

SUPERVISORY BOARD

Meeting 3 July 2024

14h30 – 16h30

Minutes

PARTICIPANTS

BACCONNIER Estelle	EC (DG MOVE)
BANNHOLZER Constanze	ÖBB
COUNE Carole	AERRL
ENGELMANN Jens	Railable
FISCHER Nils-Henning	Deutsche Bahn
FITCH Keir	EC (DG MOVE)
FÖRST Clemens	ÖBB Rail Cargo Group
GACHOT Jean-Philippe	CER
GRÄBER Johannes	Knorr-Bremse

LIPPERT Valeska	EU-Rail JU
MARXEN Ralf	Deutsche Bahn
NOËL Tibo	NUON.CONSULTING
TABOURET Hugo	UNIFE
TIONE Roberto	Wabtec
TRAVAINI Giorgio	EU-Rail JU
TOPAL-GOEKCELI Mark	ÖBB
VAN GILS Karel	EU-Rail JU

1. Introduction, welcome, adoption of the agenda

Keir FITCH opened the meeting. He welcomed the success of the high-level DAC event in Brussels early April as well as the high interest of stakeholders in the pioneer trains initiative. On the other hand, he pointed to the remaining difficulties around the funding and financing of DAC. Jens ENGELMANN (JE) welcomed the attendees, initiated the meeting with the 2024 work programme and presented the agenda. Hugo TABOURET introduced himself as UNIFE's representative on the EDDP Supervisory Board (SB).

2. Review of actions since the last SB

KF reported on what had happened since the last SB meeting, including the receipt of the expressions of interest, the Connecting Europe Days and the modularity/interchangeability report, which would be discussed in more detail during the meeting.

Those present approved the adoption of the minutes of the last EDDP SB meeting of 14 February 2024.

Giorgio TRAVAINI (GT) informed about the endorsement and decision point on the FP5 E-Coupler planned for this meeting, which should be followed by a press release. He also emphasised the success of the Connecting Europe Days from 2 to 5 April 2024 and the relevance of the joint demonstration of achievements in railway innovation. He pointed out the political persuasion task that still lies ahead and is necessary in view of the need for national financial participation.

→ Members to reach out to the Member States to argue for the relevance of the DAC and its financing.

FP5-TRANS4M-R/FDFTO

KF explained the SB – after the technical discussion in the Programme Board (PB) – was invited to formally endorse and recommend the FP5 E-coupler to the EU institutions. This would lay the foundation for the standardisation of interfaces in the relevant Technical Specifications for Interoperability via the relevant review processes of the EU Agency for Railways (ERA).

3. E-coupler decision

Constanze BANNHOLZER (CB) described the developments on the FDFTO electrical coupler design assessment. She reported on the test activities on two electrical coupler designs from Knorr-Bremse and Voith, which have been taking place since Q3 2023 in the context of the FP5 and DAC4EU projects. She informed about the establishment of an operator expert group in FP5, which assessed the design status of the suppliers and developed a recommendation based on technical criteria and an LCC assessment, as well as of Sounding Board meetings to evaluate the process and results. She then demonstrated the e-couplers developed, the parties involved in the decision-making process in FP5, and the field and laboratory tests carried out. *For more details, please refer to the presentation.*

CB informed about the recommendation of the operator expert group and the FP5 Steering committee decision to the SB in favour of the choice of the Voith electric coupler. She confirmed that she will align on the legal topic after the meeting which was requested by EC, which is the following: Voith complies to all legal and contractual obligations to provide access under at least FRAND conditions to IP which is indispensable to achieve interoperability functions. All DAC suppliers work commonly on a license agreement with defined rules for DAC suppliers (and third parties) to access IP technically and/or legally indispensable to achieve interoperability.

Those present endorsed the proposed design for the e-coupler and agreed to recommend it to the EU institutions.

→ The press material to be published following the formal endorsement of the SB should be shared with DG MOVE beforehand.

4. G: State of play 100 pioneer DAC trains incl. debrief EC meeting

Karel VAN GILS (KvG) explained the process around the DAC pioneer trains, with bilateral discussions and surveys currently being held with the PDT applicants, which are to be summarised within a report by September 2024. He then presented some of the collected framework data on the project, including the companies involved, assets, routes, and other scope indicators. He emphasised the geographically and sectoral widespread participation and expressed satisfaction with what has been achieved so far. He also demonstrated the (cross-border) routes involved in the plan, some of which were still under discussion. He also emphasised the diversity in test parameters, which still could change, such as climatic conditions or shunting, made possible by the number of routes. *For more detailed information, please refer to the presentation.*

Carole COUNE (CC) mentioned an unlisted company that had expressed interest in participating in the pioneer trains. JE confirmed that the company participations were still changing and that adjustments would be made in the following presentations.

JE emphasised that also parties previously critical of the project would participate in the discussions, demonstrating their fundamental interest.

Mark TOPAL-GOEKCELI (MT) praised the demonstrated interest of new parties and the progress around the DAC pioneer trains and stressed the relevance of this

commitment in testing in the argumentation for the performance and improvement of the technology. He addressed the outstanding issues around planning and securing funding for full deployment, which would require a political commitment from Commission and Member States. He specified that an indication of political commitment through financial contribution by the European Commission and a qualified majority of Member States was necessary to ensure the continuation of the project.

KF informed that the financial resources available from the European Commission (EC) (esp. Connecting Europe Facility) are limited and will not be sufficient for both the pioneer trains and the full system deployment. He insisted on the responsibility of the partners to coordinate support within the Member States, at best at government level, especially in the context of the current discussions on the new multiannual financial framework. He added that mechanisms (e.g. through EDDP) were needed to coordinate heterogeneous contributions of the Member States. The last CEF call under the current multi-annual framework will be published in September. DAC will be included in the call, with limited finances available. The sector has to prepare to make a CEF proposal.

MT considered European funding to be necessary for Europe-wide implementation and the persuasion or retention of more critical partners.

CC suggested the publication of a joint position paper by all parties involved addressed to the Member States and European institutions to emphasise the relevance of the financing issue. MT assured that similar endeavours had been implemented and that the basic question of general participation and acceptance of the endeavour had priority.

MT reemphasised the relevance of project implementation in the form of European cooperation. KF suggested analysing and reporting on the consequences of a failure to fund the pioneer trains. He also replied that the current position within the financial cycle would probably not allow for many concrete commitments. MT agreed to the preparation of such a report and held out the prospect of supporting the persuasion process in any form needed.

KvG argued for the joint mobilisation of the companies currently involved to lobby for the participation of their countries.

GT argued that the political decision had not yet been made in favour of or against financial support for the pioneer trains and that the current transition phase could also open opportunities for European policy. He agreed that Member States need to be convinced to put the DAC on the next political agenda. MT replied that the prioritisation of investment from the EU budget also needed to be addressed and added that what was needed initially was a political signal in support of the endeavour. KF again proposed the provision of a full impact analysis of the failure of the project. JE added that this should also include social and overall industrial effects.

Ralf MARXEN (RF) added that a prompt and clear answer to the financing question (by September 2024) was necessary, especially from the supplier's point of view, to maintain their willingness to invest. KF agreed on the importance of public funding commitments.

MT declared his willingness to act as an interface for all feedback on the issue of financing DAC pioneer trains and full system deployment.

GT added that only the recent project progresses made it possible to discuss the financing plan. MT replied that the issue has been open for discussion for some time already. He added that priorities in relation to research activities could be reprioritised from the JU budget.

5. Summary of the exchange in the 25/04/24 Programme Board

JE reported on the contents of the PB meeting held on 25 April 2024. He referred to the definition of single points of contact with the aim of improving project synchronisation and alignment.

GT informed about the selection of the "DACFIT" project in the context of the EU-Rail call "DAC retrofitting & retrofit capacity plan", which is now in the process of drawing up the Grant Agreement, whereby neutrality and confidentiality aspects are still being clarified.

JE reminded the audience of the risk management-related definition of the EDDP work areas and the scaling down of operational activities.

For more detail on the state of play and way forward of the points mentioned, please refer to the presentation or the minutes of the PB meeting from 25 April 2024.

6. Summary of the exchange in the 26/06/24 Programme Board

JE reported on the content and events of the PB meeting held on 26 June 2024. He referred to the work streams of quantitative fleet analysis and the vehicle fleet upgrading database to be covered in the context of the DACFIT project. He also informed about the discussions on the need to define alternative migration scenarios and the implementation of a sounding board on risk management based on voluntary participation.

KF asked about the provision of necessary information and participation in discussions by parties raising significant concerns re. the impact of DAC on their business. JE confirmed that their participation could be ensured more effectively in the future thanks to more individual addressing.

For more detail on the state of play and way forward of the points mentioned, please refer to the presentation or the minutes of the PB meeting from 26 June 2024.

7. B2: EDDP stakeholder management plan + actions

JE reported on the stakeholder management (SM) plan requested and developed in the "DACcord" project in 2023. He explained that now an introduction to the basic mode of operation was to be given before a dedicated information session on the topic would be organised. He explained the organisation within an SM core group and reminded the participants of the objectives to be pursued in relation to the stakeholders and the questions to be answered. He then presented and explained the DAC stakeholder map, which assigns information needs to the various parties, showing the clear need for technological demonstrators and harmonised materials. He emphasised the outstanding relevance of the finance ministries of the Member States, whose decision for or against the pioneer trains depends on the provision of information by all other parties. Next, he summarised the recommendations on the priority actions in SM. Accordingly, the technology should be made tangible as soon as possible through demonstrators, which would be possible on several occasions (e.g. InnoTrans 2024). He also emphasised the UNIFE study on the employment and economic effects of the DAC on the member states. Furthermore, he informed about the organisation of regular information days and DAC fora to share content and generate input. This is done in cooperation with the National Contact Points, which have now been extensively defined. He then outlined the country grouping that has taken place. Finally, he emphasised the relevance of the developments shown for the argumentation around the financing of the pioneer trains. *For more detailed information on the background, components, and outputs of the SM plan, please refer to the presentation.*

→ Partners interested in participating in a workshop or other session on the SM Plan should express their willingness to do so via one of the organising institutions.

MT clarified that the technological progress was remarkable and due to the commitment of many stakeholders, which should be considered a great success. His calls for the funding question to be answered should be interpreted as a continued commitment. KF explained that the advanced project successes and the consequences of failure in relation to the EU's objectives must now be highlighted at a political level. JE confirmed that further dialogue on the topic could be expected in the coming weeks.

8. B2: Report on NCP kick-off meeting

Estelle BACCONNIER reported that the first meeting of the DAC National Contact Points (NCPs) allowed to clarify the role they were expected to play. In addition, NCPs were informed about the plan to organise regional fora. She explained that a number of NCPs also reported on developments around DAC in their country. *For more details on the objectives of the NCP definition and the representatives announced, please refer to the presentation.* JE emphasised the advantages of the synergies and efficiencies made possible by the NCPs. KF asked the members of the EDDP SB to co-operate in reporting national events to the DAC.

9. B2: Communication/dissemination 2024 – State of Play InnoTrans

JE provided an overview of all DAC-related activities and representatives created for InnoTrans 2022 as a reference, which should also be created for InnoTrans 2024. He informed about the realisation of DAC-dedicated guided tours and the provision of labels to demonstrate the common activity context.

System Pillar (Task 4)

Johannes GRÄBER (JG) informed about ongoing activities of the System Pillar under Task 4, including the preparation of the rulebook, which supports the DAC pioneer trains on staff training and guidance. He informed that the FDFTO central instance (FCI) – as the central organisation for data exchange, software downloads and system authorisation – was still undergoing the concept development. Finally, he reported on the exchange with FP5 on the support of the ETCS hybrid and moving block concept (train length and train integrity) by DAC. He held out the prospect of providing a clear proposal to the Steering Group by September 2024.

AOB and closing

JE informed about the next EDDP SB meeting to be held on 14 October 2024. Keir FITCH closed this EDDP SB meeting.