

Market Place Seminar – Rail Transport in Eastern Europe

*On October 30-31 UIC and FIATA jointly organized the **Market Place Seminar – Rail Transport in Eastern Europe** in Prague. The event attracted almost 100 participants from 15 different countries. The event featured two half-day sessions with speakers from different industries, railway undertakings and freight forwarders.*

The seminar created opportunities for increased cooperation and business development in the rail sector. UIC and FIATA are satisfied with the quality of contributions of speakers as well as with the strong participation of the audience in discussions triggered by presentations. The key concept was to integrate customers, railway undertakings and freight forwarders to the same platform.

During the first session “**The rail transport needs of the automotive industry in eastern Europe**” CD Cargo, VLT Skotrans and Gefco informed about their needs and customer expectations in the automotive industry. Safety, quality and reliability are the most important factors within automotive rail transports. KombiConsult, Hupac Intermodal, Spedi-Trans and Intercontainer continued the seminar with information on markets trends, main challenges, recommendations and the future role of the freight forwarders in Eastern Europe in the session “**The future markets of eastern Europe: intermodal transport on rail**”.

The second day started with “**The future markets of eastern Europe and Asia: the demands on rail logistics**”. InterRail Holding stressed the challenges in moving goods to and from China. DB Schenker emphasized that globalization, deregulation and climate change will all concern the Euro-Asian rail logistics market and LTE presented their business concept as a private undertaking in Eastern Europe. One of their advices was to always employ local staff and respect their cultures.

CIT and JERID continued with their view on “**Legal innovations facilitating freight transport: consignment note CIM/SMGS**”. CIT presented the e-consignment note which will reduce costs for operators meanwhile JERID presented the product “European Rail information Center” which features railway information (e.g. station overview, railway distances, list of good, dangerous goods etc...). After the legal session, BASF and CFR MARFA presented their safety program in the session “**Quality and safety in chemical transport**”. BASF informed why we should avoid accidents in chemical transports and how their procurement process program is assessed. CFR Marfa stressed that safety is the topic which you cannot stop to improve. Therefore, continuous improvement in safety is one of CFR MARFA’s top priorities.

The seminar’s last session featured “**Co-operation models of forwarders in railways in traffic to and from eastern Europe**”. Proodos and DB Schenker presented a best practice in co-opetition, e.g. how to work together meanwhile competing on the commercial terms. Their block train solution which started 1997 with roughly 600 trains per year has now reached an impressive figure of 4 000 departures per year.

Participants expressed their interest in a follow-up event next year. Therefore, UIC and FIATA will review options for organizing another seminar in the second half of 2009. The follow-up seminar will focus on a different theme in a different market but the concept of inviting the whole rail sector will remain the same.

For more information, please contact Gustav Manding, Senior Freight Advisor:
manding@uic.asso.fr