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A new annex signed as part of the coordination framework signed at the end of 2021 between UIC and the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA)

Consolidated synchronisation in the field of combined transport between the two bodies

(Paris, 16 October 2023) Combined transport is key to achieving a carbon neutral transport sector in the context of the European Green Deal. Combined transport, presenting a range of benefits, contributes towards a better quality of life and proposes a seamless transport solution in order to improve the productivity of the entire chain. **The UIC combined transport codification system** has been in use for 40 years and is effectively applied by railway undertakings, infrastructure managers, and stakeholders from the rail supply chain throughout Europe.

In 2023, the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) contacted UIC asking for its permission to copy certain parts of UIC IRS 50596-6 into an ERA Technical Document, which will be referenced in the new versions of the WAG TSI, OPE TSI and RINF Regulation, set for publication by the European Commission in the near future.

The new ERA Technical Document N°ERA/TD/2023-01/CCT clearly identifies the sections from UIC and the corresponding UIC copyrights. ERA agreed to involve UIC in any modification of the ERA TD, and vice-versa, as it is important that the two documents remain synchronised with each other.

Therefore, on 29 June 2023, ERA and UIC signed a new annex to the Coordination Framework from 29 November 2021, in which the parties agreed to a number of principles and practical arrangements. These included that UIC will continue its cooperation with ERA on the evolution of the corresponding TSI provisions, application guides and technical documents, while maintaining the intellectual property rights of any UIC IRS or other UIC documents used by ERA in the field of combined transport.

François Davenne, UIC Director-General, said: *“It is important that our two organisations continue their valuable cooperation, which dates back to the establishment of the European Union Agency for Railways”*.

Josef Doppelbauer, ERA Executive Director, said: *“ERA welcomes the cooperation with UIC, as UIC can bring sector expertise from its European members for the preparation of harmonised specifications in several innovative domains such as in mobile communications (FRMCS) or smart ticketing (OSDM)”*.

Additional information:

In combined transport across various European countries, the upper sections of most ILUs (intermodal loading units) foul the loading gauge when they are loaded on wagons or bogies. Their carriage must therefore be covered by the procedure for exceptional consignments as per UIC IRS 50502. However, the cumbersome nature of the procedure made it necessary to relax the rules and, in order to reliably facilitate and speed up transport, a coding system for various elements of combined transport was established. The system ensures the safe operation of ILUs, indicates their loading gauges and ensures the owner is identified. IRS 50596-6 sets out the prescriptions for this system, in terms of ILUs, carrier wagons and lines, which ensures safe operation. The system has now been used for several decades by various companies in the combined transport chain. Those who do not wish to apply the IRS 50596-6 procedure must implement organisational measures which ensure the same level of reliability.

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