

Second meeting of the Shift2Rail States Representatives Group

29 April 2015
European Commission, Albert Borschette Building
Room AB-4B
10:00-13:00

Minutes

10:00-10:15	Introduction
	<p>The meeting was chaired by Mr Violi, Vice-Chairperson of the SRG, as the elected Chairperson had recently resigned. He briefly explained the procedural issues and gave an overview of the issues to be discussed. He stressed the need for the States Representative Group (SRG) to be informed of the developments and to actively participate in the activities of Shift2Rail (S2R). He also noted the need for acceleration of the all the processes related to the work of the Joint Undertaking (JU) and in particular to speed up the ongoing activities (such as the selection of the Executive Director, the 2nd phase of the selection of the associated members, with respect of possible redressing procedures and the Steering Committees activation) and the lunch of calls.</p> <p>Ms Magda Kopczynska, Director of European Commission (MOVE/C) also stressed the importance of the timeline for the developments in S2R JU. She pointed out that the JU was officially established nine months ago and since then considerable progress has been achieved, bearing in mind the complex processes and procedures, which are related to the establishment and functioning of a JU and which are usually not visible to the external stakeholders. She explained that similar difficulties have been faced by other JUs as well, which were able to launch activities only two years after their establishment.</p> <p>The Commission explained that in all processes the issue of quality should not be compromised, as experience has shown that investing in quality and in good organisation always pays off later. She reassured the SRG that the appointed ad interim Executive Director guarantees the continuation of the activities and she briefly referred to the issues already progressed such as the first stage of the selection of associated members, the adoption of the Master Plan, issues related to staff recruitment, housing, etc.</p> <p>Finally, the Commission noted the importance of disseminating the information concerning S2R's activities and noted that all entities and SRG in particular should contribute in this context.</p>

10:15-10:20	Approval of the provisional Agenda
	The SRG members agreed on the provisional agenda, which had been circulated on 1 April 2015 (document attached). DK requested that for future meetings relevant documents for each agenda point will be specified in order to avoid misunderstandings. DK also requested that for future meetings the agenda will include a discussion point on the interface between S2R JU and national research programmes and national policies in order to strengthen rail transport in Europe, as specified in Council Regulation 642/2014, Article 14 point 5.
10:20-10:25	Approval of the minutes of the last meeting
	The Chairman explained that the previous, first meeting of the SRG took place on 21 October 2014 and the draft minutes of that meeting were distributed on 4 November 2014 for the members of the group to comment. No comments were received apart from the FR representative who asked for the inclusion of a reference in the introduction, highlighting the importance of S2R to the competitiveness of the European railway industry in the world market. This reference was included, and the SRG members approved the minutes (document attached).
10:25-10:50	Election of the SRG Chairperson
	The Chairman, noted the resignation of Mr Real, who was elected Chairperson in the previous meeting, mentioned the good cooperation he had with Mr Real, verified the numbers of participants and in accordance with the procedure described in the Rules of Procedure, started the election of the new Chairperson. Mr Miroslav Haltuf representative of CZ, was elected, with the 2/3 of votes, Chairperson of the SRG for the period until 21 October 2016 (" <i>the remainder of his predecessor's term</i> "). Mr Haltuf thanked the members of the SRG and asked to be excused for the rest of the meeting, due to other obligations. Again the role of chairing the meeting was taken by Mr Violi.
10:50-11:30	Information on the state of play of the S2R JU
	Mr Economou, Executive Director (ad interim) of the S2R JU presented (presentation attached) the latest developments related to the activities of the JU and in particular concerning the call for Associated Members, the establishment of the Scientific Committee, the recruitment of staff, the housing of the JU, the JU's Annual Report for 2014 and the adoption of the S2R Master Plan. He then replied to specific questions raised by the SRG members. The SRG took note of the information provided by the Executive Director ad Interim. Several delegations (FR, DE, UK, IT, ES) expressed concerns about the timeline for

	<p>the activities and urged the Commission and the JU to accelerate the processes so as to launch activities at the end of 2015 rather than in spring 2016. The Executive Director ad Interim explained that all efforts are taken to accelerate the procedures, which are however lengthy and complex by nature as both the Commission and the H2020 rules have to be fully respected in order to guarantee credible, transparent and defensible results vis-à-vis all stakeholders involved.</p> <p>With regard to questions related to the Call for Associated Members (NO, NL, DE, PT, IT) and in particular concerning the redress procedure, the Executive Director ad Interim explained the sensitivity of the related information and suggested to send an explanatory note describing the redress procedure (the note was sent to SRG members on 5 May 2015).</p> <p>TR expressed concerns regarding the process for the selection of the Associated Members, arguing that the time available to submit proposals was rather too short and that the evaluation process is taking considerable time, with limited information provided to the SRG. TR asked if a second call for associated members will be launched. The Executive Director ad Interim explained that the call for associated members followed the general rules and timelines usually applicable in such cases by the Commission and that due to reasons of confidentiality it is not possible to reveal information which concerns a competitive process. A second call is not excluded but this is something to be considered after the selection under the first call has been finalised. The Chairman noted that some members of the SRG would welcome the possibility of a second call.</p> <p>With regard to the establishment of the S2R Scientific Committee members, the S2R JU informed that in line with the transparency provisions of the S2R Regulation, the names of the Scientific Committee members will be published on the S2R website. DK regretted that the member states had not been very successful in appointing members to the S2R Scientific Committee. Following the request of the DK representative, the JU will provide the SRG with a short resume of the appointed members of the S2R Scientific Committee.</p> <p>Overall it was agreed that the JU will take all efforts to guarantee continuous information flow to the SRG members.</p>
11:30-12:45	Opinion of the SRG on the draft WP for 2015-2016
	<p>The Commission (MOVE/C2), gave a brief overview (presentation attached) of the planning for developing the annual work plans (WPs) of the JU for 2015 and 2016, explaining that the opinion of the SRG is required before finalisation and adoption of the work plans and that the adoption of an annual work plan is a pre-condition for the Commission to adopt a financing decision covering the operational activities of the JU.</p> <p>According to the proposed work plan, following completion of the S2R JU</p>

	<p>membership, a call for proposals will be launched for the establishment of a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), together with an invitation for proposals for the first Specific Grant Agreements (SGA). Moreover the proposed priorities focus on IP2 and IP5 which are covered to a much lesser extent by the projects from H2020 2014 call. The relevant discussions with the founding members (other than the Union) are currently in progress and the S2R JU is consulting with the Commission, the ERA, the SRG and the Scientific Committee.</p> <p>In their comments, a number of delegations (UK, ES, NL, PT, TR) suggested that the priorities should be broader in scope to cover as many aspects as possible. DK highlighted that the national plans should be also reflected in the priorities. FR noted that there is no need for competition among the JU members and mentioned the procedures followed in Clean Sky JU as an example. UK suggested modifying point 3.2.4.7 so as to exclude part K of the General Annexes to the General Annexes to the EC Horizon2020 Work programme 2014-2015.</p> <p>The Commission and the JU took note of the comments concerning the broadening of the scope and noted that the S2R JU has no derogations from the H2020 rules that would allow for more flexibility.</p> <p>The Chairman invited the delegations to send written comments on the WPs and especially on the issue concerning the priorities, by 15 May 2015.</p>
12:45-13:00	Any other business and date of the next meeting
	<p>In reply to a question raised by PT, concerning the confidentiality of the documents distributed to the SRG members and whether the SRG members can redistribute these documents to third parties, the Executive Director ad Interim explained that in general the confidentiality principle applies and that the SRG attendees should respect the Rules of Procedure, which set clear rules in this respect (Article 10).</p> <p>The Chairman indicated that a date for the next meeting of the group would be agreed with the Chairperson and communicated in due time. It was noted, however, that the next meeting will most likely take place in autumn.</p>