



INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS

UIC Railway Noise Days – 23/24 February 2021

Only the spoken word prevails

23 February 2021

Concluding Remarks from Jakob Oertli

First, and this cannot be repeated often enough, railways are a sustainable means of transportation and must therefore be promoted. Even if climate issues have not been in the news so much recently due to Corona, this does not mean that these topics have disappeared. In addition, due to the pandemic, many railways are struggling financially, and this must be considered when looking into the future. In other words, this means that railways must not be burdened with high costs that could be incurred through exaggerated additional noise measures. This does not mean, of course, that the railways are not aware of their noise issue and are willing to do their best to reduce noise, it just means that all measures must be carefully analysed in terms of their costs and benefits.

Are we a good neighbour? I, for one, certainly think so. Railways have already put a tremendous effort into reducing noise, having built many thousands of kilometres of noise barriers in Europe, new freight rolling stock is much more silent than old rolling stock, a significant part of existing freight fleet has been retrofitted with composite brake blocks and starting 2024 only silent rolling stock will be allowed on important freight lines. But more needs to be done. Currently, a lot of research is being put into possible new measures. For example, the components of the track are being analysed and improved, so that they are less noisy and result in less maintenance effort at the same time. Finally, we are talking about the issues involved in an as open way as possible and we endeavour to work together with all stakeholders – be it the EU Commission, national governments, railway undertakings, infrastructure providers, railway clients and – of course – the lineside resident. This workshop and the State-of-the-Art report are proof of this. So, yes, railways are a good neighbour: We have done a lot and are continuing to do a lot.

Then a big thank you to all of you. Normally we try to hold these workshops in person, so that we have time to get to know one another, that we have an opportunity to network and have all sorts of conversations on the side. This is also part of being a good neighbour. Unfortunately, this has not been possible this time. But nonetheless we have done our best to keep you up to date on the issues: We have organized this webinar and we have written a State-of-the-Art report. All of this is not so easy if you cannot see people face to face. So therefore let me thank everybody who has made this possible: The speakers, M+P as the authors of the State of the Art report, all of the many people



who have contributed to the report in some form or another, such as the members of the UIC noise and vibration sector, the members of the UIC noise and vibration Core Group, the UIC staff and railway personnel in the background. There was so much effort in all of this, and it was a real pleasure working with everybody. So, I hope that you could benefit from this webinar and that it promotes our mutual understanding of the issues. Please enjoy reading our State-of-the-Art report. And I am certainly looking forward to the next opportunity where we can meet in person.

Jakob Oertli