8th MEETING OF THE EUROPE'S RAIL SRG

28 February 2024

09:30 – 12:30

1. **Introduction:** The Chair of the SRG welcomed the participants to the meeting and asked the new members to introduce themselves. There were no declarations of conflict of interest based on Agenda items.	09:30- 09:45
2. **Approval of the Agenda and previous MoM:** The Chair proposed some extra points for discussion during the meeting: - **Proposal to organise an online meeting to introduce the SRG to the new EU-Rail's ED as soon as appointed** There was no disagreement on this proposal. - **Access and use of CIRCAbc (collaborative platform that had been proposed by the SRG for sharing documents within the group)** The Chair commented that currently only the JU secretariat can upload documents and proposed that he was also given this right. There was no disagreement on this proposal. He also pointed that it was important to have the option not to disclose certain documents to all persons who have access to CIRCAbc if needed. At the request of some members, it was agreed that when a prompt reaction from members was required on a specific document, these should be sent via email (in addition of CIRCAbc). - **List of country representatives and main representative** A discussion was held on the lead SRG Representative designated for the purpose of decision making, as well as on the number of representatives per country in the SRG. The ED a.i. clarified that the rules of procedure (RoP) stipulate that SRG shall consist of up to two representatives and up to two alternates (referred to as "SRG Representatives(s)") officially nominated from each Member State and country associated to Horizon Europe (referred to as SRG Member(s)). He added that it is the responsibility of each SRG Member to nominate its SRG Representatives by means of written notification addressed to the Chairperson of the Governing Board, via the secretariat of the SRG; this also in case when representatives cease their role at the SRG, also to ensure the information on the EU-Rail's website is up to date. It was agreed that the JU secretariat will ask confirmation of the current existing list to the members as well as the name of the lead SRG Representative designated for the purpose of decision making. For this latter point, flexibility will be possible in function of the decision point in the agenda meeting, prior communication of change of lead.	09:45- 09:50

The Chair proposed having at least one physical SRG meeting per year. The Agenda for the meeting was then approved, as well as the minutes of the previous meeting without any comments.	2
3. Conclusions of SRG Extraordinary meeting of 6 February 2024: - **Presentation and approval of Conclusions** *(See latest version of Conclusions on meeting's presentation and CIRCAbc)* The Chair informed that the list of conclusions proposed at the extraordinary meeting slightly changed due to some comments he received on the eve of the meeting. The IT Representative proposed to spell out the acronyms used on the conclusions and in general for all documents. The action was agreed for future documentation. Regarding the list of conclusions, the SRG already provided their agreement to the last point (*'support to ED's proposal on DAC NCP Group'*), following a presentation by the Chair. He then referred to the 2nd point from the bottom of the list (*'SRG to focus on one extra topic per year within ERJU Research activities to give extra support'*). This would be only one point per year because good preparation requires a lot of time. ATO can be the topic for this year. Lastly, in relation to the 3rd point from the bottom of the list (*'SRG asks for specific study on transport policies'*), the Chair referred to a proposal prepared by the DE and FR representatives on which a final decision should be taken at the next meeting. He stressed that in the current context, there is a need to have results as soon as possible to be implemented into the market. Members were encouraged to reflect and send their comments on the challenge to migrate innovations into the existing system and how to support it from the regulatory point of view. *(See emails sent by DE and FR to SRG members on 28/02 and 05/03, respectively).* The Chair concluded that the list of conclusions that was added to the PowerPoint presentation as well as uploaded in CIRCAbc, will be also distributed with the minutes for possible additional comment in order to seek for a common agreement to be formalised in the next meeting. AT representative proposed to invite the Western Balkan countries group as an observer to an SRG meeting when convenient, initiative welcomed by the Chair.	09:50-10:30
4. Europe's Rail JU activities update: - **Report on System Pillar (SP) work** The ED a.i. presented to the SRG a proposal for a standardised approach to system pillar reporting. This work can be improved by members' suggestions and dedicated sections can be held if requested. Soenke Kraft (SK) project manager at EU-Rail did a presentation, starting with the work done in the last 6 months and a progress report highlighting the main points of attention. This presentation led to a broad discussion. The NL Representative asked about the certitude that technology will work in practice. SK replied that the main work of the SP Steering Group is on the identification of the requirements and that it will always be a fusion of different sources of information. The idea is to leave the freedom to the	10:45-11:45

operators to decide how to implement certain process. The NL representative underlined that freedom is fine if not moving to different levels which may affect interoperability. SK agreed.

The ED a.i. explained the work with the innovation pillar in this context, as well as of the deployment group.

The Chair commented on TMS, highlighting the importance to take into consideration the timetable, links to general public (timetable, moving trains, making connections available, smooth access to information, passengers' rights regulation, etc.) and that all together it is a very complex model, and that this complexity should be taken into account.

The NL representative asked about the discussions with ERA. SK replied that the idea is to have a precise specification of the data elements available in the railway sector. Currently the question is how to integrate better the CCS into the ERA databases, which is complex, because the level of detail of the overall CCS (also outside interoperability and safety) may be broader than ERA current databases. To ensure a strong link with ERA work is key.

The AT representative asked about the process in place for the STIP. The Chair agreed to ask for more information about who will be working on STIP content and what are the next steps. SK replied that the main idea for STIP is to look at the important topics, and ensure the topics are transferred into the harmonisation channel. But for sure not all possible topics shall be included, and it is a picture of the work ongoing in the EU Rail JU. The topics are collected from the flagships projects and system pillar activities, including comments from stakeholders, infrastructure managers, associations, taking all into account for the creation of the next draft of the STIP. The STIP is not only about TSI, but also about standardisation as well as other topics which might be come later in time.

The AT representative expressed her doubts that perhaps the work is done twice. The ED a.i. clarified that the idea of the STIP is not to substitute the existing processes, but with the STIP process we are ensuring the output of R&I of EU-Rail can be brought in a consistent and quality manner to TSI and standard with a sectorial consensus.

SK finalised his presentation by referring to the more than 1000 comments received, which are now being analysed. Many comments are repeated, but the analysis will take some time. The STIP is a living document as more information will be integrated and a new consolidated version will be prepared.

- **Information on Amendment of WP 2024**

The ED a.i. informed on the first amendment of the Work Programme 2024 to shift part of the budget appropriations from last year to this year 2024 for the completion of the pending payments of S2R projects. He explained that there was no content change.

- **Presentation of draft WP 2025-2026 + first feedback from the SRG members**

The ED a.i. presented the biannual WP which include the foreseen launch of the second wave of Flagship projects and that SRG's final opinion would be needed by October. The reason is that its adoption is scheduled for the GB meeting of November.

The AT representative asked for some indications on how to contribute to this work and informed on the preparation of a template that could be used as a model. The Chair agreed to share the template

with all members and thanked him for the initiative. But he added that it was a decision of each country how to participate in this consultation. *(See template in CIRCAbc)*

The NL representative asked for an indication about TRLs. The ED a.i. referred to the Annex VI – Call(s) for proposals 2025. The topics for the Flagship Projects have been defined from the text of the MAWP. For the Exploratory Research topic instead the topics for research are not drafted yet (for the moment it's only an indicative budget).

Several members asked for guidance on how to participate in this exercise. It was agreed that a calendar of expectations for the updates would be sent to SRG members.

The ED a.i. informed that an initial planning had been presented the day before at the SIPB meeting but not yet updated. It consists of the following:

- First draft finalised by the beginning of June and then shared with the SRG.
- Final sharing of the document for final opinion in September, so that it is ready on time for approval at the SRG meeting of October.

The JU will also request for a specific input to the SRG to define the content of the Exploratory Research topics, providing a template and deadline before the next SRG of May for discussion.

- **Information on EU-Rail ongoing calls for proposal**

The ED a.i. informed of the on-going evaluation for 2023 Call for proposals and of the launch of the 2024 Call for proposals, thanking members for advertising the calls in their respective countries.

- **Status of Deployment Group (DG) setup**

The ED a.i. informed that a list of 32 candidacies for the composition of the new DG were presented to the SIPB on the day before. The next step will be to make a recommendation to the EC for a final selection.

The Chair proposed that the SRG is informed about the meeting planning and work to be done, to which the ED a.i. assented. The SRG will also be informed on the final selection by the EC.

- **Planning presentation for Call for new associated members**

The ED a.i. explained that this exercise is foreseen in the Single Basic Act and already planned in the current year EU-Rail's WP with the objective of ensuring good representation. Technical criteria and timetable are being prepared. The draft call will be submitted to the GB in June and should be launched after, and upon GB approval.

- **Planning presentation for the draft update Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP)**

The ED a.i. informed about the status of this work and invited members to provide input on new priorities.

The Chair proposed to focus on military mobility, in particular digitalisation, including the humanitarian aspect.

- **Expression of interest for the 100 DAC test trains**

The ED a.i. informed about the status after an informative session that took place on 22 February. The JU is currently waiting to receive feedback from those interested in performing. The deadline for the expression of interest was extended until 15 March. Many questions so far were related to funding. An estimation of the cost needs to be done based also on the replies and, on this basis, funding and financing will be explored. The Chair commented that some preliminary works to make the infrastructure safe for moving those trains would be also necessary. - **Overall other activities report** The ED a.i. presented the status of the EU-Rail activities (*for more information see the presentation*). The DE representative proposed to invite the flagships leaders to SRG meetings to inform on their work. The ED a.i. proposed to consider this after the next meeting, following the presentation by the JU of the first-year assessment of the FPs. The NL representative suggested that the focus was more on high level KPIs rather than technical aspects. - **Communication and dissemination** The ED a.i. highlighted in particular the Innotrans programme, which will be shared with the SRG members once finalised.	5
5. SRG members' input on MS activities related to rail R&I: - **Input received and presented to be published in EU-Rail website** - **Input missing and expected calendar to receive it** - **Template improvement suggestions** The ED a.i. presented the projects that had been received so far from 9 countries. The JU team did an initial analysis on possible synergies and proposed actions. The SRG members agreed to express their agreement or disagreement with the proposed actions <u>by the end of March</u>. The ED a.i. also informed the members that the publication of the SRG contribution on the website is under progress. The SRG members not having yet contributed to this work were encouraged to provide their input as soon as possible and <u>in advance to the next SRG</u>. A new status will be provided in May. SRG members having already contributed are both encouraged to provide suggestions for improvements of the template, as well as adding any new elements in updating last year input.	11:45-12:15
6. Closing remarks and AoB: - **Interest session on TRA** The Chair informed that the SRG will be present at this event. The ED a.i. added that the JU ensures a rail representative in different sessions, including the plenaries, and that for the first time EU-Rail we will have a joint stand with Clean Aviation, Clean Hydrogen and SESAR JUs. - **Connecting Europe Days**	12:15-12:30

The ED a.i. informed the SRG on the event dedicated to DAC in the backdrop of the Belgian Council Presidency. Should SRG members be interested to attend they should register and inform the JU. - **Dates of next SRG meetings:** 14 May and 9 October 2024	6