



UNION INTERNATIONALE
DES CHEMINS DE FER

INTERNATIONALER
EISENBAHNVERBAND

INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS

Press Release no. 233

Rail sector stakeholders gather in Budapest for the UIC ERTMS world conference

Deployment of ETCS and GSM-R well under way in Europe and across the world.

Support from the UIC railways for the proposals of the European Commission Coordinator Karel Vinck to facilitate ERTMS migration on 6 European corridors.

(Paris, 14 April 2006). The ERTMS World Conference staged from 4 to 6 April in Budapest by UIC and the Hungarian State Railways MAV lived up to expectations, drawing a large audience from among rail sector stakeholders in Europe and the world over.

The conference, with its focus on the central theme of "*ERTMS – Towards a master plan for deployment*", aimed to review the progress made with the implementation of this interoperable system, which comprises the train control system ETCS and GSM-R, the digital radio system for railways.

A total of some 700 participants representing the European Union, governments, the rail sector and industry (signalling and telecommunications) took part in the conference and a series of high-level meetings on ERTMS organised in conjunction with the main event. Practically all European countries were represented alongside China, India, Japan, Korea, the United States, Australia and Israel.

Of particular note was the involvement in the work of the conference of *Karel Vinck*, European Coordinator for ERTMS, *Michael Cramer*, Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur for ERTMS issues and *Marcel Verslype*, Executive Director of the European Railway Agency (ERA), alongside a host of company executives from railways and industry alike.

Some key points were noted at the Budapest conference. The first was that after several years of validation and pilot tests in a series of countries, ERTMS and its component parts ETCS and GSM-R are now very much entering commercial service (the most recent landmark being the commissioning of ETCS Level 2 and GSM-R on the Italian high speed lines).

The system is based on technical and functional specifications consolidated and approved by the EU as part of work on the TSIs (Technical Specifications for Interoperability) and is now ready to be rolled out across Europe, in line with the commitments already made by railway operators.

A crucial concern today is to create the momentum that will ensure rapid and efficient deployment of ETCS and GSM-R under optimum economic and operational conditions, with priority going to the 6 European corridors defined by the EU.

The conference also heard how beyond the boundaries of Europe, the basic principles of the ETCS and GSM-R systems are set to be adapted to the needs of a string of other major world railways in China, India and Korea, helping these systems become world standards.

It was clear from the Budapest conference how much the deployment of ERTMS has benefitted from the efforts of EU Coordinator *Karel Vinck* who has been instrumental in creating this momentum, in close synergy with UIC, CER, EIM, UNIFE and their members. UIC and its members are supporting a comprehensive programme of interoperability on the 6 corridors, including provision for the allocation of EU and national resources for both infrastructure and rolling stock.

As part of the high level meeting organised in conjunction with the conference on the prospects for ERTMS deployment, UIC and its members voiced their support for the content of the summary of Corridor Studies as presented by *Karel Vinck*. They also backed the approach proposed by the EU Coordinator for a system of financial support for investment by railway undertakings in on-board ERTMS equipment, whilst emphasising the importance of optimum management of the sensitive migration period.

To take forward this joint work for the railway community, UIC has set up an ERTMS Platform to be chaired by *Roland Heinisch* (DB AG), with *Michele Elia* (FS / RFI) as Vice-Chairman.

The European Railway Agency, for its part, will continue its essential work in close synergy with railway professionals, adapting the specifications to changing needs.

The UIC ERTMS conference in Budapest featured a programme of technical visits (ERTMS demonstration) organised by MAV on the line from Budapest to Vienna. The event also included a trade fair at which all the major firms from the railway signalling and radio communications sectors were present.

A video (English language DVD) produced specially for the Budapest conference presents the current state of development of ETCS and GSM-R and prospects for deployment on the 6 European corridors. The ERTMS video and the Conference proceedings can be obtained from the UIC.

Contact:

Media:
Liesbeth de Jong
Press Relations
dejong@uic.asso.fr

UIC ERTMS Conference Coordinator:
Charlotte Gudenus
gudenus@uic.asso.fr

The UIC ERTMS World Conference was organised by UIC together with MAV in cooperation with UNIFE, UNISIG, GSM-R Group and EEIG ERTMS Users Group with the support of CER and EIM.