

ERFA – 12th ANNUAL EVENT – 1st April 2014, Brussels

Speeches of President Coart in the Seminar-debate and Gala Dinner

Introduction of the Seminar-debate and Welcome to Vice-President Siim Kallas

Dear vice-president of the European Commission,

Dear members of ERFA,

Ladies and Gentleman,

I would like first to welcome all of you for this 12th ERFA event.

“The core network needs the 4th railway package! Enough talking, we must act!”

I think that it is worth to come back to our last year event the topic.

“Believe in Europe and speed up the process for rail market opening”

What has changed from 2013 to 2014?

- Do we believe still in Europe?
- Did the process speed up?
- Did the market open up?

I believe in Europe, our members need to believe in Europe otherwise they would simply stop working because most of their work is cross border. But I am not sure that all stakeholders believe in Europe from the intensity of the lobby that we have seen against the 4RP.

Did the process speed up? No results to be expected from the 4RP before at the earliest end 2015...

Did the market open up? In some countries as France where the infrastructure manager will be reintegrated in the historic operator: it does not take the right direction. In Germany, the question of separation looks to be taboo...

But we got the 4RP... At least a version revised (but too strongly) from the compromise submitted by the TRAN committee...

Are we happy with what we got?

Yes: we are happy (provided that it is not amended by the Council)

- There will be a considerable improvement in the authorization of new rail vehicles which will become single and European.
- There will be a considerable improvement the safety certificate process which from national will become single and European.
- There will be a considerable improvement in harmonizing the 11 000 national rules in merging them in a European rail safety philosophy.

- All this suppose an empowered and cooperative ERA which from a mostly consultative entity will become the European Rail authority: the tool to implement the single European Rail Market.

No: we are not happy

- We are not happy on the governance side of the package: there has been a tremendous lobby from the historic operators mostly in France, Germany and Italy to make the governance easier to integrated holding by weakening Chinese walls and financial independence between infrastructure manager and historic railway undertaking. The minimum duty of the Infrastructure Manager can be restricted to just path allocation and charging. The power of regulator is also at threat.
- I have good hope that the dialogue between the Council and the Commission will allow to rebalance this issue. Should a suitable compromise impossible be found, the Commission will then be in a position to withdraw his proposal...And ERFA will support it!

But I am sure that the Member States will be able to find a suitable compromise in between the defence of the interest of their historic operators and the position of the Commission guaranteeing the plurality of the market.

But yes, no doubt that “The core network needs the 4RP. Enough talking, we must act”.

This is what we will hear from the various speakers and the debate we will have.

- Vice President Kallas will open the debate (and leave us).
- We will have 4 guests from the industry:
 - Emmanuel Delachambre from GEFCO: a leading company in the European and even world logistic.
 - Ludolf Kerkeling heading the German association NEE
 - Konstantin Skorik heading Freightliner Poland and Germany.
 - Frank Schuhholz heading ERS Railways.
- And finally a guest from the Commission: Mr. Onidi who will close our debate.

Dear President Kallas, the shop is yours.

Introduction to the Gala-Dinner

Dear Member, dear Guests,

2013 has been a challenging year: this is what I already said last year in 2013 for 2012!

Last year I mentioned Andreotti, the former Italian president of the Council saying that it exists 2 types of fools: the ones believing they are Napoleon and the ones trying to reform the railways.

And I am still there..., and the Commission is still there trying hard, and ERFA is still there so maybe, maybe Andreotti was wrong.

2014 appears to be a very positive year for ERFA.

We have 3 new board members:

- CRE: the Swiss Cargo Rail Europe, represented by an old friend Markus Vaerst.
- NEE: the German alternative operator association represented by Ludolf Kerkeling.
- Metallurgtrans (MT Group): the Ukrainian operator who was already member of ERFA for 8 years. I introduce to you Yuriy Maslikov. Yuriy! Having a Ukrainian member is a privilege for ERFA. I would like to express to you our solidarity in those difficult periods. It shows that ERFA follows the European construction even where it the most challenging.

We have 3 new members:

- BRC (Bulgarian Railway Company): from Bulgaria which shows that we are following also the single European rail market going to the East.
- FerCargo: The Italian association of alternate operators regrouping 15 RUs
- And Westbahn : Westbahn is a passenger operator; we have already some members doing within NEE passenger operations and NEE is also close to MOFAIR, the German alternative passenger operators association. But Westbahn is the real first 100 % passenger that we are welcoming. It the sign that ERFA will also support the passenger community because 99 % of the problem that passenger new entrants are suffering are the same encountered by the freight community some years before!

We are also welcoming a new staff member in ERFA: the board decided unanimously after having reviewed 7 candidatures to hire Julia Lamb that I ask you to welcome. Julia was formerly working with Brian Simpson and the EU parliament. She will replace Pierre Tonon due to retire in July. I welcome Julia among us. I do not say goodbye to Pierre because he has 3 months to perform before retirement... And I know that he will do it.

But enough speaking, It is time to tell you “Bon appétit”.

Introduction of MEP Brian Simpson, Chairman of the TRAN Committee

Dear Brian,

I do not think it is necessary to introduce you: everybody knows that you are MEP but not an MEP amongst the other! You are the Chairman of the TRAN, the Transport ... and Tourism Committee of the European Parliament.

Up to you Brian the nice job to federate the various rapporteurs to come to coherent compromise to be submitted to the Parliament.

And even if we are very partially pleased with the outcome of the 4RP vote, I must say that you did a good job. The compromise you produced was really balanced even if we would have liked it stronger on the governance.

When I visited you to defend our point of view, we were stressed by the intensity of the lobby around us and I told you that I was choked by the intensity of the action of some historic operator over passing by far the one of their home country. I said to you that I found that it is questionable from a democratic point of view. A few days facing sabotage actions of your work: you came to the same position.

This allows me to reinstate the ERFA credo in terms of lobby.

- ERFA represents its members..... the market-openers!
- The ERFA policy is defined by its board. It is implemented by the Secretary General and the President.
- In other words we are not an association with undefined policy representing only themselves or their SG or President...
- Our lobby respects the opinion of other parties and above everything the democratic game.

Brian, you took the decision to not reapply for a new mandate at the next election. I just would like to tell you thank you for the job you did and your dedication in the European construction... and also congratulate you for your nomination as New Coordinator for the motorways of the Sea!

But Brian, I already spoke too much. The shop is yours and the audience is listening...