



Press release

Berne, 31.10.2013

Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

Brussels, 24 October 2013

On 24 October 2013, **OTIF** signed **administrative arrangements** in Brussels with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (**DG Move**) and the European Railway Agency (**ERA**).

This is an important landmark for cooperation between these three organisations, following on from the European Union's accession to OTIF with the agreement of 23 June 2011.

In a symbolic gesture, the signing took place at the Railway Interoperability and Safety Committee (RISC), which is the body in which the EU Member States approve the draft technical texts produced by the European Railway Agency.

This agreement, which is pivotal for the development of international railway law, was signed by the heads of the three organisations concerned:

- **Mr Matthias Ruete**, Director General of DG Move;
- **Mr Marcel Verslype**, Executive Director of the European Railway Agency (ERA);
- **Mr François Davenne**, Secretary General of OTIF.

The three directors welcomed this successful cooperation and expressed satisfaction with the agreement that has been reached on the EU's voting procedure in OTIF's technical bodies, which enables **the European Commission to participate actively in OTIF's bodies**. An exchange of letters (**Translation/ Original French**) took place between OTIF and the DG MOVE.

OTIF's technical regulations offer those of its Member States that so wish – the so-called States Parties – compatibility with European law.

It was important to put in place methods for operational coordination with the European Railway Agency which, under the aegis of the European Commission, is the source of these regulations.

In contrast, in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), OTIF develops the regulations on the transport of dangerous goods. It was important to improve coordination in this area as well.

According to the terms of the administrative arrangements, ERA will invite the representatives designated by OTIF to the various working groups so that they can represent the interests of the **States Parties that are not members of the EU** when European railway regulations are being drafted.

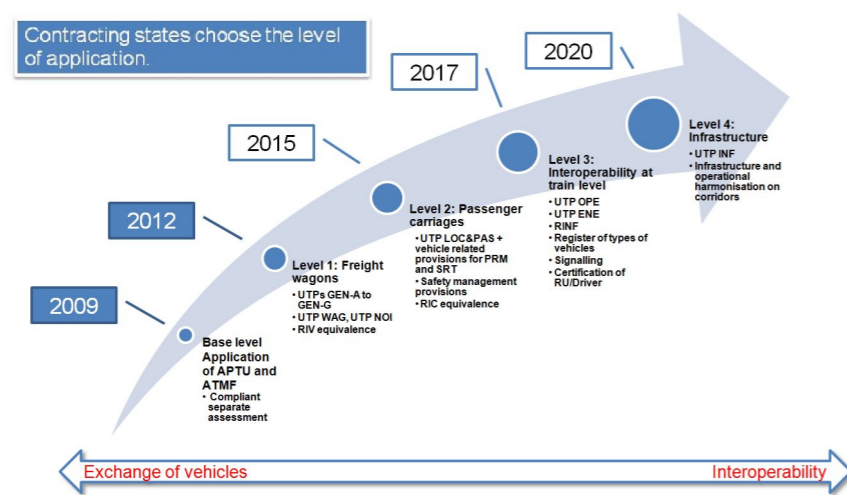


Mr. Ruete , Director General of DG MOVE, signing the agreement

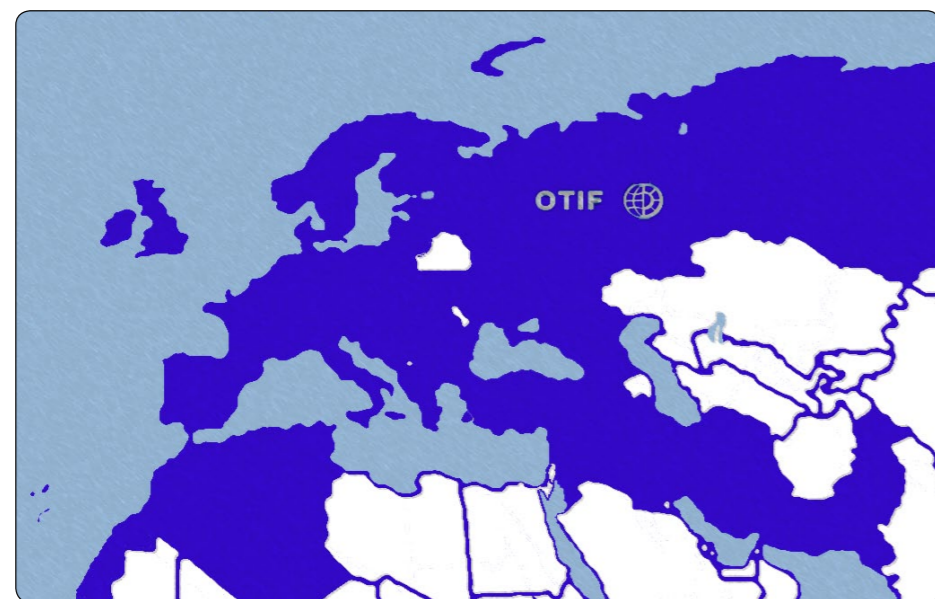


This way, the Secretariat of OTIF intends to involve the national experts from the States Parties that are not members of the EU. Internal coordination within OTIF will be put in place in this regard.

These new procedures are based on a road map that is common to both OTIF and the European Commission, which enables the two organisations to provide a **forward-looking vision** for the progressive implementation of real interoperability in OTIF's sphere.



As OTIF has **49 Member States** which also surround the Member States of the EU, this coordination is equally important for the European Commission.



This cooperation will also modify the working methods in terms of the technical registers. OTIF currently has two technical registers: the register of entities in charge of maintenance, which includes a list of ECM certification bodies and ECM certificates, and the register of Vehicle Keeper Markings (VKM), which is synchronised between ERA and OTIF.

The administrative arrangements specify that ERA and OTIF will seek to establish **common registers**. The arrangements entered into force when they were signed by the three parties on **24 October 2013**. They will remain valid for five years and may be renewed with the agreement of the three signatories.



ERA, OTIF and DG MOVE, parties to the agreement, represented by Mr Verslype, Mr Davenne and Mr Ruete (left to right)

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