

Third meeting of the Shift2Rail States Representatives Group

22 October 2015

White Atrium building, meeting rooms 3-4
Avenue de la Toison d'Or 56-60, Brussels 10:00-13:00

Minutes

10:00-10:05	Introduction
	<p>The meeting was chaired by Mr Haltuf, Chairperson of the SRG. In his opening remarks the Chairperson welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of S2R to be a successful initiative for the railway sector. He noted that all actors should cooperate in this respect and that there are important milestones ahead in 2016 onwards. He asked the JU and the Commission to maintain frequent communication with the SRG and a continuous flow of information in-between the SRG meetings.</p> <p>A list of participants is attached.</p>
10:05-10:10	Approval of the provisional Agenda
	<p>The SRG members agreed on the provisional agenda, which had been circulated on 11 September 2015 (document attached). DK requested that the relevant agenda point could be specified for each distributed document. This was agreed.</p>
10:10-10:15	Approval of the minutes of the last meeting
	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting, as circulated on 20 October 2015, were approved (document attached).</p>
10:15-10:40	Report on the state of play of the S2R JU
	<p>Mr Economou, Executive Director ad interim of the S2R JU presented the latest developments related to the activities of the JU, in particular concerning the call for Associated Members, the recruitment of the Executive Director and the finalisation of the annual work plans 2015-2016 (presentation attached). He then replied to specific questions raised by the SRG members.</p> <p>The SRG took note of the information provided by the Executive Director ad Interim.</p> <p>Several delegations (UK, PT, NL, DE, ES, IT PL) highlighted the need for the</p>

participation of more railway undertakings (operators) as members of the S2R JU, in order to emphasise the end-user perspective and to guarantee the necessary balance with the industrial partners. IP4 was mentioned as a concrete case where the involvement of railway undertakings should be strengthened, as the proposed activities may not reflect the current state of the art. An additional call for associated members was proposed for this IP (DE, PT, IT).

The Executive Director ad interim explained that for the selection of the associated members the JU paid considerable attention to the involvement of the end users, while at the same time respecting the criterion of excellence, in accordance with the established rules. In this respect he reminded those present that the selection of the candidate associated members was based on the evaluation of their proposals by independent experts and the outcome of this evaluation had to be respected. He also explained that there are other limitations to be respected such as the minimum own contribution required in order to become an associated member. He noted that among the candidate associated members there are currently three railway undertakings, one of which is a big consortium comprising a number of undertakings and infrastructure managers and he reminded that two of the founding members are also railway operating companies. He also explained that the involvement of end users can also be achieved through the user requirements working group, which is currently being established.

Concerning IP4, the Executive Director ad interim noted the comments of the SRG members, which will be taken into account when finalising the description of the work, following the input from the Scientific Committee (in particular). He recognised that the evaluation of the proposals in this IP resulted in a limited participation of railway undertakings, however he noted that one of the founding members participating in this IP is a railway operating company. He also explained the possibility of associated members to be able to perform a limited number of activities in IPs other than the ones for which they had been selected.

In reply to a question raised by PL the Executive Director ad interim explained that the JU had decided to advance the work for the Multi Annual Action Plan (MAAP) in parallel to the completion of the JU membership, in order to avoid serious delays in launching the activities. If one of the redress cases, currently under examination, will lead to the acceptance of a candidate who is currently excluded, this candidate will become a member of the JU with equal rights. In addition the MAAP may need to be amended in order to reflect the possible new member's technical contribution in the various IPs. The Executive Director ad interim explained that the JU plans to reserve budget for such eventuality and for a possible second call for associated members (if needed).

Following SE's remark on the need for a simplification of the procedures for evaluating the Members' technical proposals in the upcoming calls, the Executive Director ad interim explained that the one-stage approach is likely will be followed, in line with the H2020 rules.

TR asked for the evaluation summary reports (ESR) to be sent to the SRG

	<p>members. The Executive Director ad interim explained that these are internal, technical documents that have been communicated only to the concerned applicants.</p> <p>UK and PT highlighted the need for the acceleration of the process for awarding grants, while DE noted that the quality of the work should not be compromised for the sake of speeding up. The Executive Director ad interim and the Commission explained that both the quality of work and the timing will be taken in due account and noted that the time for granting was up to eight months according to the H2020 rules).</p> <p>NL asked for more information on the setting up of the working groups and the criteria for selecting participants. The Executive Director ad interim explained that the Governing Board has decided to invite representative associations based on the ERA list of the European representative bodies (RBs), approved by the Committee referred to in Article 29 of Directive 2008/57/EC. He agreed to distribute the final list of participants to the SRG members for their information.</p> <p>In reply to a question raised by CZ, the Executive Director ad interim explained that the overall quality and fairness of the procedures is guaranteed by the fact that the H2020 rules are respected, and that the Commission and the JU are supervising all actions, assisted inter alia by the advisory bodies and the European Railway Agency.</p> <p>The JU also presented the latest developments with regard to the finalisation of the annual work plans for 2015, 2016 and the planning for 2017.</p> <p>In reply to AT's question, the JU explained that the topics for Open Calls can only be openly communicated in mid-December when the Work Plans for 2015 and 16 are adopted by the Governing Board and the first calls are expected to be launched.</p> <p>UK highlighted the need for additional flexibility with regard to the issue of subcontracting. NL and AT noted that the H2020 rules should be respected in order for the JU to be sure that the activities are carried out by the Members selected for this purpose. The JU noted that this issue has already been raised and discussed and that the JU will use flexibility on a case by case approach within the margins of the established rules.</p> <p>The SRG members took note of the information provided by the JU.</p>
<p>10:40-12:30</p>	<p>Shift2Rail Multiannual Action Plan (MAAP) – discussion and preliminary opinion</p>
	<p>The JU briefly presented the MAAP, as it has been submitted to the SRG and the Scientific Committee for consultation, highlighting that the MAAP was still being compiled.</p> <p>Several delegations (AT, PL, NL, UK, NO) noted that some time would be necessary in order to properly reflect on such a comprehensive document and made only preliminary remarks. It was highlighted (AT, NO) that the total</p>

	<p>amount of Open Calls reflected in the document is lower than the one foreseen by the Regulation. The JU explained that this is due to the fact that the non-Members part of Lighthouse projects had been inconsistently taken into account in the presentations provided by the IP coordinators. In reply to questions raised by PL and UK, the JU explained that the “system group” is comprised of S2R JU members and aims at coordinating the integration of Technical Demonstrators within or across IPs. AT highlighted that in IP2 there is a need for close cooperation with the standardisation organisations and this may not appear sufficiently in the document. The JU replied that this is the intention and will check that appropriate references are provided. Following NL’s comment, it was explained that the MAAP could not already describe the exact contribution of the members into the various activities as this will be determined by the award of the specific Actions Grants, following the successful evaluation of the Members' Action proposals. CZ noted that the described activities including their level of innovation in the TD should be reflected with the budget needs. The JU took note of the comment, and noted that this information already exists in the text and will be highlighted. In its intervention, IT highlighted the need to ensure coordination with other H2020 activities (synergies, consistency and elimination of overlaps) including the “<i>lighthouse</i>” projects, as well as the need to demonstrate the added value of the selected associated members in achieving the objectives of the Master Plan.</p> <p>To facilitate the work of the SRG, the Chairperson distributed a presentation (attached) including his initial comments/remarks, already indicating to the Members that it would not be possible to wait for the Scientific Committee feedback on the more technical parts (the detailed descriptions of the IPs), which the SRG members agreed, would rather be for the SC to comment.</p> <p>The SRG members were requested to use that presentation as the basis for formulating their comments and to submit their comments both to the Chairperson and to the JU. All the comments should reach the JU no later than 2 November 2015.</p>
12:30-12:45	SRG General Working Methods
	<p>Concerning the working methods of the SRG, the Chairperson proposed the creation of sub-groups, which would be open to all SRG members. The topics to be addressed will be defined (e.g. for looking into the issue of national strategies and research programmes). The Executive Director ad interim recognised the fact that the SRG may choose its own working methods but asked the SRG members to respect the mandate provided by the Regulation and to explore ways of maximising the efficiency of the work, taking into account also organisational issues and budgetary constraints.</p> <p>With regard to the cooperation with other bodies, such as the Scientific Committee and ERRAC, the SRG members agreed that open channels of communication should be established, and in this respect the Chairpersons of these bodies could be invited to participate in the meetings of the SRG. It was noted that the SRG Chairperson already participated in the last meeting of the</p>

	<p>Scientific Committee.</p> <p>The Chairperson proposed to distribute a draft for the SRG 2016 work plan.</p> <p>EL noted that the work of the SRG should be under the control of the JU and requested more information about the Chairperson's initiative to distribute a questionnaire. The Executive Director ad interim, supported by FR, noted that the provisions of the Regulation should be respected and these provisions define the role of the SRG. Concerning the questionnaire, he highlighted that this was an initiative by the Chairperson, without any involvement of the JU. The Chairperson noted that while respecting the rules, the SRG should maintain some independence. With regard to the questionnaire, the Chairperson will distribute the answers received from the SRG members upon request and this information will not be public.</p>
12:45-13:00	Next meeting
	<p>Following the comment of TR that the meeting should not always take place in Brussels, the Chairperson asked the SRG members to reflect and send possible proposals. The Executive Director ad interim noted the organisation of a meeting elsewhere is not excluded but should have the consent of the JU and that the organisational and practical aspects should be taken into consideration.</p> <p>The next meeting will take place in spring next year (indicative date: 12th or 13th of April 2016 or 26th or 27th of April. The date for the next meeting of the group would be agreed with the Chairperson and communicated in due time.</p>