

Press Release – Modernisation of State Aid Guidelines for Railway Undertakings

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ERFA believes it is crucial that the State Aid Guidelines for Railway Undertakings are modernised to take into consideration developments in the rail freight sector over the past eleven years. ERFA therefore calls upon the incoming the European Commission to work towards a revision of the Guidelines for Railway Undertakings.

Given that the State Aid Guidelines for Railway Undertakings were not included in the State Aid Modernisation Package of 2012, ERFA believes it is necessary that the opportunity is taken to revise the Guidelines during the upcoming State Aid Modernisation Package. This moment should be taken to clarify on where funding may be permitted for freight rolling stock, modernize the rules for restructuring of a freight division and allow for the possibility of public funding playing a greater role in ERTMS and noise reduction measures.

Crucially, the Guidelines need to take into consideration how the rail freight sector has evolved since 2008. Since 2008, all rail freight divisions and operators have had the opportunity to return to long-term viability. ERFA therefore sees a need to reassess the status for restructuring of a rail freight division.

“It is important for the continued development of the European rail freight market that we have clear and modernized State Aid Guidelines for Railway Undertakings. The rail freight sector has a crucial role to play in the decarbonisation of the transport sector and the revised Guidelines need to focus on how the rail freight industry as a whole can be assisted in contributing towards this goal”, say ERFA President, Dirk Stahl.

“The existing Guidelines were created in a very specific moment in time with a specific context, as clearly stated in the Guidelines themselves, and it must be accepted that this moment in time has now passed. It is therefore essential that a revision of the Guidelines takes place in order to have a framework that meets the needs of the European rail freight sector as a whole”, say ERFA Secretary General, Conor Feighan.

For more information, you can Contact:

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Rue Montoyer 23, B-1000 Brussels ; Reg nr. 0478.440.721. Belgian official gazette 26.11.2007