Signal

The ERTMS Newsletter

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Top Story

New CCS regulation (the new CCS Regulation and the second release of Baseline 3 voted in Feb RISC)

On the 10th February 2016 the representatives of the Member States in the RISC Committee (Railway Interoperability & Safety Committee) voted unanimously for the revised Control Command & Signalling TSI.

The new CCS TSI that will enter in force, foreseeable, in July 2016 includes the second maintenance release of the ETCS specifications Baseline 3 (v3.6.0) and baseline 1 for the GSM-R specifications. The main functions introduced are GPRS data communication, on-line key management and improvements to interferences issues and clarifications of some aspects of the certification and testing processes.

These new release follows main principles on stability and compatibility of the ERTMS specifications and will therefore coexist with the current baselines (B2-2.3.0.d and B3 MR-(v3.4.0) and Baseline 1 of the GSMR specifications.

The European Railway Agency has carried out, in cooperation with the Sector the Baseline Compatibility Assessment (which results are summarized in the BCA report) of the proposed Release 2 vis-a-vis Baseline 2 and Baseline 3 Maintenance Release 1 to ensure backwards compatibility with the former versions. Getting this backwards compatibility means that any baseline 3 ERTMS onboard subsystem will be able to work with no technical or operational impact on a 2.3.0.d trackside.

The implementation dates of ERTMS trackside, which are currently in the CCS TSI, will be set out in the new European Deployment Plan (EDP) as a specific regulation. Therefore, the new TSI foresees a transition period until the new regulation is applicable. The new EDP will include the implementation timeline of the nine Core Network Corridors and not only the previous six ERTMS Corridors.
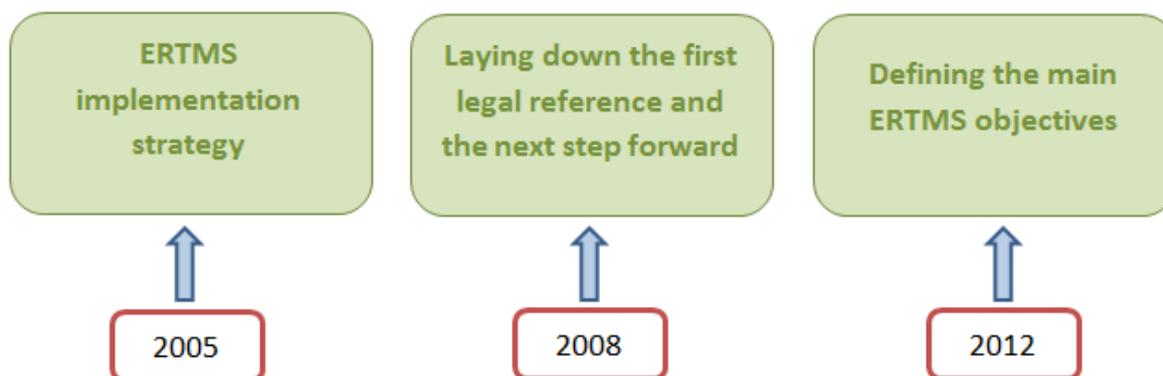
Did you know…

… There is an updated ERTMS website launched?

Please visit…
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/ertms/index_en.htm
and get to know the ERTMS in detail

ERTMS implementation strategy	Laying down the first legal reference and the next step forward	Defining the main ERTMS objectives
↑	↑	↑
2005	2008	2012

In the spotlight: Interview with Lokomotion Operations Manager Niels Jäger

Lokomotion rail is the leading private haulier in transalpine freight traffic and has to deal with technical and administrative hurdles for cross border traffic. You also operate freight services in Austria, Slovenia, Italy and Germany. What is the role of ETCS in your company/business?

We are running more than 50 per cent of our trains on the Brenner-line, which is thus one of the core-routes of our business. In Austria this line is partly equipped with ETCS. Therefore we can enjoy the improvement of safety given by ETCS.

We have the same situation on the Austrian "Weststrecke" between Vienna and Salzburg.

Source: lokomotion-rail.de

Until now, especially the Brenner-line is equipped with ETCS partially so we are operationally challenged by a mix of ETCS equipped and non-equipped infrastructure.

Being Lokomotion a strong cross-border RU, which benefits do you expect from ERTMS? Will it have an effect on your operations? How would you think ERTMS could positively impact your operations for example between Germany, Austria and Italy where your partner RTC is operating?

Speaking in terms of ERTMS we distinguish GSM-R and ETCS. We are already benefiting from GSM-R in the communication loco driver, train supervision staff and dispatchers. We expect to widen the range of usage of our locos if the ETCS is homologated on our type 185, for example in Hungary and for the transit traffic through Switzerland. Jointly with our partner railway RTC we are disposing a fleet of locomotives and the homologation issue is key success seamless, flexible and cost efficient operation in cross border traffic.

What is your ETCS implementation strategy? What percentage of your fleet is equipped with ETCS?

We have followed the development of ETCS right from the beginning and considered the technical development stages in the procurement strategy for our fleet. We were among the first railway undertakings to use multi-system locomotives in international rail freight transport and are therefore very interested in improvements. We have equipped all but four machines of our fleet of around 60 electrical locomotives actually with baseline 2.3.0.d.

What are the critical operational rules that need to be changed in order to obtain the full benefit of interoperability?

Besides the ETCS interoperability and cross-acceptance homologation issues on the infrastructure (Track-side) and locomotive (on board side) we see that the language barrier becomes the next biggest interoperability obstacle in cross border traffic. Locomotive drivers need to speak the respective countries´ language fluently to communicate with the local train control staff, especially in case of accidents. The rail sector has a clear disadvantage compared to international road transport where "no" language skills are required from the drivers.

To a smaller extent and with a much faster realisation time frame, are for example the tail-lights which are still required in Italy. A first step was done by the acceptance of permanent light rather than flash lights, but a consequent next step would be the acceptance of reflecting plates – like in Austria, Germany and many other countries. We propose to test the use of such plates on the Brenner to Verona line for one or two years and to evaluate the impact on the operations before deciding a regular use on that line and beyond.

In your opinion, which are the challenges for ERTMS in the near future?

On-board equipment has to be updated taking into account infrastructure managers´ diverse specifications. This creates additional costs and reduces operational flexibility. For a railway undertaking we are depending on the efficient use of our locomotives on a network and cannot accept line specific variants. Therefore we call for a moratorium in new requirements until the technical specifications are harmonized and the technology providers are able to supply interoperable on-board equipment at reasonable cost.

A second challenge is the implementation strategy along corridors and finally networks. The benefits of ETCS can only be lifted if relevant sections of the freight corridors are equipped and the operational rules including the transition from equipped to –non-equipped sections are harmonized. On the Brenner line in Austria still 2.5 of 109 kilometres are not equipped and create operational hurdles every day. The larger problem is in Germany where DB Netz is among the last infrastructure managers to implement ETCS but creating new requirements instead of applying working examples from neighbour countries.

A big wish would be if infrastructure managers could agree upon implementing corridor networks and not "patchwork". Railway undertaking like Lokomotion would be eager to assist in defining priorities in this respect.

How do you think EC could further support you and other small RUs?

The rules to get the ETCS equipment homologated are still complicated and are causing considerable problems. The Commission should avoid country specific interpretations of the rules.

Also it would be very important to make it clear in the TSI that the new ETCS equipment can be added in parallel to existing class-B-systems, otherwise consecutive retrofits are getting a commercial fiasco if they are possible at all.

We advise the Commission to assess if infrastructure-managers are using ERTMS implementation to create new barriers for discrimination free access to the rail-infrastructure and the seamless movement of goods in Europe.

Breaking news

TEN-T days Rotterdam

This year, the TEN-T Days 2016 features a dedicated "Investors Conference" on how to boost funding and financing in transport infrastructure. The "Investors Conference" will target investors, project promoters, Member State representatives, European Coordinators and the EIB in a number of interactive working sessions in order to give practical advice on how to successfully use the opportunities offered by the Investment Plan for Europe as well as the Connecting Europe Facility.

Sources: Tendays.eu (2016)

ETCS in service from Athus to Antwerpen

With ETCS Level 1 now operational on 429 km route-km between Athus and Antwerpen, infrastructure manager Infrabel says that Belgium now has the greatest length of conventional route in Europe to be equipped with this train protection system. ETCS was brought into service on the last two sections of ERTMS Corridor C, Antwerpen-Noord — Berchem and Ottignies — Fleurus — Namur, on December 22.

Sources: Railway Gazette (2016)

Belgian ETCS Level 2 pilot line to be ready this year

The first of three pilot projects to prepare for the implementation of ETCS Level 2 across the national network is due to be ready later this year, according to Infrabel project director Yves Werner.

Sources: Railway Gazette (2016)

Alstom, Siemens and CAF consortium to install ERTMS in Spain's Atlantic Corridor

A consortium comprised Alstom, Siemens Rail Automation and CAF signalling will install the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) on the La Coruña-Santiago and Santiago-Vigo links in Spain's Atlantic Corridor this month.

The consortium will carry out the Level 1 train safety and protection system work as part of a €63.2m contract awarded by Spanish railway infrastructure manager Adif.

Sources: Railway Technology (2016)

Contact details

For further information on ERTMS, please visit our website:
ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/ertms

Get in contact with our Deployment Management team via MOVE-ERTMS-DEPLOYMENT(at) ec(dot)europa(dot)eu.

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