

Easier, faster, safer



RFC NORTH SEA - MED 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



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Message from the Presidents and Managing Director



2017, year of continuous growth for Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean.

The year 2017 marked for Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean its biggest rise in terms of freight traffic. It also is the year of renewed close relationship with its customers with deeper involvement in the activities of the Corridor.

In terms of traffic, on the initial corridor lines of 2013, the number of trains rose by +38% compared to the start of the corridor, while 2017 saw the biggest yeargrowth of the corridor since it took full operation. In terms of offered capacity, the published capacity for the yearly timetable decreased with -16% compared to the year before. This is the consequence of the timetable 2017 corridor's strategic decision to focus on the stability for the offered capacity.

The total capacity demand on the Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean rose to 7,2 million/km. On most of the border points of the Corridor, like Mouscron-Tourcoing, Aubange-Mont-Saint-Martin-Rodange, Basel-Saint-Louis or Essen-Rosendaal, the volume and/or the share of the capacity allocated by the corridor is ever increasing.

The cooperation within the RFC Network has been improved, with more regular discussion leading to common recommendations on the ERTMS deployment action plan, contingency plans or PCS development.

In 2017, from a financial point of view, the European Commission continued to cofund the activities of the Corridor via CEF funding. The current funding will take an end at the end of 2018. Also in 2017, the European Commission granted us a new financing scheme for the years 2019 and 2020, renewing by this its commitment to finance the activities of the Corridor in the future years.

We also fulfilled the commitment to involve in a more intense way the stakeholders into the different working groups handling the Coordination of Works and ERTMS implementation, in order to improve its full working potential.

We wish to thank all who contributed to this rich year, and first of all the advisory groups, Railway Undertakings and Terminals as our customers, who actively participated in the Corridor discussions and working groups. The same gratitude goes to the European Commission, for its deep involvement and renewed engagement by financing the Corridor activities beyond 2018.

For 2018, with the development of the capacity offered in the timetable 2019 catalogue, we aim for a significant rise in the requested capacity. We will continue to accompany the growth of our customers, in promoting their strategic needs in terms of infrastructure performances and capacity quality.

We wish you a pleasant reading of this 2017 annual report, and hope that in 2018 we continue to work closely together towards the further ambitious development of the Corridor.

Valérie Verzele

President
Executive board

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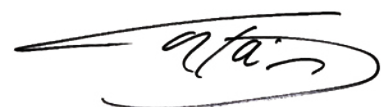
Ann Billiau

President of the Assembly
RFC North Sea – Med

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Guillaume Confais-Morieux

Managing Director
RFC North Sea - Med

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1. About the corridor

1.1. A major European rail freight route

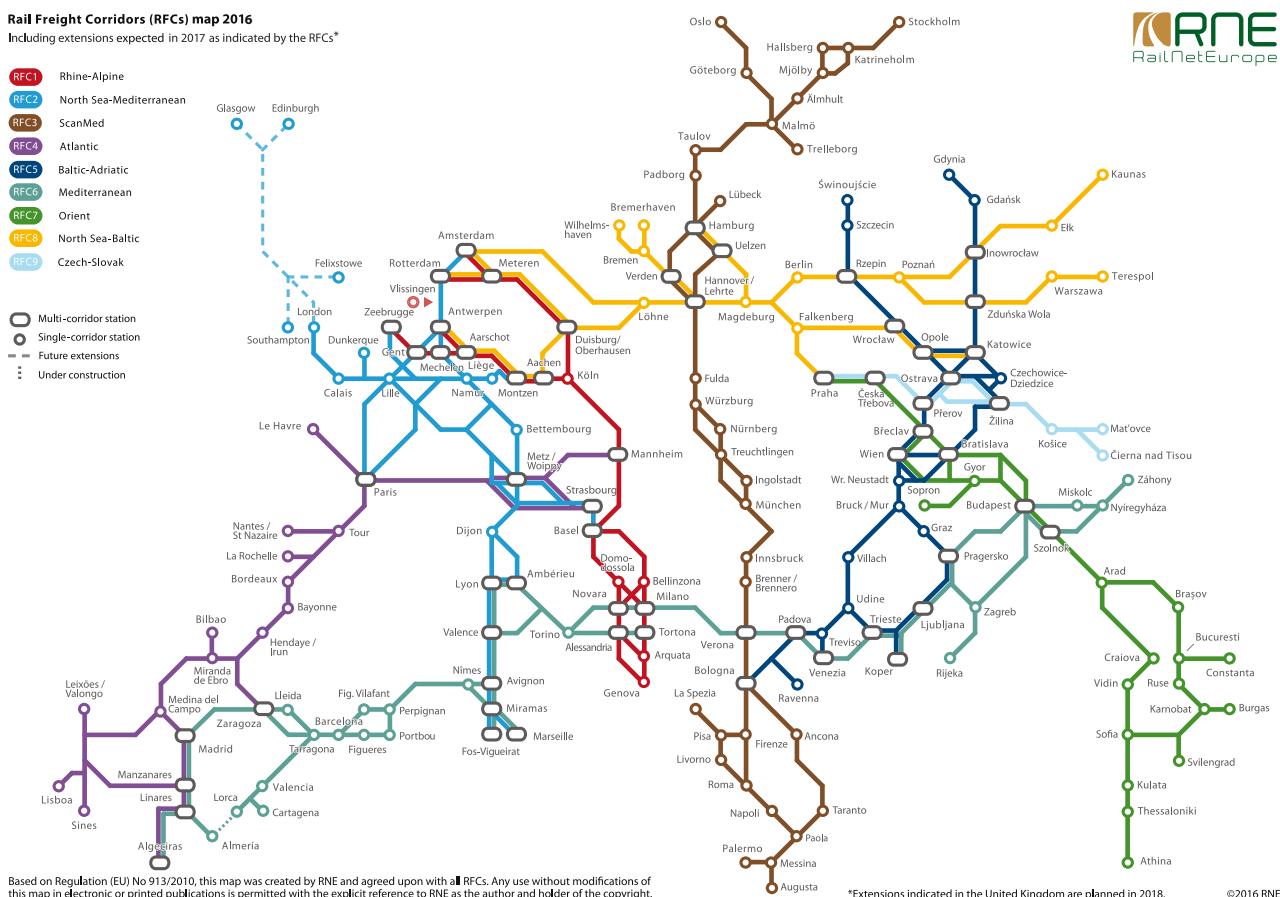
Rail Freight Corridor North Sea – Mediterranean (RFC North Sea – Med) is a freight-oriented route connecting the Netherlands, Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, France and Switzerland. Since January 2016, it links main European ports (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Zeebrugge, Dunkirk, and Marseille) to the industrial zones of Western Europe and to the gateways of Southern Europe, with 5500 kilometres of lines.

Changes are to be expected in the corridor's routing. The letter of intent on the extension of the corridor to Geneva was submitted in May 2017 to the Commission and the extension beyond London, foreseen by EU law, was prepared in December 2017.

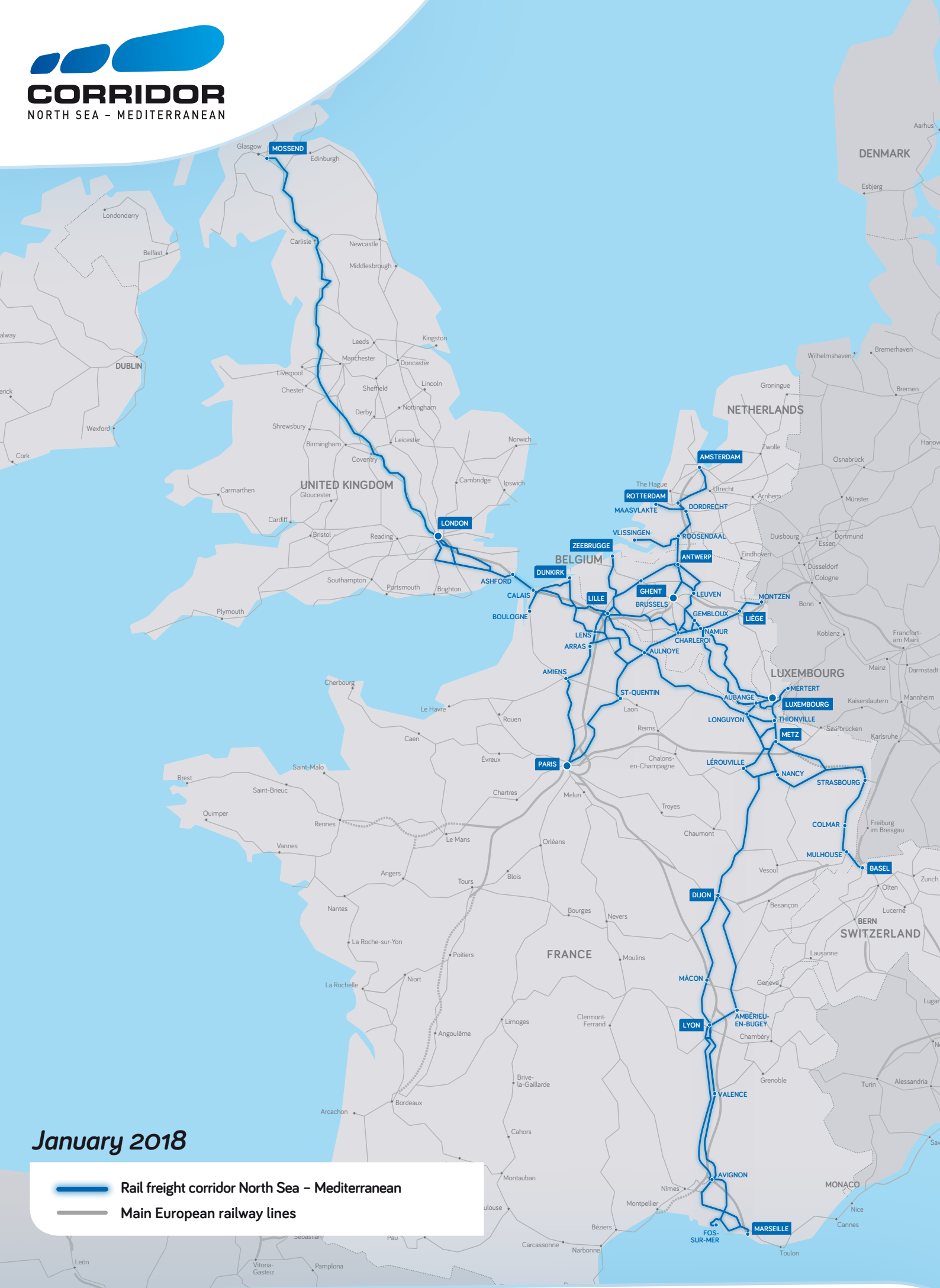
The corridor is also a gateway to the rest of Europe, being connected to the RFCs Rhine – Alpine, Atlantic, Mediterranean and North Sea – Baltic and building together with all corridors a European network of rail freight corridors.

Rail Freight Corridors (RFCs) map 2016



Including extensions expected in 2017 as indicated by the RFCs*



RFC North Sea – Med is one of the most promising rail corridors in Europe, with already more than 38 000 international trains per year.



January 2018

-  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 and by using the international booking system Path Coordination System (PCS).

This capacity takes the form of “off the shelf” paths, called pre-arranged paths, 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, because:

- 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 monthly 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 new EDP published by the European Commission. This system is designed to eventually replace national ones, which impose specific equipment on engines running on several networks.

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. This Regulation created a European rail network composed of nine initial international rail freight corridors. RFC North Sea – Med was one of the six corridors which had to be operational by 10 November 2013, the remaining three had to be operational by 10 November 2015.

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.

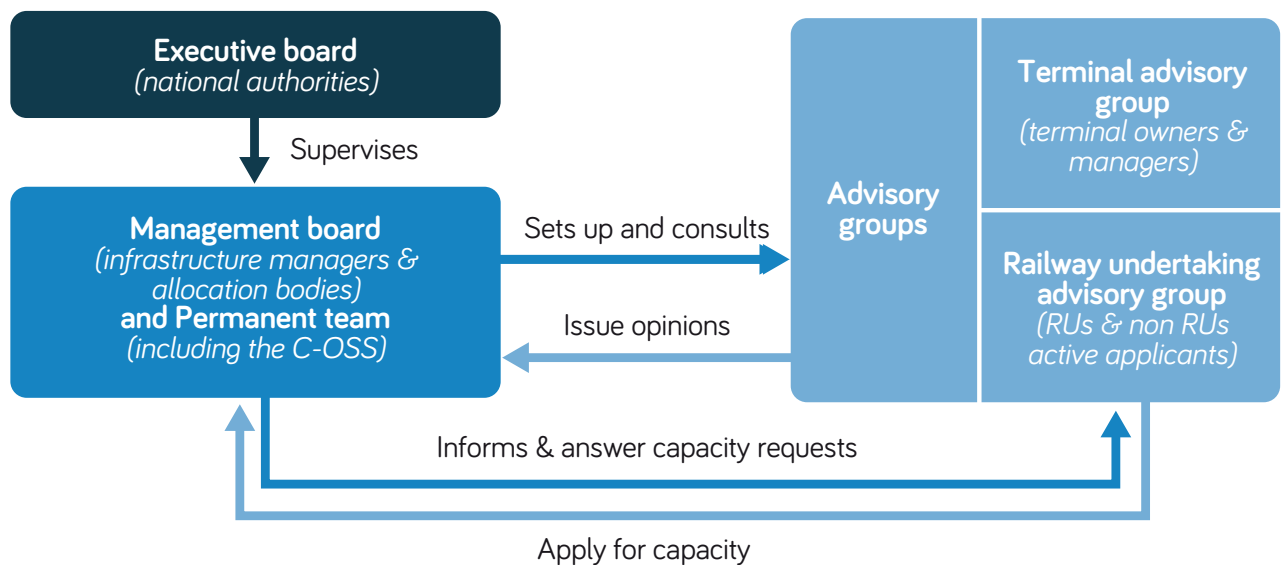
The second Regulation renamed the rail freight corridors and extended their field. Rail Freight Corridor n°2 became Rail Freight Corridor North Sea - Mediterranean and was gradually extended in three phases:

1. to Dunkirk, Calais, Liège (Montzen) and Paris, in January 2015 (at the date of the publication of the 2016 timetable catalogue);
2. to London, Zeebrugge, Amsterdam and Marseille in January 2016 (at the date of the publication of the 2017 timetable catalogue) ;
3. to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Southampton and Felixstowe in January 2018 (at the date of the publication of the 2019 timetable catalogue).



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.

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 the 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.

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 new 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;
- coordinate the work of the RFC North Sea - Med and 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.

¹ For 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.

2.1. The Executive board

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

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

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

- the representatives of the Management 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);
- the spokesperson 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.

FULL REPRESENTATIVES



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



Jeannot Poeker
Principal Inspector
Ministère du
Développement
Durable et des
Infrastructures,
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

2.1. The Executive board

STAND-IN REPRESENTATIVES



Antoine Haouchine
Ministry of
Ecological and
Inclusive Transition
of France



Bethan Stokes
Department
for Transport
of the United
Kingdom



Peter Geens
Federal Public
Service Mobility
and Transport
of Belgium



Rolf Zimmermann
Federal Office of
Transport of
Switzerland



André Bissen
Ministère du
Développement
Durable et des
Infrastructures,
Grand Duchy
of Luxembourg



Hinne Groot
Ministry of
Infrastructure and
Water management
of The Netherlands

2.2. The Management board

Mission and vision

The mission of the Management board is to offer a market 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 the new 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.



2.2. The Management board

Members

The Netherlands:
ProRail

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

Belgium:
Infrabel

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

France:
SNCF Réseau



Luxembourg:
CFL



United Kingdom:
NetworkRail



France / United Kingdom:
Eurotunnel



Partners

Luxembourg:
ACF



Switzerland:
Trasse Schweiz, SBB Infra





2.2. The Management board

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 Ann Billiau and the Vice-President of the Assembly is Daniel Thull. 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.



Ann Billiau
President of the Assembly

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



Philippe Gauderon
Head of SBB
Infrastructure



Jacques Gounon
Chairman and Chief
Executive Officer
Eurotunnel



Thomas Isenmann
Managing Director,
Trasse Schweiz



Mark Carne
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, Infrastruc-
ture 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



Steve Rhymes
Head of Freight
Network Management
Network Rail

The permanent team



Guillaume Confais-Morieux
Managing Director



Thomas Vanbeveren
One-stop shop leader
Quality & Capacity-
Manager



Mohamed Salimène
Operations &
Investments manager
ERTMS coordinator



Matthieu Maeselle
Communication &
Finance Manager
advisory groups

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.

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 Mohamed Salimène <i>RFC NSM</i>	Train Performance Management WG leader Thomas Vanbeveren <i>RFC NSM</i> Mohamed Salimène <i>RFC NSM</i>
Traffic Management WG leader Mohamed Salimène <i>RFC NSM</i>	Corridor Information Document WG leader Thomas Vanbeveren <i>RFC NSM</i>	Legal WG leader Guillaume Confais <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 Mohamed Salimène <i>RFC NSM</i>	

The activities of the Management board, including the permanent team and the working groups and committees are described in Chapter 4 - Results in 2017.

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 by the Management board which has consequences for them. 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. The following are also invited to take part in activities of the RAG:

- four railway sector organisations: CER (Community of European Railway 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 full list of RAG members is available in the Corridor Information Document, Book 5.

The RAG is chaired by Lieven Goethals (Lineas). If he is unavailable, Eric Lambert (CFL Cargo) replaces him.



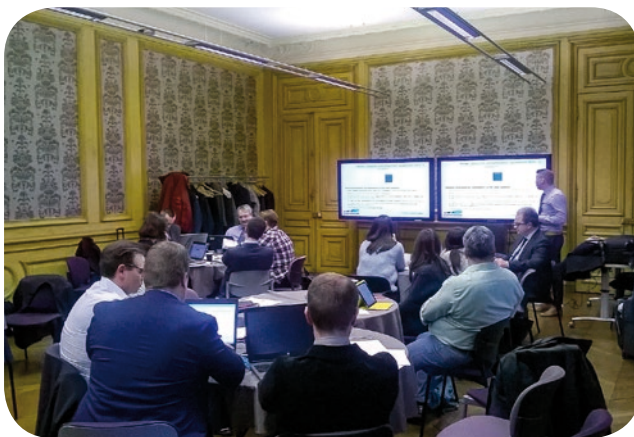
“Although we do very welcome the extra infrastructure investments for a better and safer network tomorrow, we absolutely cannot emphasize enough that in rail logistics for delivery of the goods tomorrow we have to run the freight train today! Together we can?”

Lieven Goethals, Chairman of the RAG

2.3. The Advisory Groups

Two RAG meetings were organized in 2017, which were each preceded by a pre-RAG meeting between railway undertakings:

- On 25th of January in Paris. This meeting focused on railway undertakings' expectations for the corridor Action plan and the results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey, as well as capacity allocation by SNCF Réseau for the 2018 timetable, PCS, the ERTMS deployment plan and the loading gauge in France. 25 people, representing CFL Cargo, Europorte, Lineas, Sibelit, SNCF Logistics, CER, ERFA, the Executive and Management boards participated in the meeting.



- On the 19th of September in Bettembourg (Luxemburg). This meeting focused on the update of the Corridor Action plan, the quality of the capacity for 2018 and presentation of the strategy in 2019, the ERTMS deployment in Luxemburg and the ERTMS Deployment Action Plan, and the update of the loading gauge in France and Switzerland.

Outlook 2018: Three RAG meetings are scheduled in 2018: on 31th of January in Basel, on the 30th of May in Brussels specifically focusing on the update of the action plan, and on the 24th of September in Paris.

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 are situated on the corridor, are invited to the TAG meetings. The full list of TAG members is available in the Corridor Information Document, Book 5.

A TAG meeting took place on the 30th of May 2017 in Marseille. In this meeting, the focus was put on the expectations of the terminals towards the corridor and the state of play of the sector priorities, as well as the performance of the corridor, the impact of capacity on terminals, information about the Corridor Information Documents and the information for terminals within the Train Information System (TIS).

The port authorities of Marseille organised the day before the TAG meeting a presentation moment to its stakeholders, where the Corridor had the opportunity to present itself.

15 persons participated in the meeting, representing the ports of Marseille and Zeebrugge, the terminals of CFL Multimodal, and Lineas, and Management board members.



Outlook 2018: *The next TAG meeting will take place on a to be defined date and place.*

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 two groups to facilitate dialogue and coordination between the rail freight corridors:

- The European Commission organises the **Single European Railway Area Committee (SERAC) working group**, which aims at facilitating dialogue with all ministries, infrastructure managers and regulatory bodies involved in the rail freight corridors. The following topics were addressed in the two meetings which took place in place in 2017 (11th (17/05) and 12th meeting (09/11):
 - the language requirements for train drivers.
 - the cooperation framework between core network corridors and rail freight corridors;
 - presentation of a ERTMS Deployment Action Plan paper steered by RFC North Sea – Med in the name of the RFC Network;
 - the evaluation process of Regulation (EU) 913/2010;
 - the results of the 2017 User satisfaction survey;
 - capacity offered and requested in 2017, presented by the speaker of the C-OSS community;
 - short distance interoperability.
- the **Corridor Group** under the chairmanship of Mr Karel Vinck. In this forum, representatives of the Management boards of rail freight corridors exchange experience and discuss issues regarding the implementation of ERTMS and other issues related to the corridors. The Corridor Group, which met twice in 2015, is integrated in SERAC since May 2015.

The other Rail Freight Corridors

The RFC Network intensified its common work in 2017, in organizing 4 RFC Network meetings, and participating in 2 RNE RFC High Level Group Meetings (preparation of the General Assemblies), one common TAG meeting organised by UIRR, one ECCO Meeting (Efficient Cross Corridor Organisation, which is a UIC group composed of RAG & RFC speakers), 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 four meetings of the RFC network in 2017, mainly to discuss harmonisation between RFCs, common tools and studies and the evaluation of the Regulation.

This group steered also a position paper concerning the ERTMS Deployment Action Plan, which was shared with our stakeholders, the Executive Board and the European Commission.

Intense discussion started also from end 2017 with the aim to develop a handbook for contingency planning in case of major disruption. These discussions took place following the Rastatt incident in Germany, and RFC North Sea –Med brought its full support to RFC Rhine Alpine to develop this document and a rerouting overview.

The Rastatt disruption underlined also the need for progress on the improvement of the loading gauge and other TEN-T parameters, e.g. longer trains, along the corridors and on the improvement of operational issues.

Also, the Executive Board participated in the activities of the Network of Executive Boards of Rail Freight Corridors (NExBo) and contributed to the elaboration of the recommendations of the NExBo on ETA and the use of KPIs. These recommendations were adopted by the NExBo in February 2018.

A Cross Corridor Strategy Workshop was jointly organized by all RFCs and took place in Frankfurt on 21st of February 2017 with participation of Infrastructure Managers, Railway Undertakings, terminal owners and end customers. The Workshop concluded on three lines of action to be implemented by the network of RFCs:

1. Privilege a business-driven over a political driven development
2. Harmonize the operational environment of international rail freight
3. Make international rail freight reliable and predictable.

The meeting was a great opportunity to conduct a dialogue and to identify the issues arising in the whole logistics chain.

3. Cooperation with stakeholders

The Core Network Corridor

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

- We participated in the CNC forum on 15th of June and 23th of October. We presented a strategy from RFC North Sea - Med that has to be shared with CNC.

The Regulatory bodies

As required by Regulation (EU) 913/2010, the Regulatory bodies covering the networks of the corridor coordinate in order to ensure nondiscriminatory access to the corridor for international rail services. They are also the appeal body under Art 56 (1) of Directive 2012/34/EU. The Belgian Regulatory body represents all regulatory bodies at the Executive board meetings of the corridor.

Cooperation between the RBs and the Corridor is assured via bi-annual meetings with the Managing Director and the Corridor One-Stop Shop (C-OSS). These meetings are used to exchange views on the processes to create the catalogues and the allocation of capacity on the corridor. One bi- annual meeting with the Independent Regulators' Group (IRG) and the 9 Rail Freight Corridors, was organized in Vienna on the 27th of January 2017. RFC North Sea - Med answered on the written questions formulated by the Regulatory Bodies formulated throughout 2017. RFC North Sea - Med also offered a Regulatory Body window within the Management Board of December 2017.

Regulatory bodies are also invited to join the advisory group meetings. It is usually the Regulatory Body of the country in which the meeting takes place who participates.

Outlook 2018: *RFC North Sea - Med stays in close touch with the Regulatory Bodies and will propose written consultations and meetings if necessity is felt by the Regulatory Bodies.*



3. Cooperation with stakeholders

RailNetEurope

RailNetEurope (RNE) is an association composed 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 PCS (Path Coordination System) TIS (Train Information System) and CIP (Corridor Information Platform).

The Management board or members of the Permanent Team also participated in the following RNE meetings, working groups and boards in 2017:

- 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)
- Capacity working group:
 - TCR (Temporary Capacity Restrictions) coordination
 - PCS Next generation
 - Train performance management and Common KPI's
 - Traffic management and its sub-group Corridor trains and priority rules
 - TCC Com (traffic control centre communication)
 - TIS (Train Information System)
- CID & network statement working group
- User satisfaction survey working group
- CIP (Customer Information Platform) Change Control Board.



4. Results in 2017

Capacity and coordination of works

Capacity management

Capacity Management remains one of the pillars of the work of the Corridor. The 2018 timetable catalogue of pre-arranged paths was published on the 9th of January 2017. The volume of pre-arranged paths published and ordered via the C-OSS is indicated via the corridor capacity KPIs (see chapter 5 – Performance of the corridor).

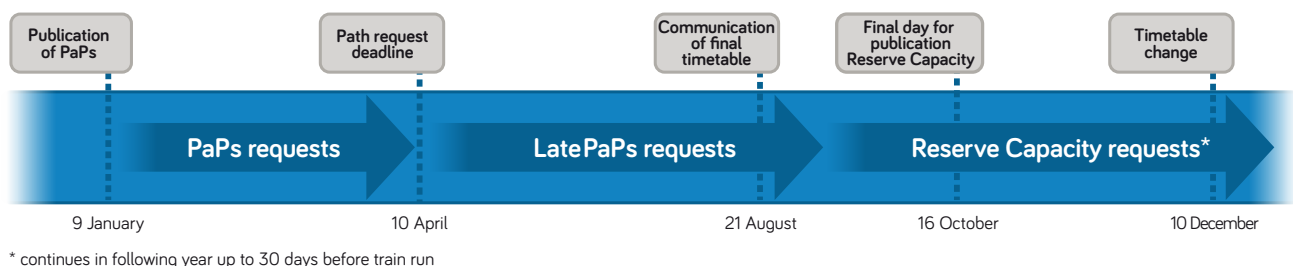
The main aim of the pre-arranged path catalogue is to offer guidance to all potential customers in ordering international freight paths. The catalogue is jointly set up by timetable specialists of all infrastructure managers and allocation bodies of the corridor under coordination of the C-OSS, to allow easy access to the market, and smooth border crossings and O/D solutions in operations.

For the set-up of this catalogue, the corridor invites all potential clients to discuss on their capacity wishes, to enable a catalogue construction as close as possible to market requirements. For the first time, this method was commonly applied by all nine Rail Freight Corridors, as instigated by the C-OSS Community.

The Executive Board pursued its efforts to actively support the elaboration of a capacity offer meeting the market needs. The Executive Board monitored the results of the requests in 2017, collecting information for further guidance for next timetables.

***Outlook 2018:** the PaP catalogue for the 2019 timetable was published on the 8th of January 2018.*

CAPACITY ALLOCATION CALENDAR IN 2017



Coordination of works

Infrastructure managers along the corridor coordinate the planning of works that affect capacity along the corridor, so that a railway undertaking wanting to run a train from country A to country B is no longer in a situation where infrastructure works are at the same time being carried out on the principal line in country A and on the diversionary line in country B. The outcome of this coordination is a list of coordinated works, published on the website for customers' needs. The infrastructure managers of the corridor coordinated the works for the 2018 till 2020 timetables in meetings held twice a year at least.

The list of works updated for the 2018 till 2020 timetables was published in December 2017.

Outlook 2018 : RFC North Sea - Med will accompany the infrastructure Managers and Railway undertakings for the implementation of Annex VII that came into force in December 2017.

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. For this, infrastructure managers, together with the support of RNE, have been working hard to set up an improved corridor punctuality report on the basis of data from the Train Information System (TIS), which provides real-time train data. On top of that, the working group developed, based on input of the RUs, a work plan for 2018, in order to progress towards the project goal.

4.. Results in 2017

Traffic management

Traffic management on the lines of the corridor consists in improving the situation both at the borders between two infrastructure managers and on the lines, in case of disturbance.

The Traffic Management working group, composed of experts of all infrastructure managers of the corridor, contributes to the improvement of traffic management on the corridor. It mainly aims at implementing TIS at all infrastructure managers of the corridor.

In 2017, the priority was to follow up the TIS data exchange implementation. To achieve this objective, IMs within the corridor committed to implement TAF TSI (cf. TAF/TAP TSI Master Plan). RFC North Sea - Med organizes 3 coordination meetings per year with IM's in order to follow up the progress of the project.

International contingency Management

The Rastatt disruption on the RFC Rhine-Alpine (12 August – 2 October 2017) demonstrated the importance of the resilience and the complementarity of RFCs Rhine-Alpine and North Sea-Mediterranean. This topic was considered with the view to learn from this incident to improve the functioning of RFC North Sea - Med.

Outlook 2018: A draft handbook on international contingency management will be approved by vote by RNE in May 2018.

Implementation plan

In 2017, the Management board updated the implementation plan.

The implementation plan contains an indicative investment plan which provides the complete indicative list of investments which are intended to be implemented within the next ten years and which are focussed on capacity management and interoperable systems deployment. This list enables infrastructure managers to exchange information on investments with neighbouring infrastructure managers, thus facilitating the coordination of these investments at corridor level. The update performed in 2017 resulted in a list of more than 60 investments for a total cost of more than 7 billion euros. These investments take into account the project list of the CNC North Sea – Mediterranean.



ERTMS deployment

The implementation of ETCS (European Train Control System) on the corridor routes is one of the fundamental goals which led to the creation of ERTMS Corridor C, now integrated into RFC North Sea - Med. A new EDP was also published by the European Commission. This system is designed to eventually replace national systems, imposing specific equipment on engines running on several networks.

CFL Infra and SNCF Réseau simultaneously put in service both sides of the border on 17th October 2016 on the Bettembourg - Thionville - Uckange section. Also, on the 3th March 2017 the border section of Aubange - Rodange - Mont-Saint Martin became operational with a complete commissioning.

The implementation of ETCS on these border points represents an important real step in the deployment of the European control and command system on the Rotterdam-Antwerp-Basel route, one of the main axes of the North Sea - Med corridor.

On this route, ERTMS is already in service on the main sections of the North Sea - Med corridor in Belgium and Luxembourg; deployment works are under way on the French side and the completion of the whole route is planned for 2022 (Longuyon – Basel).

Outlook 2018: *The Antwerp-Basel route on the RFC North Sea - Med will be fully equipped with ETCS by 2022.*

Actions of the Executive board

The former ERTMS Corridor C is the backbone of the RFC North Sea - Med. The Executive Board continued to coordinate the ERTMS deployment along the corridor. While the implementation is ongoing on several parts of the corridor, the first cross border section was equipped in ETCS at the border of France and Luxembourg at the beginning of the year 2017.

A strategic discussion with the European ERTMS coordinator, mr. Karel Vinck, took place at the Executive Board meeting on 5 October 2017. Karel Vinck and the Executive Board members, with the presence of the Management Board, discussed, among others, the role of the RFCs in the implementation of ERTMS, the harmonisation of rules at border points, the availability of compatible on-board units baseline 3, and the support the RFCs could receive from DG MOVE for the ERTMS deployment.

4. Results in 2017

Actions of the Management board



Mohamed Salimène
ERTMS coordinator



Sylvain Mosmann
ERTMS technical advisor

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 2016, the committee worked on the subject of data entry, in order to harmonise different approaches along the corridor.

In 2017, the results of the working group have been shared with the RFC Network and the EUAR.

***Outlook 2018:** as part of the ERTMS committee meetings, the Management Board of RFC North Sea - Med would like to set up a platform for exchange of experience on operational subjects, related to the implementation of the ERTMS Deployment Action Plan of the European Commission. The starting point of the discussions is the list of items identified in this action plan.*

Deployment of ETCS on the corridor

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 in spring 2017 (level 1 version 2.3.0d);
Netherlands:	in the Netherlands, the first ETCS corridor sections will be operational from 2024 onwards;
Switzerland:	ERTMS (level 1 Limited Supervision) was deployed in 2015 between the French border and Basel Marshalling Yard. Since end 2016 it is officially possible for trains equipped with ERTMS to run on this section.

The European Deployment plan published by the European Commission

The fundamental objective of deploying ERTMS is implementing interoperability on the entire rail network of the European Union.

The ERTMS European Coordinator has been conducting consultations with Member States and infrastructure managers on the review of the previous European Deployment Plan (EDP 2009).

A proposal for the Member States on a new implementation timeline was finalized in 2016, and a major step has been reached by the European Union Agency for Railways in stabilizing the technical specifications: a complete and stable ERTMS version was voted by the Member States by unanimity in February 2016 and entered into force on 5 July 2016.

Following the adoption of The European Deployment Plan end of 2016, the Member States released their national implementation plans in 2017.

***Outlook 2018:** Following the publication of the European Deployment Plan and later the ERTMS Deployment Action Plan, the RFC North Sea - Med will set up a platform for exchange on operational subjects with stakeholders.*



4.. Results in 2017

Transport market studies

In 2016, RFC North Sea - Med has published the update of the UK TMS study. Also, in 2017, the RFC network has agreed on a common methodology to build an Origin/ Destination Matrix.

However, the European Commission (DG Move) informed the RFCs of the Trimode project they were planning to develop, which would be a more improved model to use for producing the Transport Market Study (TMS).

The RFCs were encouraged to wait for the release of Trimode and use it for carrying out their TMS. Following DG Move advice, the RFC Network decided to abandon its Origin / Destination matrix survey, and to rely on the Trimode project to obtain the main raw market data necessary for the TMS update.

Discussions were ongoing with the DG Move when they were informed on October 4th, 2017 that the Trimode project will be significantly delayed, with results delivered probably after 2020.

Therefore, the decision on the TMS update is still pending and related to the decision of the European Commission regarding Trimode.

Communication

The Management board strives for 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 “Easier, Faster, Safer”, the press are the main communication tools of the corridor. In 2017, the Management board also participated in a number of events (see chapter 6. Events).

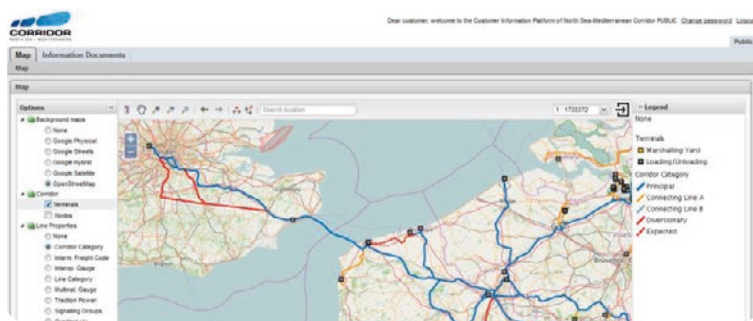
Corridor Information Document

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, access conditions, capacity and traffic management procedures as well as the implementation plan of the corridor. In 2017, all corridors worked together to publish the information on capacity, temporary capacity restrictions and traffic management, listed in Book 4 of the CID, via common texts, leaving open the possibility to add corridor specific information where needed. Also for book 1 and 2, the common and harmonized template has been used for publication. Also in 2017, the Management board drafted and consulted the advisory groups on the 2019 timetable CID.

Outlook 2018 : The CID for timetable 2019 was published on the website on the 8th of January 2018. The harmonisation of Book 5 was kicked off in 2017 and should be finalised in 2018.

Geographical information system (GIS)

In 2017, the Management board continued to work with 5 other RFCs in order to implement a common GIS called CIP (Customer Information Platform). RailNetEurope took the Project management and organised workgroups 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. Also, the 'Multi Corridor View', allowing the consultation of the information over different RFC's, has been implemented in 2017. Further improvements, developments and integration with other RNE tools is foreseen in 2018.



Nicolas Gatez,
GIS Implementation manager

Brochure

The Brochure of the corridor (about us/ publications), was updated in 2017.



5. Performance of the corridor

Performance monitoring

Each year, at the end of the first quarter, the corridor publishes its performance monitoring report. The most important performance indicators are listed in this report below. For more details, see:

<https://www.rfc-northsea-med.eu/en/page/figures-performance-corridor>

Operations

Total Corridor Traffic

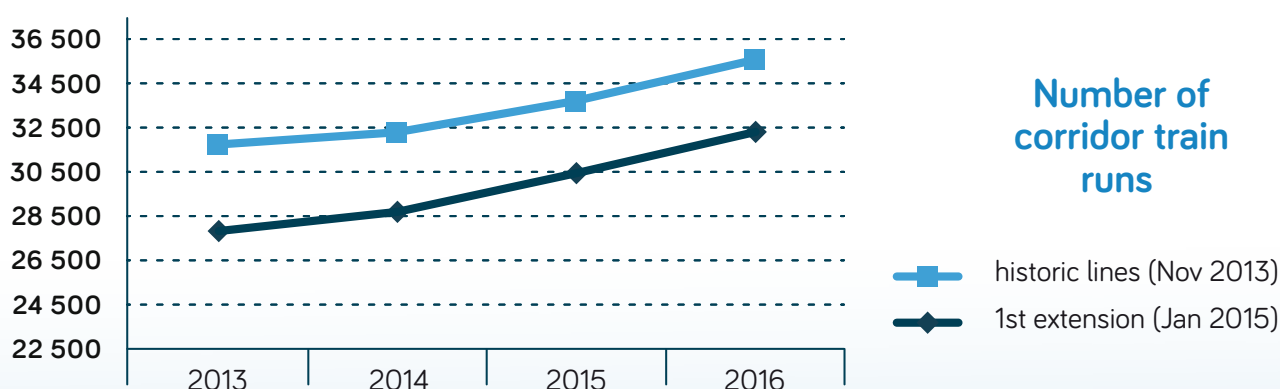
In the figures presented, all international freight trains that pass a border on the corridor are taken into account, if they at least travel 70 km on corridor lines.

The evolution of the total amount of Corridor traffic is influenced heavily by the economic growth of the Corridor region. However, the Corridor aims to increase the amount of Corridor trains in the following matter, compared to the year 2013, taking into account a low economic growth:

RFC NSM Objective	2020	2030
historic lines (Nov 2013)	+3%	+9%

Since the start of the Corridor, we could witness an increase in international rail freight traffic by 38%. In 2017, the sharpest growth so far could be noted, leading to a result of +18% compared to 2016.

Evolution compared to 2013 (start RFC NSM)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
historic lines (Nov 2013)	27835	+3%	+9%	+16%	+38%
1st extension (Jan 2015)	31.711	+2%	+6%	+12%	+32%



Traffic Volume (Per Corridor Border)

The evolution of traffic per corridor border is shown to give an indication on 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.

Traffic per border	2017 vs 2016	Total number of trains in 2017
Bettembourg / Zoufftgen	-4%	10681
Roosendaal / Essen	6%	10125
Basel / St.Louis	6%	8107
Mouscron / Tourcoing	16%	7069
Aubange / Rodange	-15%	5895
Aubange / Mont-Saint-Martin	9%	3999
Erquelinnes / Jeumont	36%	2094
Calais-Fréthun / Eurotunnel / Dollands Moor	n.a.	1941
Baisieux /Blandin	-27%	1461

The fluctuations at Aubange/Rodange and Aubange/Mont-Saint-Martin can largely be linked to fluctuations throughout the year linked to traffic works, because in general, we see a steady rise in traffic on the Benelux-Switzerland traffic, which for the majority explains the good figure for Basel/St.Louis. More precisely, traffic scheduled via Aubange/Rodange and Bettembourg/Zoufftgen is often rerouted via Aubange/Mont-Saint-Martin because of temporary capacity restrictions, or vice versa.

At the franco-swiss border of St.Louis/St.Johann, a small increase could be noted, aligned with the evolution we've witnessed over the last couple of years. This also means that the influence of re-routing the traffic from Germany to Switzerland via RFC North Sea - Med following the Rastatt incident was very little, and not significant overall.

Since the traffic volumes at Baisieux/Blandin and Erquelinnes/Jeumont are very small compared to the other corridor borders, new traffic or cancelled traffic can have a big impact on the figures. For some years, we see a decreasing volume for the former, while at the latter, some new promising traffics have started in 2016.

Punctuality

RFC North Sea - Med continues its efforts to reach the objective of 80% punctuality in the future. Unfortunately, for the fourth year running, this objective was not reached. For 2017, the global corridor punctuality figure are the following:

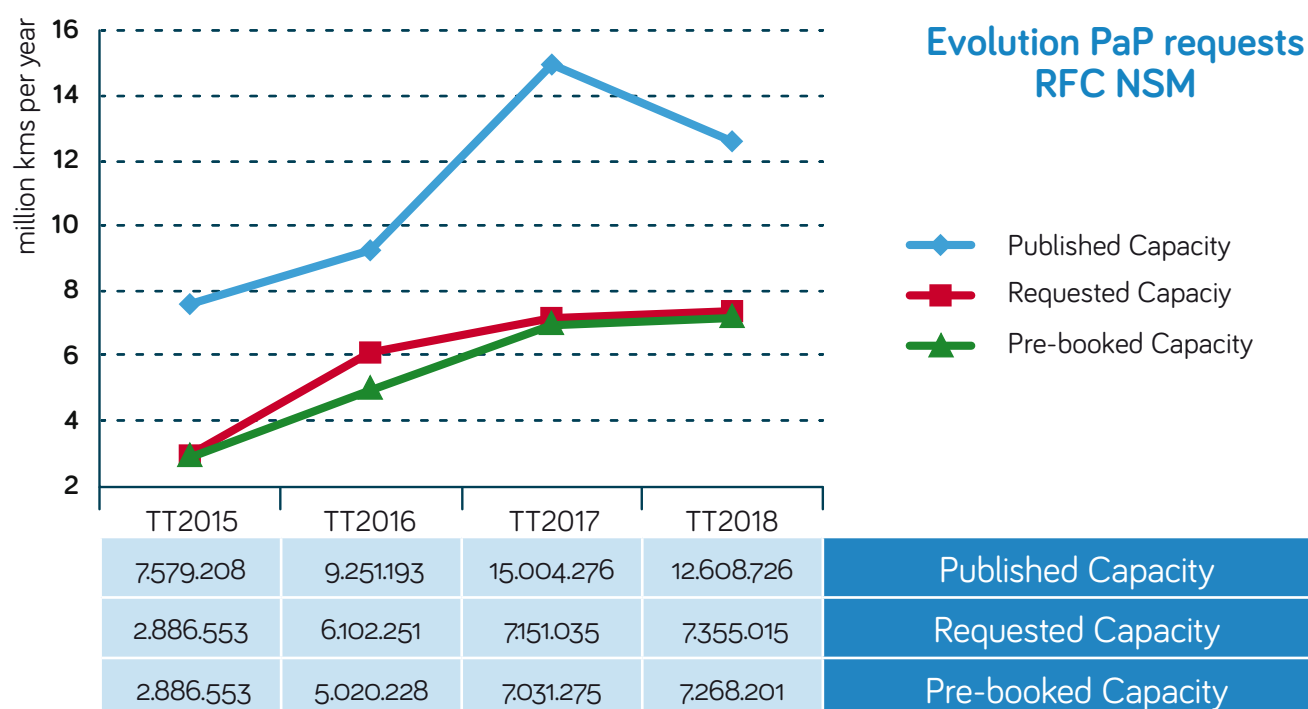
5. Performance of the corridor

Yearly RFC NSM punctuality (30min on selected corridor trains)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
punctuality evolution compared to TT2013	77,9%	+ 1%	+ 1%	- 1%	=

Capacity Allocation

In 2017, the published capacity for the yearly timetable decreased with 16% compared to the year before. This was mainly because the corridor choose to focus on stability of the offered capacity. The graph below displays all the PaP capacity (in KMs per year) that has been published by the C-OSS of the Corridor in January 2017, for the annual timetable 2018 together with what has been requested and pre-allocated in April.

It must be noted that most PaPs run Monday to Friday, but some might have more (7) or less (minimum 3) running days, or that a given PaP might not be available on some days throughout the year.

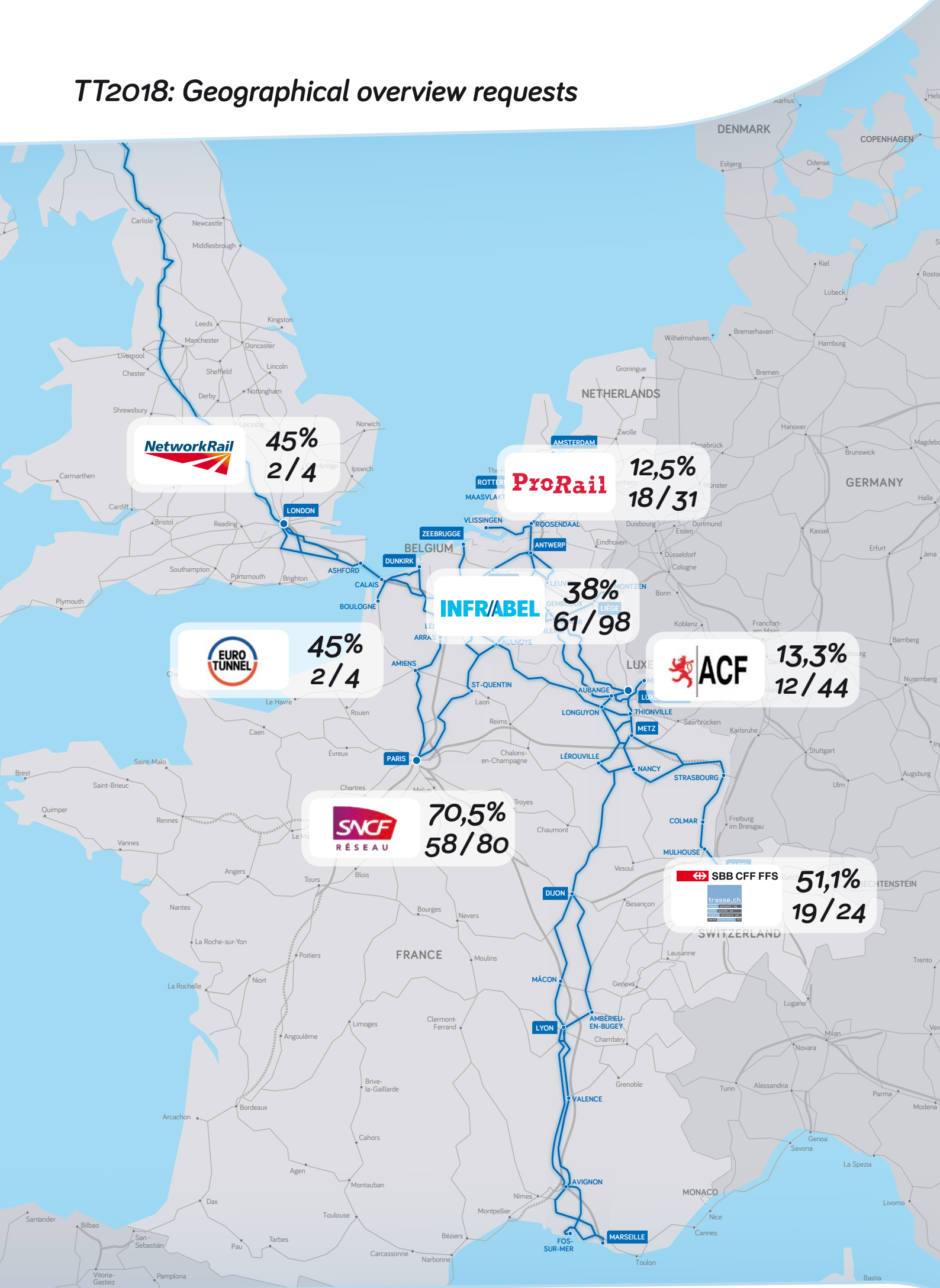


The small difference between the requested capacity and the pre-allocated capacity for timetable 2018 shows that there were only a very limited number of conflicting requests in April 2017. This clearly shows that the PaP offer for timetable 2018 was very much aligned with market demands.

The geographical distribution of the PaP capacity requested per country throughout the corridor is shown below. For each of the Infrastructure Managers or Allocation Bodies, the following is indicated:

- the percentage of capacity requested in April which was offered in January
- the number of PaPs that were at least partly requested in April vs. the PaPs published in January.

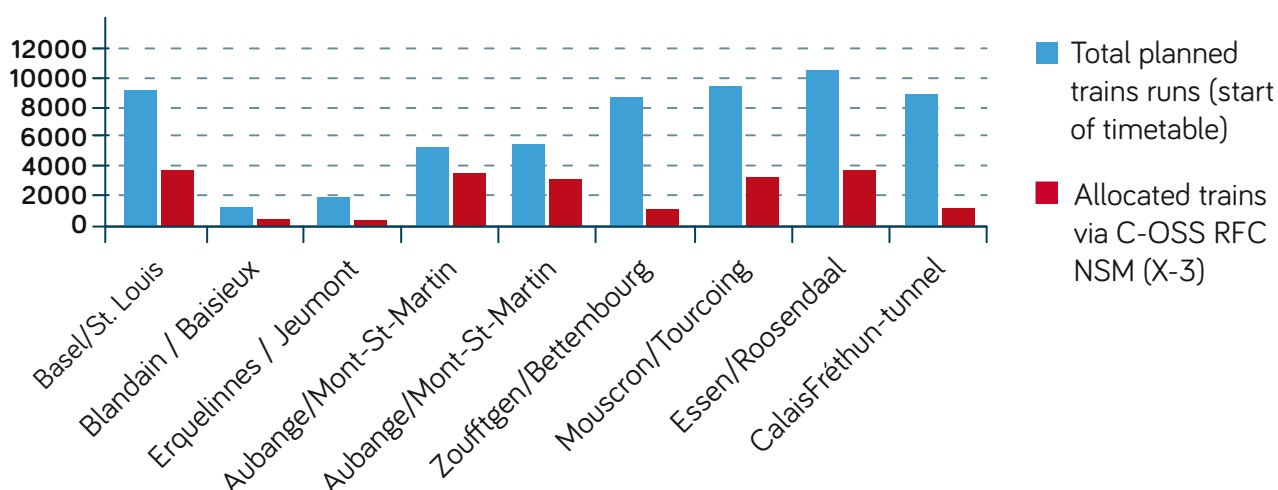
TT2018: Geographical overview requests



5. Performance of the corridor

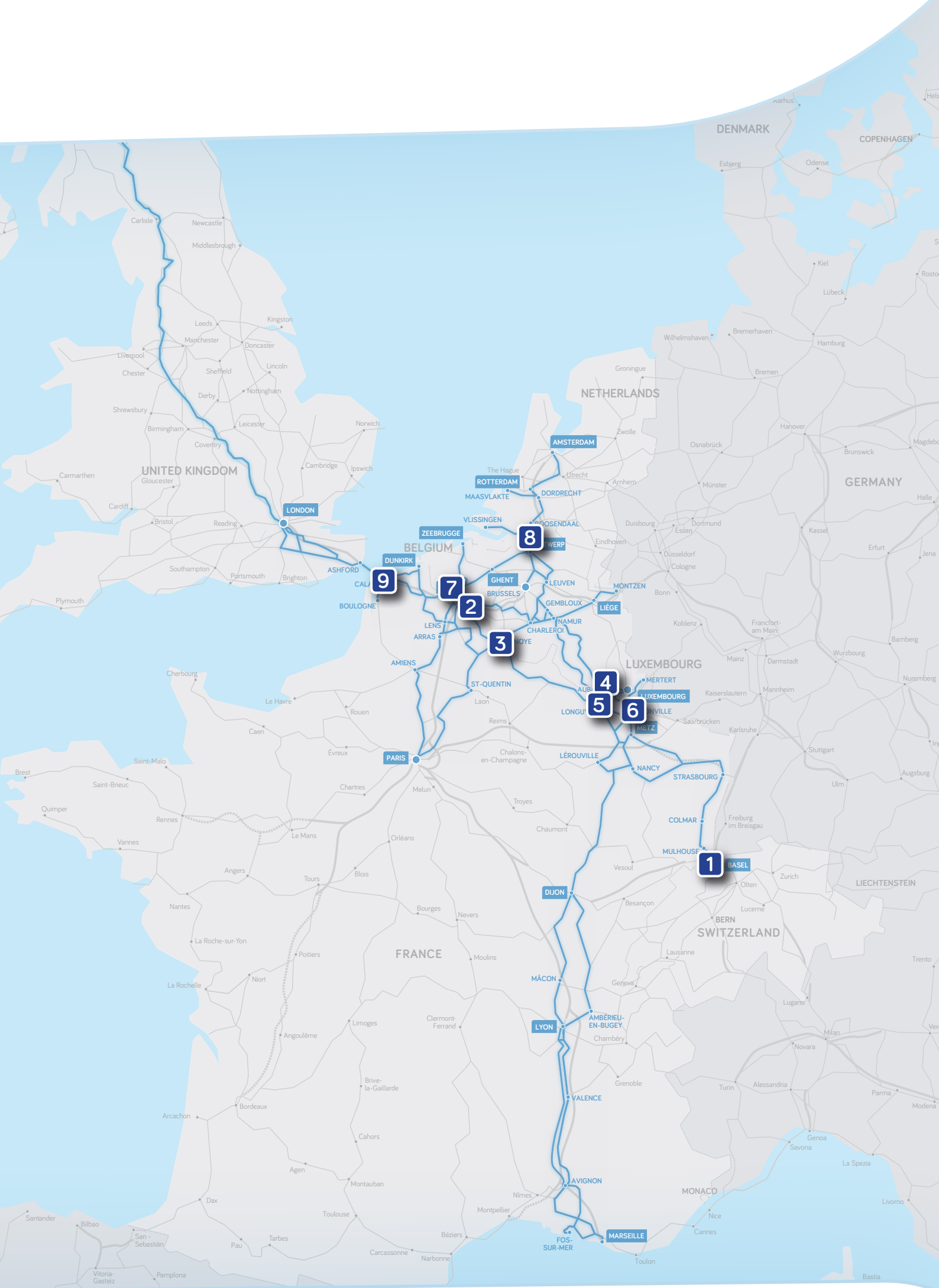
To have an idea on the importance of the role of the Corridor in the total allocation process, a comparison was made between the capacity allocated by the C-OSS of RFC NSM and the total scheduled traffic per corridor border point. This way we can determine the share of trains running on the corridor which were ordered via the C-OSS (or via PaP, or via feeder/outflow), compared to the total amount of foreseen corridor circulations.

RFC NSM border	Share of scheduled trains allocated via the C-OSS (X-3)		
	TT 2016	TT 2017	TT 2018
1 Basel/St.Louis	53%	47%	44%
2 Blandain/Baisieux	51%	21%	46%
3 Erquelines/Jeumont	5%	0%	26%
4 Aubange/Rodange	39%	47%	68%
5 Aubange/Mont-St-Martin	84%	56%	60%
6 Zoufftgen/Bettembourg	16%	14%	15%
7 Mouscron/Tourcoing	64%	43%	37%
8 Essen/Roosendaal	8%	18%	38%
9 CalaisFréthun-tunnel	/	/	16%
All	41%	33%	34%



Figures can only be regarded as an indication:

- Works or last minute demands from the customer might lead to changing timetables, routing or calendar; partly or entirely
- Cancellations (between allocation by C-OSS and start of timetable; partly or entirely).



6. Events

RFC North Sea - Med presented its activities and ambitions to stakeholders at four events in 2017.

PCS Training 22nd and 23th of February 2017, Milano

Together with RFC Atlantic and RFC Mediterranean, a PCS training, with special focus on PaP requests for TT2018, took place in Milano, on the 22nd and 23rd of February.



SITL fair in Paris, on 22, 23 and 24 March

RFC North Sea – Med presented its activities at SNCF Réseau's booth. Our Managing Director also participated to the debate discussing the potential of new routes.



CCRCC meeting, organised by EUAR on 15 and 16 November

For the first time, RFC North Sea - Med was invited as speaker to the Control Command and Railway Communication Conference (CCRCC) organised by the EUAR. This meeting took place in Valenciennes, on the 15th and 16th of November.

The EU Rail Freight Day in Vienna on 7 December 2017

The fourth Rail Freight Day was organised by RailNetEurope and the European Commission. RFC North Sea – Med presented its activities in the exhibition area.



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 2017, one subsidy contributed to its financing and to some of its members.

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

The Grant agreement was signed on 1 December 2015. This Action covers, from 2015 to 2018, the following activities:

- Capacity, traffic and performance management and studies for the deployment of interoperable systems
- Further harmonisation and updates of the CID and GIS
- Updates of the Transport Market Study
- Coordination of the corridor's further developments and communication
- Loading gauge upgrade study on the Network Rail lines of the corridor (beneficiary: Network Rail).

The forecast amount of the subsidy is 1.2 million €.

In December 2017, and after negotiations with DG Move, RFC North Sea - Med was granted a 'Program Support Action' (PSA) that will safeguard the financing of the RFC North Sea - Med for the years 2019 and 2020. The Executive Board gave its full support for the application of the EEIG to this new instrument.

Outlook 2018 : *The PSA Grant Agreement is foreseen to be signed in 2018. Also, RFC North Sea - Med expressed its support for CEF projects on the corridor for the ERTMS deployment of track-side and on-board components, for innovation and the deployment of new technology (such as retrofitting of wagons, sharing of train tracking and ETA information), the removal of a railway bottleneck in an urban node (Lyon urban node and INSPIRA multimodal node in the Rhone Valley) and the development of multimodal logistics platforms (freight hub at Venissieux-St Priest).*

Annex. Results of the 2017 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 18 October 2017. To be mentioned, this was shortly after the Rastatt incident.

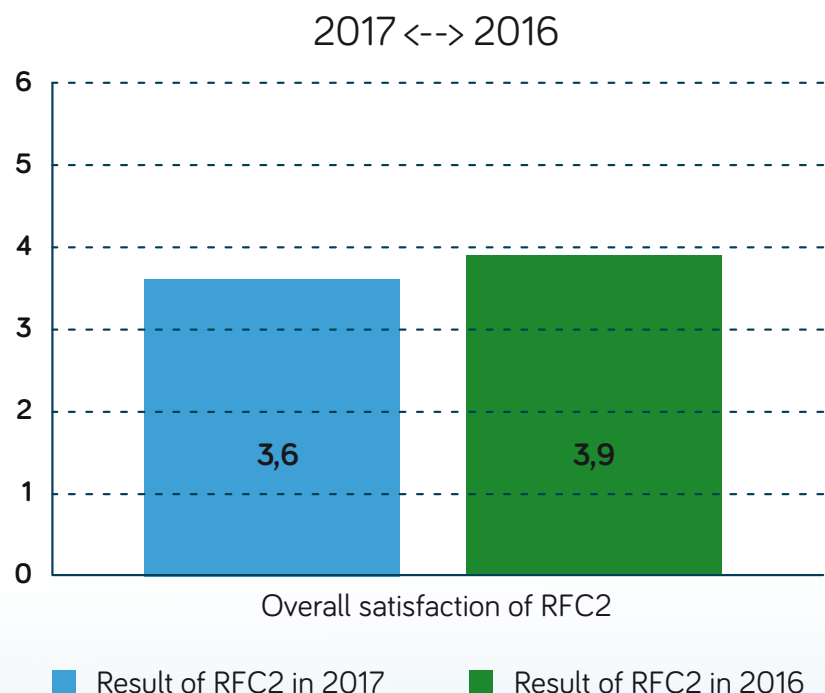
Respondants :

- 76 for all corridors.
- 19 for RFC NSM (out of 84 e-mails sent).
- The survey was sent to one person per 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)?", resulted in following results:



Annex . Results of the 2017 user satisfaction survey

Moreover, the respondents had the opportunity to formulate their remarks:

- commitment between IM
- coordination of works between RFCs (on alternative and cross route sections)
- coordination with other RFC at various levels (alternative route description)
- focus more on maritime flows going to or from deep sea terminals
- follow the problems with the path after the allocation of September
- i would like to feel the corridor more than today
- improve capacity allocation process in France, PaP and PCS improvements urgently needed
- be an enabler by providing data to bundle maritime flows
- foresee reduction of Infra costs in case of long term quality disturbance
- improvement and harmonization of processes along the corridor (cross-border and not only within member states)
- more rapid deployment of investment at cross border level (incl. ERTMS, coord. works, long trains etc.)
- stop using PCS for PAP
- development of one harmonized TCM
- harmonize the document of the expression of need with our national document
- take the lead in completing missing links / eliminating bottlenecks - P400
- development of a harmonized and concerted ERTMS-migration strategy along the corridor; taking into account the RU-migration (loco investments)
- stop making changes every year and stabilize the process/tools
- take the lead in aligning ERTMS deployment between IM (NL/BE/LU/FR).



3. Conclusion

- All detailed results are available on our website via following link:
https://www.rfc-northsea-med.eu/sites/rfc2.eu/files/telechargements/5.%202017_customer_satisfaction_survey_-_rag_20180131.pdf
- Results in line with the other corridors.
- Light satisfaction increase for:
 - Coordination of works
 - Satisfaction with the CID
 - Train performance management.
- Stable for:
 - Satisfaction with PaP
 - Satisfaction with PCS (overall, usability)
 - Overall communication.
- Satisfaction decrease for:
 - Overall satisfaction, with more comments formulated by the respondents!
 - Infrastructure developments
 - Satisfaction with the C-OSS
 - Terminal information
 - Satisfaction with Traffic Management
 - Management Board in RAG meetings.



Office of the Corridor One-stop-shop / writing address

Avenue Fonsny, 13 • B-1060 Brussels • Belgium
Tel: +32 (2) 432 2808 • E-mail: oss@rfc2.eu

Head office / administrative address

EEIG RFC North Sea - Med • 9 Place de la gare
L-1616 Luxembourg

Website

www.rfc-northsea-med.eu

The activities of EEIG RFC North Sea - Med are co-financed by the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility.

The sole responsibility of this publication lies with the author. The European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

Pictures: DR SNCF et DR Infrabel • Lineas • Benjamin Brolet • Georges Carillo • Fabian Sanguinetti • Christop Van Den Driessche

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