



**UIC ERTMS world conference:
over 750 participants from 35 countries in Malaga on 31 March-2 April**

***All elements are now available for a fast and effective deployment of ERTMS,
the interoperable rail traffic management system.***

(Paris, 6 April 2009). The UIC ERTMS world conference 2009, the leading event dedicated to the deployment of ERTMS (the European Rail Traffic Management System) was an impressive success. 750 participants from 35 countries and all 5 continents, among them all stakeholders involved in the implementation of ETCS (European Train Control System) and GSM-R (Radio Communications System for Railways), representatives of railways, industries and a number of leading institutions, and more than 40 exhibitors were present during 2 days in Malaga (Spain) to take stock of progress, exchange experiences on the implementation and set goals and objectives for the future deployment.

In Europe, ETCS is currently in commercial operation in 9 countries on more than 2,500 route-km (4,500 track-km). Spain has been chosen for this 2009 edition for its role as a major ERTMS implementer. *Josefina Cruz Villalón*, the Spanish Transport State Secretary and *Antonio Gonzalez Marin*, Chairman of ADIF, outlined the Spanish commitment to the railways and the development of ERTMS.

Spain has been and still is one of the most important players of ERTMS. Today, 1,050 km of high speed lines incorporate the ETCS level 1 which makes Spain the country with the highest number of kilometres of ETCS in operation worldwide. ETCS plays a key role for a high performance network that allowed achieving a high punctuality and liability rate of 99%. Moreover, Spain is starting to implement the system in the commuter network of Madrid, which will result in an increase of the infrastructure capacity and safety level.

GSM-R will be rolled-out on the whole national network to replace the previous existing communication system. Important future challenges will be the start up of ETCS level 2 on high speed lines with the possibility to increase speed up to 350 km/h in the short term and cross acceptance for the circulation in Spain of French and Portuguese trains and vice-versa. Both *Josefina Cruz Villalón* and *Antonio Gonzalez Marin* stressed that Spain has proved that interoperability is possible.

Karel Vinck, after 3 years in his function as Coordinator of the European Commission for ERTMS, stated that *"he is now optimistic that all rail stakeholders will get ERTMS "on board and on track" for the biggest technological, economical and operational step forward for cross border traffic*. In this time of economic crisis, investment in infrastructure projects is part of the solution. There is now a consolidated and interoperable standard, the SRS 2.3.0.d which is the single technological baseline unifying all previous versions. The European Commission prepared the ERTMS European Deployment Plan. Beyond the mandatory deployment on the 6 priority ERTMS corridors by 2015-2020 the plan foresees a complete roll-out on the whole Trans-European Network.

Marcel Verslype, ERA Executive Director, explained the role of the European Rail Agency (ERA) as the system authority for the ERTMS specifications. The tasks of the Agency are to ensure, in close cooperation with the representative organizations of the sector, the maintenance of the

current version of the specifications for ETCS and GSM-R, and in parallel to develop the new versions. This activity needs to balance the necessary protection of the investments already committed for ERTMS projects, with the opportunity offered by an enabling technology to allow exploitation of new business opportunities, operational improvements and better efficiency for the railways. The backward compatibility of the new version of the system is required by the new interoperability directive).

Béatrice Dunogué-Gaffié, Provisional Administrator of the International Union of Railways (UIC), underlined that *“UIC, as the only railway professional body which was in existence when the first blue-print for the ETCS system was prepared over 20 years ago, has continued to support and work actively to achieve the objectives of ERTMS”*. She added that *“it is an extremely rewarding validation of all that effort, to see the enthusiasm with which the Spanish Railways have committed themselves to this ambitious project, and how the European Commission continues to place its faith in the project and in the future of the Railways”*.

ERTMS finds increasing interest as well for important railway networks outside Europe. *Michael Clausecker*, General Director of the Association of the European rail industry (UNIFE) stated that *“ERTMS, initially a major European project, now appears as the global signalling standard and is being embraced by the railways worldwide”*. Nearly 50 % of the total ERTMS trackside investments are made by non European countries. ERTMS has become a showcase for the European technology excellence worldwide. More than 1,600 route-km (3,000 track-km) are in operation in Taiwan (China) and South-Korea in particular. China, Saudi-Arabia and Turkey are amongst the top five investors of ERTMS. Other countries interested in ERTMS or already implementing are India, Morocco, Australia, Algeria, Mexico.

Pierpaolo Di Labio, Chairman of the GSM-R Industry Group, affirmed *“we can look very optimistically at what has been achieved by the common efforts of the group in making GSM-R a well established world communications platform for railways”* Europe has since long passed from a national deployment level to an international one and Asia, Africa and Australia are now on the GSM-R world map as well. About 45 countries in 5 continents are expected to select GSM-R by 2012. GSM-R is embarking now on new challenges such as keeping pace with technological development in order to avoid obsolescence, optimizing the use of available infrastructure with the implementation of new applications.

Taking the floor at the Closing Ceremony, *José Damian Santiago*, Infrastructure Secretary General of Spain and *Yoshio Ishida*, UIC Chairman and Vice President of JR East (Japan) underlined the importance of the UIC ERTMS world Conference and expressed their thanks to all actors in the field of signalling, radio- and telecommunications who made this ERTMS conference a success.

José Damian Santiago added that Spain has proved that by creating a first laboratory in the field of ERTMS committing all stakeholders, it achieved the goal of interoperability and therewith simplify authorization and certification in Europe. For Spain it is feasible to continue with the system that will have a benefit for the citizens as well.

Yoshio Ishida who started his mandate as UIC Chairman on 1 April, stressed that he is well aware of the significant of the ERTMS project for European railways but underlined that the ETCS and GSM-R systems are now also finding new markets outside Europe. He took the occasion to announce that, as part of the UIC Global Signalling initiative, East Japan Railways would host the 2nd UIC Global Conference on Traffic Management and Train Control Systems in June 2010.

Technical Visit with ERTMS on high speed trains

The technical visit, organised by ADIF and RENFE, on 31 March was a great success. Two high-speed trains with ERTMS cab signals transmitted on to monitors in each carriage departed from Malaga train station carrying 600 people for a live demonstration of ERTMS on the high-speed line section between Malaga and Cordoba. Among others ADIF and RENFE showed the functioning of the interface between ERTMS and conventional signalling. Exhibitions of rolling stock and infrastructure related equipment in the stations of Malaga and Cordoba gave additional in-sights to the participants.

For any further information please contact:

Media

Liesbeth de Jong, UIC Press Relations Manager
Tel: + 33 1 44 49 20 53, e-mail: dejong@uic.asso.fr

Delphine Margot, UIC Communications Advisor
Tel: + 33 1 44 49 20 55, e-mail: margot@uic.asso.fr

ERTMS

Paolo de Cicco, UIC ERTMS Platform Manager
Tel.: + 33 1 44 49 20 65, e-mail: decicco@uic.asso.fr

ERTMS 2009 Conference

Françoise El Alaoui, Project Manager ERTMS
Conference
Tel : + 33 1 44 49 20 62, e-mail: elalaoui@uic.asso.fr
Website:
www.ertms-conference.com