



**CLECAT**

European association for forwarding, transport, logistic and customs services

# **Report on CLECAT activities on EU RAIL FREIGHT CORRIDORS**

**Ivan Petrov, Chairman of the Clecat Rail Transport Institute**  
for the

**Debate on European Rail Freight Corridors at the House of  
Romanian Parliament, Bucharest**  
September 17<sup>th</sup> 2009

# CLECAT at a glance

- **22 MEMBERS, EU and continental coverage**
  - Freight Forwarders & Logistic service providers national federations and confederations
  - Customs Representatives national federations
  - Policy scope: EU legislation & neighbouring policy
- **COMPANIES**
  - Global players
  - SME's and regional operators
  - Small & family businesses
- **NUMBERS**
  - Over 19.000 companies
  - Over 1 million direct FTE's
  - ≈ 90% of Customs, 70% maritime, 90% air, 50% road and rail operations in Europe
- **CLECAT is registered in the EU register of interest representatives**
  - Want to become Member? Call us !!!

# CLECAT reaction at the Commission's proposal

- The proposal has been welcomed by the representative associations of EU rail freight customers, including CLECAT:
  - a corridor approach is useful for obtaining an integrated European Railway Area; freight corridors work as natural drivers for harmonisation as they represent tools for enhancing coordination between EU member states in the implementation of rail interoperability
  - The proposal seeks to bring together the infrastructure managers for the different rail networks in different member states, to work closely and coordinate the management of the lines designated as international rail freight corridors
  - The proposal was needed and could have a truly big impact on the attractiveness of rail freight for customers and on future growth prospects;
- However, there are points that rail freight users would have liked to be made stronger, e.g. in the area of governance bodies, traffic management and quality of service.

# Governance Bodies

- The proposed regulation does not allow for railway customers to have a simple and efficient mechanism that would allow them to directly influence the decisions and measures taken by the governance bodies responsible for the freight corridors:
  - users are those who set current and future market needs and therefore can make an important contribution thanks to their expert knowledge of strategic flows of freight traffic in Europe
  - it would have been judicious to establish an implementation follow-up system that enables users to submit observations in a simple and direct way, as and if malpractice in the implementation of the future regulation is observed
  - many rail freight users are also 'economic subjects' that invest heavily in rail connections, facilities and equipment: as such they have a right to be consulted and their opinions and requests taken seriously.
    - For instance, the proposal does not allow applicants to be consulted about the derogation of a Member-States from the provisions of the proposed regulation

# Traffic Management

- Capacity reserves, priority rules, and the condition of authorised applicants should all be made mandatory:
  - a 'non-discriminatory access to infrastructure' is one of the means to promote the efficient use of infrastructure on the European rail network and to have full and fair competition taking place throughout the European territory
  - Absence of any innovative measures that may improve traffic management since paths will continue to have their access unavailable to users even after a certain period of unused time
  - Infrastructure Managers should be allowed in all Member States to enlarge their choice of customers and to assign slots to different kinds of "authorised applicant", such as a freight forwarder or shipper and not just to traditional rail freight operators

# Quality of services

- It is unfair that the shippers are not involved in the elaboration of performance indicators for the freight corridors:
  - the involvement of users to the set up and adjustment of quality indicators would be a useful tool to provide them with the necessary transparency on the level of performance of European rail freight transport, whilst acting as an incentive to improve their own performance
  - this involvement would contribute to increase the awareness of user and provider respective constrains and requirements (operators currently tend develop their own service quality measurements and customers too may possess their own individually defined set of quality measurements)
  - a common set of defined measurements which would both involve customers and operators and focus on the delivery of service to a generic set of performance standards would enable the identification of common bottlenecks and barriers to improved service performance in a rail freight supply chain from consignor to consignee

# Action in support of the proposal

- **Strong coordination with major global and EU customers, shippers, forwarders, independent train operators and others to support and strengthen the proposal at EP 1<sup>st</sup> reading through a joint position**
  - All signatories agree that the Regulation is an good step into the right direction.
    - Public joint position and press releases were prepared and disseminated
    - A number of individual and collective interviews with MEP's were arranged.
- **A novel look at rail services?**
  - ECSA (EU ship owners) and ESPO (EU port authorities) joined the common position, this shows a new attitude:
  - a step-change in the business interests along our strategic international rail freight corridors
  - rail freight corridors to link ports with industrial centres and consumer markets with a supra-national, continental view
  - joined up policy toward facilitation of efficient movement of freight (and passengers) no longer from ship to shore, but to hinterland, beyond and back

# Where improvement is needed

- Stronger requirement to improve infrastructure quality consistently along a corridor
  - this requires greater co-ordination and management between Infrastructure Managers, as part of the corridor management with a fully functioning one-stop-shop (OSS)
- Strict deadline for the start of freight corridors (e.g. 2012/2015)
- The “Implementation Plans” of the corridors must cover the whole logistics chain, including times for dispatching and loading and unloading at terminals
- The ability of Authorised Applicants to reserve paths on all parts of this network must be granted without exceptions
- Customers are to be directly involved in the governance bodies of the corridors (including the elaboration of corridor performance indicators).
- There must be an effective ‘use-it-or-lose-it’ provision in order to enable the highest traffic levels to be achieved.
- The requirement for open access terminals and facilities at regular points along route corridors must include sea and inland ports as well as airports.
- All decisions of the governance bodies should be based on their impact and effect on service performance and should be facilitated by a single corridor authority.

# Some misconceptions

- **Passenger trains will not be delayed:**
  - this Regulation only applies to TEN-T routes, a very small proportion of rail lines in the EU. The approach of the Commission, which Clecat supports, is to provide for the creation of a flexible system of priority in the train planning, taking into account the needs both of passenger services and long distance freight services
- **Infrastructure Managers (IMs) do not need to be left alone to resolve their own disruption:**
  - IMs need to be flexible when there is disruption, but having close links with adjacent IMs should help rather than hinder this. This could make immediately additional resources available with quicker and more efficient results, especially when this cooperation becomes regular and habitual
- **OSS will not prevent competition between corridors:**
  - Separate OSSs for each corridor are envisaged, providing a real opportunity for them to compete for business and for RUs to obtain competitive bids for paths.

# CLECAT on EP 1<sup>st</sup> reading result

## ■ Positive points:

- Decision to involve applicants and customers in the establishment of corridor performance indicators
- Decision to strengthen the role of Regulatory Bodies in case of conflict between applicant and Governance Bodies
  - this should increase competition and transparency
  - encourage Regulatory Bodies to act in the full interests of competition on the rail and not be swayed by national politics, ideology or incumbents' interests
- Decisions to involve infrastructure managers and groups of railway undertakings in governance bodies

## ■ Negative points:

- The EU Parliament has chosen at 1<sup>st</sup> reading not to take account of the necessity to give clear priority to freight on certain selected routes by disposing of the term "priority"
  - this undermines the proposal's objective to develop an efficient and integrated freight transport network
- Decision not to extend the involvement in governance bodies to customers, who should also be directly involved besides RU's

# Conclusions

- It is high time that rail services became more customer friendly
- Legislation can improve the timing for rail freight service to become more efficient
- CLECAT is in strong support of the legislative proposal to establish priority rail freight corridors
- Supporting these views is always welcome and the public positions are open for signatures

# Thank you!

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



# CLECAT

European association for forwarding, transport, logistic and customs services