5th MEETING OF THE EUROPE'S RAIL SRG

2 March 2023

09:30-12:30

1. Introduction Welcome by the Chairperson and introductory speech from the EC; Declarations of conflict of interest based on the Agenda items The Vice-Chairperson and acting Chairperson of the SRG welcomed the participants to the fifth meeting of the SRG. He thanked participants for their presence and highlighted the preference for a physical meeting for next SRG meeting on 8th June 2023.	09:30-09:45
2. Approval of the Agenda and previous MoM The acting Chairperson introduced the Agenda which was adopted by the SRG. The participants adopted the revised minutes of the fourth meeting.	09:45-09:50
3. State of play – information from the EUROPE'S RAIL Presentation and discussion on the progress of the EU-Rail activities: System Pillar, Innovation Pillar and status of the preparations of the Deployment Group The Executive Director ad interim (ED a.i.) indicated an update will be provided on the status of the three pillars: System Pillar (SP), Innovation Pillar (IP) and Deployment Group. Mr Soenke indicated all documents of last System Pillar Steering Group meeting had been sent to the SRG. On future radio, he indicated an agreement had been reached for the alignment of the scope of V2 specifications. On absolute train positioning, agreement has been reached on the process for action within SP on Absolute Train Positioning with ERA and the European Space Agency. Concerning the task/domain finalisation, the remit and planning documents have been finalised. Regarding EU-Rail and Harmonisation/Standardisation and TSI Input Plan, the documents have been sent	09:50-10:30

for circulation and comments. Regarding the report on energy savings approaches, a response from the SP consortium is pending.

The Austrian representative enquired whether SP defines the needs and TSI follows or vice-versa.

The ED a.i. indicated that the legislative process remains the same (decision following the EU comitology process with involvement of MS), but highlighted the importance of the SP role in ensuring consistency of the sector input and considering the R&I work performed in EU-Rail (and elsewhere). SP works with a view to ensuring seamless integration of innovation into a new digital rail system architecture. Once the EU-Rail and Harmonisation/Standardisation and TSI Input Plan and related documents are finalised, they can enter more smoothly into the TSI process. The SP therefore allows for the sector to pick up a faster approval pace in the last step of the TSI process.

The acting Chairperson proposed a smaller group could discuss the SP outputs in relation to the SRG. A proposal from DE/FR was sent in this respect and will be discussed later in the meeting.

The ED a.i. presented an update on the Innovation Pillar. He highlighted that the EU-RAIL published the call for proposals HORIZON-ER-JU-2022-02 on 13 September 2022. The deadline prescribed for his call was 14 December 2022. An evaluation was carried out according to the rules on proposal submission and evaluation laid down in the EU-RAIL Work Programme 2022-2024. The award of the call will take place during the 7th Governing Board meeting of 15 March. Proposals cover Flagship Area 7 on "Innovation on new approaches for guided transport modes" and the "Exploratory Research and other activities". He underlined that regretfully not many proposals had been submitted for this call, so an assessment will take place in that respect. Further suggestions from the SRG will be welcome, e.g. national info-days.

He underlined a tender procedure for the programme management services linked to the Flagship Projects was concluded (restricted tender procedure to members of the JU). One PM service is foreseen for each Flagship Project. The tender for the provision of a toolset for Model-Based System Engineering, Conceptual Data Model and Federated Dataspace was canceled and a new process is under investigation

Guidelines for IKAA reporting are being finalised and will soon be published in the governance handbook.

The ED a.i. stated that the Grant Agreements for 6 flagship projects were signed in December 2022. The Cooperation tool has been set up. Flagship projects will be visible on our website. Fixed reporting template has been agreed for each flagship project every 3 months. Alignment meetings between flagship projects, and between flagship projects and SP have been agreed.

He provided a snapshot of individual projects, already presented in SRG workshops. He highlighted the focus is on the impact side, to achieve tangible results with high TRL levels.

The ED a.i. provided participants with an update on the proposals for the Deployment Group. He clarified the distinction between IP, SP and Deployment Group in the following way: He stated the Innovation Pillar delivers on what are the innovative solutions with the necessary knowledge to ensure the technical migration into the existing rail system. The System Pillar defines the architecture that allow a smooth integration of innovative technological and operational solutions, defines specifications, prepares proposals for standards and TSIs and defines how the rail system can be operated targeting harmonization. The Deployment Group targets how sector capability can be strengthened to contribute to sustainability, accelerating the pace to bring rail innovation into the market. It focuses on needs in relation to European coordination of deployment; deployment packages, including technical/operational migrations plans to a level to be determined; investment Plan, funding and financing. Its aim is to formulate recommendations to the JU, to the European Commission and Member States on the deployment of innovative solutions which require a European coordinated deployment.

He underlined a task force has been setup to identify the possible areas of action, scope, legal setup, resources, and other elements. As per art. 97 of the SBA, in particular, "The Commission shall take the final decision on the composition of the Group."

In terms of next steps, the ED a.i. highlighted the ED-SIPB endorsement of the work in progress (March); the exchange with European Commission and other institutional actors (SRG); the development of a first concept paper; presentation to the ED-SIPB an presentation (decision) to the EU-Rail Governing Board.

The FR representative enquired whether a larger consultation with the SRG is planned. The ED a.i. answered that this is indeed foreseen, including whether MS should be members of this group, as they need to play an important role, i.e. vis-à-vis access to financing and implementation. When a concrete deployment action will be needed, coordination at EU level of MS implementation may be needed, e.g. DAC.

The representative from the EC (DG MOVE) indicated that coordination with ERTMS national coordinators will need to be ensured regarding control command signalling issues.

The Finnish representative highlighted that possibilities should be fostered to integrate small start-up companies involved in innovation progress of the European railway sector.

The Austrian representative highlighted that the buzz word is users. The over-arching question is "with what aim?". Market uptake has been to some extent mentioned, however, he expressed concerns about the user-side in this approach which has to be

considered with a view to "mobility transition", i. e. the holistic transformation of the mobility and logistics system. He emphasized that seamless European travelling is at the heart of European policies but that cross-boarder through-ticketing is still an unsolved issue.

The European Commission (EC) representative answered that on ticketing, discussions are on-going on how ticketing will be set up from the user perspective, passenger rights' regulation and joint ticketing as well as messages to be exchanged among railway operators and infrastructure managers to allow this. The efforts of the EC will focus on developing a common rail ticketing framework, improving timetable for efficient circulation of freight trains using track capacity. Legislative proposals should be tabled before summer 2023.

The acting Chairperson underlined that synergies need to be ensured between R&I efforts and technical specifications for interoperability, taking into account cluster 5 of Horizon Europe. He expressed his appreciation that inconsistencies in passenger rights' legislation and TSIs will be tackled. He proposed a future roundtable be organized with the EC to discuss those topics with MS. The EC representative indicated they would participate in future SRG meetings. ERA participation will also be ensured. A proposal in this respect will be prepared for the second half of the year.

The ED a.i. presented the communication and dissemination activities (*please refer to the presentation*). He expressed a call for support from MS on the mobility start-up prize, as EU-RAIL is also financing a prize, and will inform the SRG for dissemination of the context for start-ups in their MS.

The Austrian representative asked whether these opportunities are used to take into account feedback concerning customer needs and contributions from the user side. The ED a.i. answered that the user input is especially useful for the research activities and in each FP an advisory group is being set up with this precise objective. A call for tenders will be launched to ensure users and unions will contribute to the Programme. On the freight side, collaboration with ALICE is on-going on studies on users' needs. The AT representative answered that for freight ALICE is indeed a privileged partner. For the mobility of persons, instead of organising dedicated events, he suggested using current events to materialize a feedback channel in a pragmatic way. The acting Chairperson indicated this can be included at TRA 2024 in Dublin.

The German representative highlighted the importance of fostering an exchange with users, academia and research initiatives. She asked the ED a.i. how to intensify the exchange with researchers who are not inside those 6 flagship areas. The ED a.i. highlighted two groups; the ERRAC Scientific Committee and the upcoming EU-RAIL Scientific Steering Group. The latter will enter more into the content of new FP.

4. Launch of the procedure for the election of SRG Chair/Vice-Chair	10:30-11:00

The ED a.i. explained the procedure in compliance with Art 4(1) of the SRG Rules of Procedure. The ED a.i. shall contact all SRG Representatives asking for proposed candidates for the two positions. Each SRG Member may nominate only one SRG Representative from another SRG Member. After the completion of the nomination by the SRG Members, the ED shall coordinate the vote. The ED shall present the list of proposed candidates to the SRG Representatives, along with their statements of motivation and of impartiality. All supporting documents, including a short curriculum vitae, must be sent to the SRG Representatives before the vote. He indicated this procedure should be completed within one month.	
The SRG RoP further states that the Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected by consensus (higher than simple majority), or failing that, on the basis of a simple majority of the SRG Members represented at the meeting or cast through electronic voting should the need arise. If no candidate pools over 50% of the votes, a second round is initiated "with the candidates garnering the highest number of votes in the first round running again". A vote must be held even if one candidate stands for election. Candidates cannot vote for themselves.	
The SRG members agreed that the RoP should be amended to render the voting procedure more straightforward. The EU-RAIL secretariat will therefore, for the sake of clarity before the voting takes place, launch a written procedure for amendment of Art. 4 of the RoP with the following suggestions for change; • clarification of vote by "consensus"; • deletion of the sentence "For each position, each SRG Member may nominate only one SRG Representative from another SRG Member"; • clarification of: "on the basis of a simple majority of the SRG Members represented at the meeting or cast through electronic voting should the need arise" • clarification of : "a second round is initiated with the candidates garnering the highest number of votes in the first round running again"	
The SRG members agreed that based on these revised RoP, the voting procedure will be launched on 9 May 2023 to ensure a physical vote at 6th SRG meeting scheduled on 8 June 2023.	
5. Discussion points - **Nomination of Europe's Rail *ad interim* Executive Director and launch of the recruitment procedure** Mr Giorgio TRAVAINI explained the status on his nomination as ED ad interim of the EU-RAIL Joint Undertaking. The EC representative and the acting Chairperson of the SRG thanked him for his outstanding commitment to the JU and expressed their best wishes for success during this interim phase.	11:00-12:20

- **Update on DAC: focus on progress, Investment Plan Study, possible demonstrators**

Antonio De Rose from E&Y provided an update on DAC, according to the Terms of Reference of the study commissioned by the JU to E&Y. *Please refer to the presentation.*

The Swedish representative enquired whether the paper presented before Christmas by E&Y regarding DAC was final. Mr De Rose indicated the substance has not changed.

The FR representative emphasized that private sector contribution should be maximized by equity or EIB. He stated that emphasis should also be put on what the consequences are with regard to MS ability to top-up EC contribution. He underlined a key decision is the EC budget contribution and possible complementary contributions from MS.

Mr De Rose stated the objective of maximization of private sector investment was at the core of the modelling exercise performed (avoidance of over-subsidization). He stated the DAC investments can tick the boxes of sustainability and therefore give access to more favourable financing rates as green assets.

The acting Chairperson suggested to continue the discussion in a dedicated call. Furthermore, he indicated that a large-scale demonstrator is proposed by CZ – validation testing of DAC level 5 in real operation conditions, after the DAC is developed and TSIs are drafted. The CZ will contact the FA5 coordinator to see how it fits in the project planning. The Chair proposed to set-up a smaller SRG group to provide a proposal for DAC tests validation.

- **Call for Expression of Interest (CEI) on appointment of Europe's Rail Scientific Steering Group members**

ED a.i. highlighted that the first draft of the CEI was distributed to the Governing Board for comments from 23/01 until 14/02.

In terms of scope, the proposal to move the scientific advice from individual evaluation of projects towards more collective knowledge, with the potential involvement of the scientific experts in the full cycle of programme (e.g. input to the work programme, periodical evaluation). Future scientific advice should be more engaged in the assessment of the status of programme, e.g., in the form of the yearly scientific assessment.

He indicated the agenda of the 7th Governing Board meeting of 15 March 2022 foresees the adoption of GB Decision n°06/2023 on the launch of CEI to establish the Scientific Steering Group. Following adoption of the GB Decision on 15/03, the CEI will be published.

He stated that in accordance with Article 21(4) of the SBA, the GB shall take into consideration the potential candidates proposed by the SRG – i.e. candidates supported by the SRG as a group.

The SRG will be invited to communicate to EU-RAIL, through its Chair, a list of proposed candidates, who submitted their application in answer to the CEI.

The acting Chairperson proposed to collect at SRG level all candidates proposed by MS and then decide which can be taken in the list submitted to EU-RAIL.

The list can be discussed at the next SRG meeting 8 June.

- **Open discussion on how to structure MS role in providing national R&I activities' list and their potential synergies with EU-RAIL JU Programme.**

ED a.i. presented his suggestion on MS reporting (*please refer to the presentation*). This item will be further discussed in the 6th SRG meeting.

The DE representative supported specific information on project level and enquired about the estimated timeline to establish a common sharing platform. The ED a.i. answered that if the common sharing platform is used internally, it will be straightforward. For the website it would imply development costs and contracting services, which could be implemented this year.

The PT representative asked for a clarification on the launch of the call for Associated Members. The ED a.i. answered the process will be defined in 2023, so that Governing Board can launch the call in 2024.

The SRG agreed on the approach and the JU will prepare the needed template and processes for a possible first reporting in the next SRG meeting.

- **Proposal to ensure transparency and openness of the System Pillar**

The ED a.i. presented the proposal to ensure transparency and openness of the System Pillar, along the following lines:

- SRG Chairperson is (already) a member of the SP Steering Group

- SP Steering Group shall regularly report to the SRG on its activities and the progress in the System Pillar

  - Standing agenda point every meeting

  - Outputs following the SP-STG to be provided to SRG

  - Standardisation and TSI Input Plan to be circulated

▪ If an issue where an SRG opinion is required arises, EU-Rail will proactively contact the SRG Chair and agree a way forward, including ad hoc papers or workshops. ▪ Minutes of SP Steering Group should be sent to SRG members. The common position presented by DE and FR was accepted by the SRG: "*Insofar as allowing a swift processing of ER materials pushed forward to RISC by way of information of Member States is concerned, the ability to forward outputs coming from the SP-Steering Group (and typically to be passed to ERA) as proposed to be supplied above appear to NSAs and the ecosystem of each Member State as a good base for information sharing. The level of detail has to be determined subsequently. Any ad hoc session would seem useful, at least quarterly meetings. Consultations are presently being held with EPSF and the FR ecosystem respectively EBA (German NSA) and GER ecosystem.*" The ED a.i. asked if the intention is to have fixed quarterly meetings or ad hoc meetings. If these are fixed meetings, SP points will not be necessary in SRG meetings. The FR representative confirmed the intention to have fixed quarterly meetings and agreed that a full reporting would not be needed in the SRG. A complementary and more high-level one would still be appreciated. The AT representative raised the point on Circabc data sharing. The ED a.i. indicated this is a matter that will now be followed up on and a solution proposed by the next SRG.	
6. Closing remarks and AoB - Date of the 6th SRG meeting (in person): 8th June 2023 AM, with SRG coordination hyperloop meeting in the PM	12:20-12:30