

# Signal

the European Rail Traffic Management System

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## A busy agenda for 2008 (and beyond)

With the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding\* (MoU) in July 2008, all stakeholders have identified milestones and have committed to working together with the European Commission and the European Railway Agency to reach the targets set to speed up ERTMS deployment.

Also in July, the European Parliament adopted a resolution in agreement with the Council to amend Regulation (EC) No 881/2004 establishing a European Railway Agency (ERA) – an amendment that reinforces the tasks and role of the ERA in the future deployment of ERTMS across the whole rail system. Formal adoption is expected by the end of the year.

Further important steps will be taken later in the year. During the autumn, the Commission will adopt a European Deployment Plan for ERTMS which will incorporate national deployment plans as well as focus on removing potential missing links and ensuring coordinated deployment along corridors.

Meanwhile, funding decisions are being finalised for the 19 ERTMS projects selected to receive EU co-financing under the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) multi-annual programme 2007-2013: EU support for around 3 000 km of trackside implementation (including projects along all six ERTMS freight corridors) and on-board equipment in over 450 train cabs/locomotives will help create the critical mass necessary for successful ERTMS implementation across Europe.

In addition, a new Call for Proposals for ERTMS projects under the TEN-T multi-annual programme will be launched in early 2009. It is expected that funding will target ERTMS trackside installation along the six freight corridors.

The ERTMS agenda was packed during the first half of 2008 and will continue to be busy for the remainder of the year: look out in particular for the forthcoming European Deployment Plan for ERTMS and ERTMS funding decisions. And don't miss our features in this latest edition of *Signal* on the European Railway Agency and ERTMS in Hungary...

*The Signal team*



## Interview with Marcel Verslype: 'The special role of the European Railway Agency'



*Marcel Verslype is the Executive Director of the European Railway Agency (ERA) in Lille/ Valenciennes, France. In this exclusive interview, he tells Signal about the Agency's role concerning ERTMS – part of the Agency's continuing efforts to lay the technical foundations to help construct in Europe a safe, modern railway system that offers high-quality, competitive services and that is not restricted by national borders...*

**Signal: What is the role of the Agency on ERTMS and what are the main results of your activities to date?**

**MV:** The Agency is recognised as the system authority for the ERTMS specifications: working in close cooperation with the sector and with the sector's active support, our ERTMS unit has defined the process for managing the Change Requests for the system specifications, it maintains the database of Change Requests, and it organises the working groups with the sector organisations and the representatives of the National Safety Authorities.

The recent European Commission Decision to update the European Train Control System (ETCS) specifications puts into effect the results of the major revision organised last year by the Agency: based on the inputs from the sector organisations and the feedback from commercial implementations, we defined the set of modifications and clarifications necessary for the ETCS version 2.3.0, analysing with experts from the sector the different solutions and assessing the consequences for existing projects. This resulted in a recommendation to the Commission for the updating of Annex A of the two technical specifications for interoper-

ability relating to control-command and signalling, and was followed by a Commission Decision in April 2008 adopting what is known as 'version 2.3.0d'.

In parallel, we have defined the functional scope for the next version of ETCS, the baseline 3: we have reached a common position with the sector organisations on the new functional enhancements to be specified.

**Signal: Looking ahead, what major challenges do you expect?**

**MV:** The European institutions and the railway sector are increasingly looking to the Agency to play a central role in the challenging issue of contributing to the Community policy for a more competitive European railway system – we expect to reassess our work program to this effect once the revised Agency Regulation has been formally adopted.

Meanwhile, the Commission Decision of April 2008 establishes that common test specifications for the 2.3.0d specifications need to be completed by the end of 2008. The ERA is supervising the work of a group of experts developing the test specifications.

The new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on ERTMS signed in Rome on 4 July by the sector and by the Commission defines a number of demanding goals for the Agency: we are now very busy defining and validating the technical solutions required to include the new functions in the specifications, with the aim to publish them at the end of September. The last three months of the year will be dedicated to the definition of the first draft of the System Requirement Specifications (the main specification document) for the baseline 3 of ETCS.



**The new MoU sets the target of 2012 for the Agency to present its recommendation for the ETCS baseline 3. To meet this target we must overcome some significant challenges:**

- the specifications must ensure backward compatibility: this concept has always been present in the ERTMS world, and is now laid down in the new Interoperability Directive. We have a very advanced definition of the mechanism for backward compatibility that we will need to validate;
- the specifications must be complete, coherent and stable – this is why we normally refer to them as ‘baseline’ 3. We must ensure that the risk for the first commercial applications based on the new baseline is minimised. For our part we are developing a possible approach based on more formalised specifica-

tions. In addition, we need the collective effort of the sector to ensure that proper consolidation and validation of the specifications are carried out in a timely manner. The support of the Commission’s Directorate-General for Energy and Transport and of the European Coordinator for ERTMS, Karel Vinck, is essential to meet this challenge;

- the specifications for the ETCS system alone will not automatically ensure interoperability; other aspects can be crucial, such as operational regulations and acceptance of vehicles.

The Agency, with our overall competence in the areas of Safety, Interoperability and Cross-Acceptance, and with established cooperation with all the actors in the sector, is uniquely positioned to offer the answers to key challenges for the railways in Europe.

## The European Railway Agency – an overview

The Agency has a staff of about 100 people from some 20 different countries, the majority highly specialised experts from the railway sector. Working closely with railway sector stakeholders, national authorities and other concerned parties, as well as with the European institutions, the main task of the Agency is to develop recommendations and opinions for economically viable common technical standards for interoperability and common approaches to safety. In addition to these two main areas of activity – safety and

interoperability – the Agency is the system authority for the ERTMS specifications, and will be in charge of proposing a common approach for the cross-acceptance of railway vehicles. An Economic Evaluation unit ensures that the costs and benefits of measures proposed by the Agency are properly analysed and evaluated.

For further information see:  
<http://www.era.europa.eu>

## ERTMS – the Hungarian experience

Hungary is one of the pioneers in European Train Control System (ETCS) deployment. Already back in 1999 the first ETCS pilot line with ETCS Level 1 (L1) was installed in Hungary and Austria between Bruck a.d. Leitha (ÖBB) and Kimle (MÁV).

Today in Hungary two lines are equipped with ETCS L1: the Budapest–Hegyeshalom line (the Hungarian part of the Budapest–Vienna connection) and the Hodos–Zalalövő line.

But that is not all. During 2007–2013, rail companies MÁV and GySEV intend to install more than 800 km of main line with ETCS Level 2 (L2) systems. Among these lines are the Hungarian sections of ERTMS Corridor D (Valencia–Lyon–Turin–Ljubljana–Budapest) and Corridor E (Dresden–Prague–Bratislava/Vienna–Budapest–Bucharest–Constanta) which are of course accorded high priority. In parallel with ongoing ETCS

L2 implementation, planning – and, from the end of 2008, deployment – of GSM-R is underway.

Lines to be equipped with ETCS L2 trackside between 2007 and 2013:

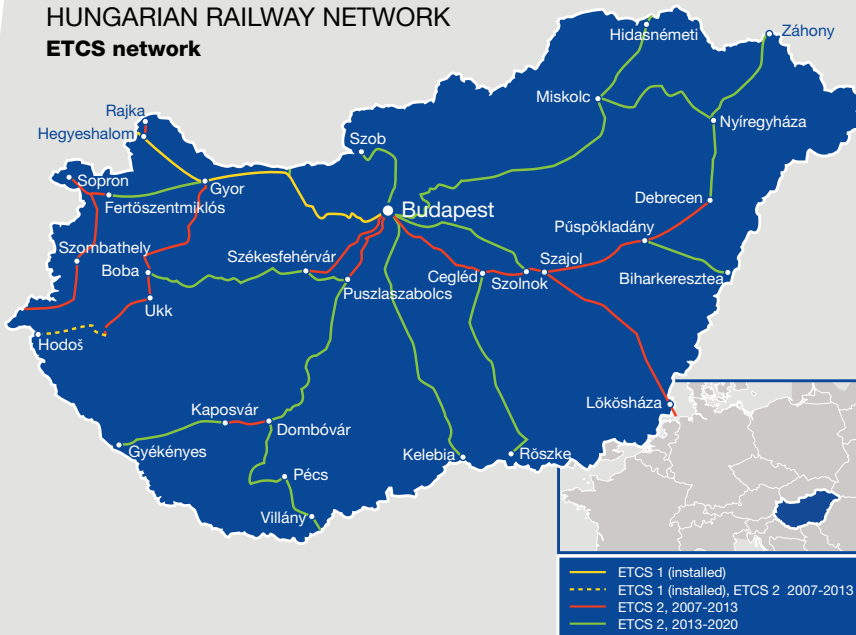
- Hegyeshalom – Rajka (13 km)
- Boba – Bajánsenye (102 km)
- Győr – Celldömölk – Boba (82 km)
- Kaposvár – Dombóvár (31 km)
- Budapest – Pusztaszabolcs (53 km)
- Budapest – Székesfehérvár (75 km)
- Budapest – Cegléd – Szolnok – Debrecen (221 km)
- Szolnok – Békéscsaba – Lőkösháza (115 km)
- Sopron – Szombathely – Szentgotthárd (116 km)

### ERTMS diary

- 18-19 September, 2008: Brussels Committee on the Interoperability and Safety of the European Railway System
- 14-15 October, 2008: Brussels Trans-European transport networks (TEN-T) Days
- 29 October, 2008: Paris French EU Presidency conference 'Freight without borders'
- 25-26 November, 2008: Brussels Committee on the Interoperability and Safety of the European Railway System

*Please send us your dates!*

### HUNGARIAN RAILWAY NETWORK ETCS network



For further information on ERTMS, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/rail/interoperability/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/rail/interoperability/index_en.htm)

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