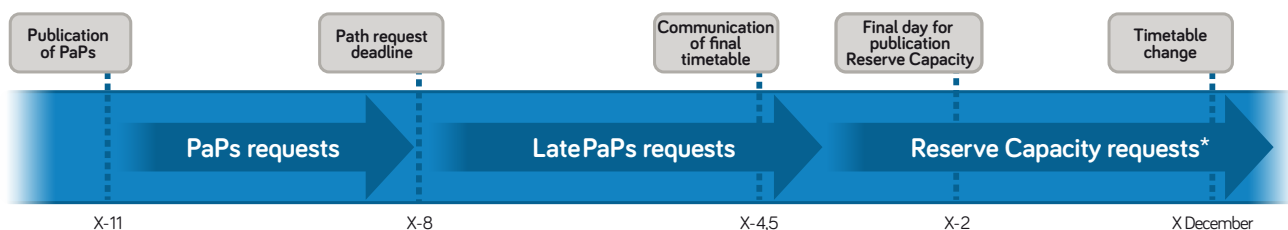
Capacity management

2019 started with the publication of the Pre-arranged Path catalogue for timetable 2020, and ended with the finalization of the catalogue for timetable 2021. Offer and requests saw again a positive evolution, leading to 4 out of 10 freight trains crossing RFC North Sea – Mediterranean borders to be requested through the C-OSS. This only strengthens the vision of the Corridor in being the centerpiece of international rail freight path coordination.

Another important milestone was reached with the allocation of the first Rolling Planning paths on the Timetable Redesign Pilot between Antwerpen and Rotterdam. ProRail and Infrabel, together with the clients running on these lines, opted for the C-OSS as the single source for Rolling planning capacity, leading the Rail Freight Corridor to a next phase, which must see a full implementation of TTR for the entire European network for timetable 2025.

Outlook 2020: the PaP catalogue for the 2021 timetable was published on the 14th of January 2020.

CAPACITY ALLOCATION CALENDAR IN 2019



* continues in following year up to 30 days before train run

4. Results in 2019

Temporary Capacity Restrictions

During the course of the year, Infrastructure Managers along the Corridor faced the problem that the magnitude and volume of TCRs impacting their networks became difficult to manage with the existing set of procedures. The Corridor helped establishing a new long-term coordination process, based on the needs of the clients and the IMs, and the tools at hand. For the first time, such an extensive programme for the coming years could be established, with the Corridor in a central role as facilitator and guardian of the process.

Also, the way the list of TCRs was provided in the past has been updated, offering a Corridor overview of the most impacting TCRs, together with a detailed overview of all TCRs scheduled. This overview is published and updated on the Corridor website each semester.

Outlook 2020 : RFC North Sea - Med will implement the new TCR coordination process agreed between the Infrastructure Managers in 2019.

Train performance and traffic management

Train performance management

The train performance management project has as goal to monitor punctuality of international freight trains running on the Corridor, and initiate actions to improve punctuality where necessary. The working group consisting of performance managers from the Infrastructure Managers have been analysing the Corridor punctuality reports on the basis of data from the Train Information System (TIS), which provides real-time train data. A list of poor performing trains has been drafted which are in continuous close observation. This way, the working group ensures that the problems are tackled at national level and structural issues can be identified where needed.

Traffic management

Working methods of the Management board on Traffic Management issues within the Corridor has been revised in 2019. The working group is now called upon to carry out actions on the ground according to the requests of the customers: Railway Undertakings, Applicants or Terminals on concrete measures such as:

- monitoring of “on time” train departures and arrivals at pilot sites (Lyon / Bettembourg; Antwerp or Marseille)

- communication at border points for international run-through trains. The objective of these pilots is for the Corridor to work in a spirit of continuous improvement to improve the performance of the Corridor and therefore work closely with the Train Performance Management working group.

International Contingency Management

RFC North Sea - Med published in December 2018 the document “Re-Routing scenarios” in order to deal with international disruptions on the Corridor.

The re-routing scenarios for RFC North Sea - Med are updated every year until the end of November by the corridor organization together with the IMs of RFC North Sea - MEd.

In September 2019, a corridor-wide test was conducted. A simulation of a large-scale accident impacting a section of the Corridor line was triggered. This test made it possible to measure the effectiveness of the coordination process between IMs at the operational level as well as on communication.

A new test is to be conducted in 2020 involving the RUs to complete the process.

Implementation plan

No update has been done of the implementation plan in 2019. An update is expected in 2020.

Communication

The Management board strives towards better communication and to work in full transparency with its stakeholders, and mainly its customers.

The Corridor Information Document, the geographical information system, the website, RFC North Sea – Med brochure and press releases are the main communication tools of the Corridor. In 2019, the Management board also participated in a number of events (see chapter 6. Events).



4. Results in 2019





4. Results in 2019

Corridor Information Document

All necessary information to use the Corridor is provided in the Corridor Information Document (CID) which is published at www.rfc-northsea-med.eu. This document gives corridor-scale information such as infrastructure and terminal characteristics, TCRs, access conditions, capacity and traffic management procedures as well as the implementation plan of the Corridor. In 2019, all corridors worked together on the further harmonisation of the Books 1 to 4. Also, the digitalisation project of the CID was kicked off in 2019, and will be implemented in 2020. Finally, for the second time, in 2019, RFC's Rhine-Alpine, North Sea - Med, Atlantic and North Sea - Baltic, published a single CID Book 1.

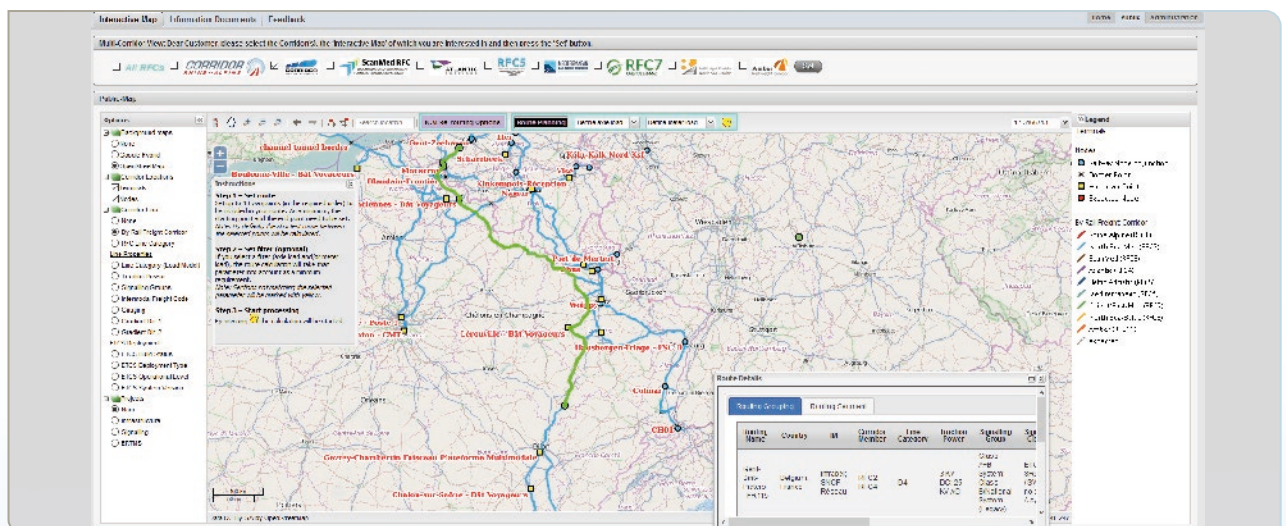
Outlook 2020 : The CID for timetable 2021 was published on the website on the 23th of January 2020. In 2020, the RFC Network will give its support for the digitalisation of CID.

Geographical information system (GIS)



Nicolas Gatez,
GIS Implementation
manager

In 2019, the Management board continued to work with 10 other RFCs in order to implement a common GIS called CIP (Customer Information Platform), as 2 new RFC (Orient-East Med and Amber) joined the CIP. RailNetEurope is in charge of the Project management and organised workshops with all RFCs. Nicolas Gatez of Infrabel is improving the quality of the system as implementation manager for RFC North Sea-Med. This GIS is now available on RFC North Sea - Med's website. It contains the main technical characteristics of the lines of the Corridor. In 2019, new functionalities were introduced, as route planning functionality, the ICM-re-routing functionality and more general improvements were made in the system. Further improvements, developments and integration with other RNE tools are foreseen in 2020, mainly linked to the Big Data project steered by RNE.





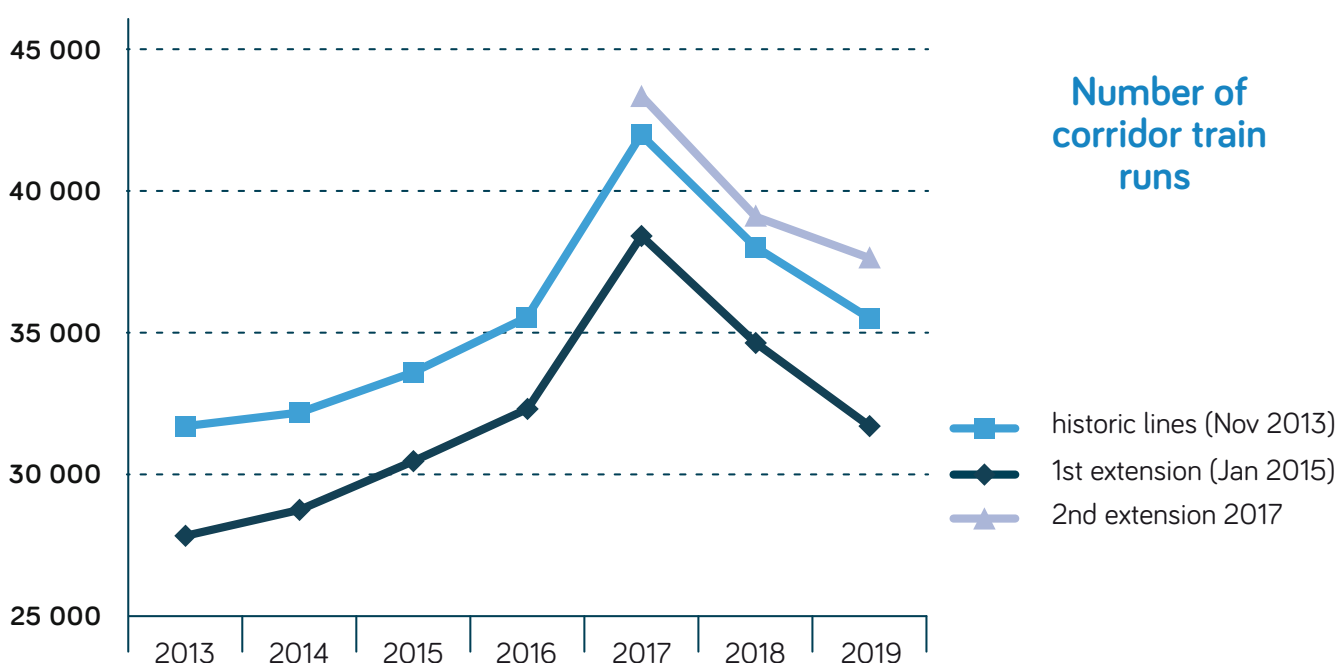
5. Performance of the Corridor

Operations

Total Corridor Traffic

In the figures presented, all international freight trains that pass a border on the Corridor are taken into account, if they at least travel 70 km on Corridor lines.

The evolution of the total amount of Corridor traffic is influenced heavily by the economic growth of the Corridor region.



The strong volume growth in 2017 resulting from Rastatt and the 2nd extension of the Corridor were erased in 2018 and 2019.

In 2019 we have seen a further decrease of traffic, partly due to cyclical causes that are weighing on the dynamism of industrial production.

Evolution compared to 2013 (start RFC NSM)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
historic lines (Nov 2013)	27835	+3%	+9%	+16%	+38%	+24%	+14%
1st extension (Jan 2015)	31.711	+2%	+6%	+12%	+32%	+20%	+12%
2nd extension (2017)					43.316	-10%	-13%

Traffic Volume (Per Corridor Border)

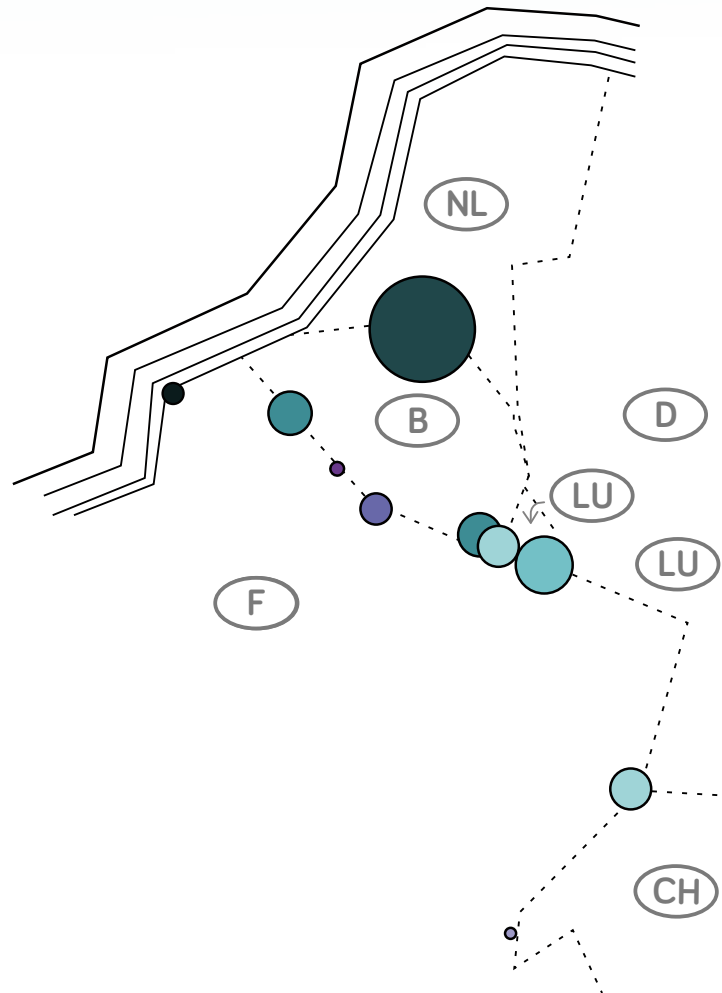
The evolution of traffic per Corridor border is shown to give an indication of the geographical spread of the traffic on the Corridor. This is especially important given the fact that there are many different traffic flows with very different O/Ds using the Corridor lines.

PCS border location names		Border points traffic (Nb of train)	Share
ProRail	Infrabel		
Roosendaal Grens	Essen Grens	9724	24%
Infrabel	ACF CFL		
Aubange frontiere LU	Rodange frontiere BAUB	4653	11%
Infrabel	SNCF Réseau		
Mouscron frontière	Tourcoing frontière	4636	11%
Aubange frontière FR	Mont St Martin fr FR BE	3731	9%
Erquelines frontière	Jeumont frontière FR BE	2653	6%
Blandain frontière	Baisieux fr FR BE	1149	3%
ACF CFL	SNCF Réseau		
Bettembourg fr	Zoufftgen (IE) fr FR LU	5198	13%
SNCF Réseau	CFF Infra		
Bale st Jean Point de contact	Basel st Johan	6866	17%
Pougny chancy fr FR SU	La Plaine fr	341	1%
Eurotunnel	SNCF Réseau		
Calais Frethun faisceau tunnel - Doolands Moor	Calais Frethun faisceau tunnel - Doolands Moor	2057	5%

5. Performance of the Corridor

The Belgian - Dutch border point remains the most active for the Corridor. However, the Benelux / Switzerland axis is a strong capacity axis for the development of the Antwerp port area and explains the good share of the Basel / St Louis border point.

The shares on Baisieux/Blandain and Pougny Chancy / La Plaine appear small but they are new corridor borders that we are counting on and which do not yet have significant volumes in relation to the other points.



Punctuality

RFC North Sea – Med continues its efforts to reach the objective of 80% punctuality in the future. For 2019, the global corridor punctuality figure is the following:

Evolution of punctuality since 2013	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Average RFC both directions in %	78,44	81,16	78,59	77,30	77,80	78,19	80,16

Train punctuality is a strong performance management indicator for the Corridor. Pilot projects started in 2019 will continue in 2020 with the aim of improving results.

6. Events

RFC North Sea - Med presented its activities and ambitions to stakeholders at one events in 2019. Also, one bilateral meeting was organised with an important port interest group of France.

SITL fair in Paris, on 27th of March

RFC North Sea – Med presented its activities at SNCF Réseau's booth.



Bilateral meeting with MedLinkPort Association

The permanent team took the opportunity to meet MedLink Ports Association* representing the ports at the Mediterranean Sea and upstream on the Rhône-Saône, working on the development of the multimodal traffic on their axes.

Together with Mrs. Fabienne Margail in her function as Delegate General of the Medlink Ports Association, the permanent team met Minister Jean-Claude Gayssot, Former French Transport Minister, president of the Port de Sète and president of the MedLink Ports Association, at his office in Sète. Minister Gayssot expressed his full support to the modal shift from road to rail, during this very interesting meeting.



* <https://www.medlinkports.fr/>

7. Finance

The financial resources available for RFC North Sea-Med come from contributions from its members and partners and European subsidies received. Since its creation, RFC North Sea - Med has been granted five subsidies. In 2019, one subsidy contributed to its financing.

“Improvement and promotion of Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean” (Action n. 2014-EU-TM-0043-S)

RFC North Sea - Med closed successfully this financing action by delivering the final report at the end of 2019 and received from INEA the final payment in 2020.

“Long-term development, governance and support to the harmonisation process of Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean within the European rail freight network” (Action n. 2016-PSA-RFCo2)

- In May 2018, the Grant agreement between INEA and RFC North Sea - Med regarding the 'Program Support Action' (PSA) was signed. This PSA will safeguard the financing of the RFC North Sea - Med for the years 2019 and 2020.
- Following activities are financed under this PSA:
 - Capacity, traffic and performance management, studies for the deployment of interoperability;
 - Coordination of the further developments and communication with clients and stakeholders

Outlook 2020 : RFC North Sea - Med will continue to be financed for its activities under the PSA in 2020. Also, RFC North Sea-Med will continue to support financing applications submitted by its members and stakeholders. For the moment, RFC North Sea - Med does not have any visibility on financing beyond 2020.



Annex. Results of the 2019 user satisfaction survey

1. Survey design

- The survey is organised by RNE and supplier MarketMind.
- Common for all 8 participating RFCs.
- Field phase took place from 12 September to 11 October 2019

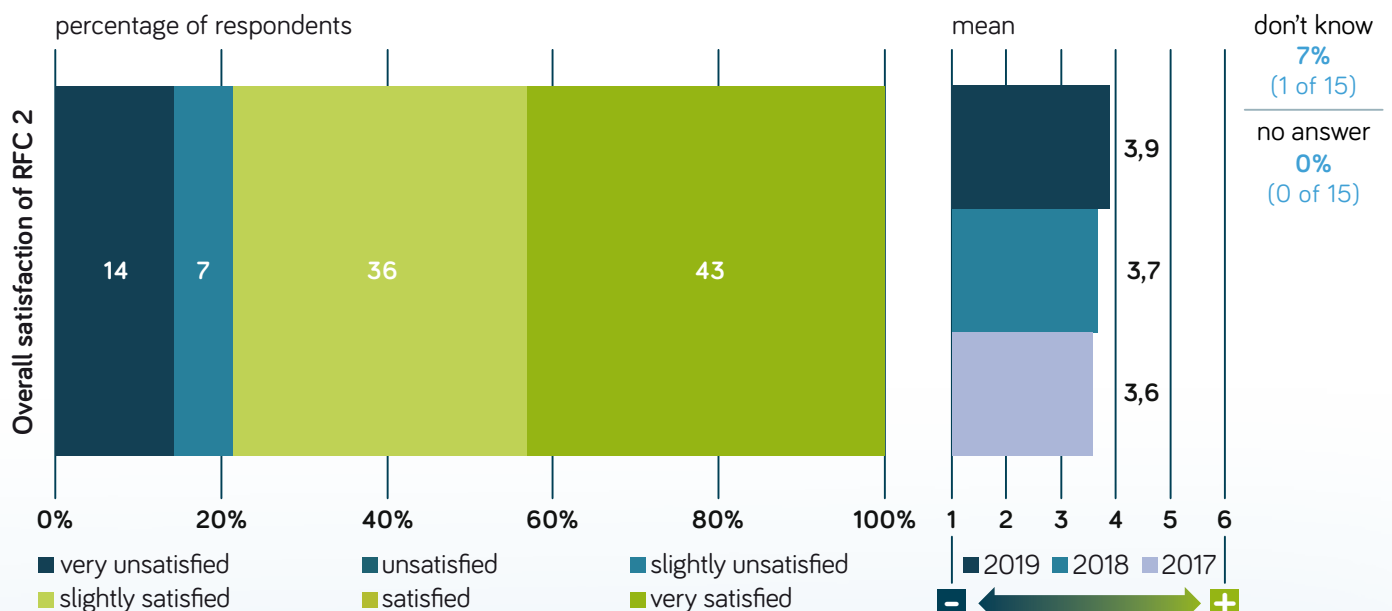
Respondants :

- 67 for all corridors.
- 14 for RFC NSM (out of 86 e-mails sent).
- The survey was sent to one person per RU/Non-RU applicant/Terminal. Questions could be answered by different persons.
- Almost all clients answered, but due to low number of responses hard to compare statistically.
- The questionnaire was carried out by 'Computer Aided Web Interviews' (CAWI).
- Marks are from: 1 (very unsatisfied) to 6 (very satisfied).

2. Overall satisfaction of the RFC North Sea - Mediterranean

The question:

"Overall, how satisfied are you in general as a user of the RFC(s)?", has the following results:



Annex . Results of the 2019 user satisfaction survey

3. Conclusion

- All detailed results are available on our website via following link:

https://www.rfc-northsea-med.eu/sites/rfc2.eu/files/telechargements/ RFC_survey_2019_report_RFC_NSM.pdf

All these elements are taken into account to feed the common Action Plan steered by the Corridor.

Outlook 2020 : RFC North Sea - Med will review, together with the other RFC's the way the survey is set up and organized.





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