

## **UIC European Management Committee & 17<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly Europe**

11 December 2013

**Mauro Moretti**

**UIC Vice-Chairman**

**Elected UIC Europe Chairman**

Dear colleagues, dear Mr Loubinoux, it is with real pleasure that I accept the responsibility of leading UIC Europe. I would like to warmly thank you for your confidence.

### **A stronger UIC that leads in innovation**

UIC has been for many years the only worldwide rail where standards, best practices and networking between the railway companies have been developed. At the European level, UIC has provided most of the technical inputs which support the Single Railway Area policy, and has been recognized as an important stakeholder for the progress of the European liberalization process.

Training and transfer of Know how among companies have been a constant driver and positive feature of UIC.

However, despite the significant increase in passenger kilometers travelled and the launch of high quality, high speed rail services in the past decade, the total rail share of land transportation in Europe has remained substantially flat.

These sobering figures point to a vast range of unleveraged opportunities for growth, but represent at the same time a threat where the opportunities go unrecognized and are not pursued.

These challenges shall find a coherent and sustainable answer from the Railway Operating Companies that are responsible for the performances of the services offered; one of the basic tools to implement this framework is the availability of standards good for the fulfilment of these requirements and to supply to the other stakeholders precise and complementary references.

UIC - and particularly UIC Europe - are the places where to develop these activities. The UIC Guidelines on Railway Standardisation, the evolution of Leaflets into International Railway Standards, their aggregation in clusters or self-consistent applicative projects are on-going examples.

However, I have to note and underline that the declining number of UIC technical projects in the last years in Europe does not bode well.

### **ICT a special case?**

European Citizens, our Customers, live in a working and leisure environment that is increasingly ICT instrumented, in “smart” cities and regions, consuming and producing interconnected “smart” services integrated with digital telecommunications and collaboration technologies based on open industry ICT standards. In this case, UIC proprietary standards have failed so far to keep pace with the need of integrating rail mobility into the Consumer’s experience of life in a ‘digital’ environment.

Furthermore, with no market uptake outside of the Rail community, such proprietary standards have no support from the ICT industry adding costs and limiting evolution and adoption. A special reflection should be devoted to these aspects.

## **Research and Shift2Rail**

In the next 7 years EC research funds will be available almost exclusively through the Shift2Rail joint technology initiative, starting with the Horizon 2020 open calls to be launched today (Dec 11<sup>th</sup> 2013) which are directly linked to it.

Access of the UIC Rail Operators to those funds are therefore predicated on their orienting their research initiatives on the fundamental objectives of the Shift2Rail work program, which includes, on explicit demand from the EC, and by participation of some Rail Operators including Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane, Customer experience systems. There can be no UIC leading role in either the initial Horizon 2020 open calls or the subsequent Shift2Rail JTI where such research and industrialization projects are ignored, and there can be no UIC leading role where new products are created without UIC’s active participation.

Participation in the Horizon 2020 open calls and Shift2Rail however requires a fundamental adaptation of current UIC platforms, procedures and working practices to the new research legal framework and work plan.

The UIC has recognized the challenges and the need to re-orient its activities focusing on markets and Customers, and has demonstrated its determination and ability through the establishment of the Standardization Platform with a goal of using “Standardisation [as] the means to provide the integration, dissemination and exploitation of best practices, results and procedures, while linking them to the economic factors for the benefits of Customers”. In its first year of operation, the Standard Platform has created clusters of revitalized UIC leaflets organized under the International Railways Standard layout.

This effort must be extended and replicated, integrating it with the new research work program, to turn the UIC once again into a leader in Rail innovation. Shift2Rail is a huge opportunity for our sector, but also a test for UIC that have to invest also in training. Our Research Department will be tested by the new European initiative.

Leadership cannot be claimed: it must be taken and executed by a willing and capable group of innovators united on a purpose. That’s the challenge for UIC and for ourselves.

Thank you very much again for your attention and for your confidence.