



Successful MERLIN Mid-Term Conference hosted by the 5th “UIC Energy Efficiency Days” (EED 2014) 2014 in Antwerp

“Energy and the Railways – Smart Friends”

(Antwerp / Paris, 17 June 2014) The MERLIN Mid-Term Conference, the EU co-funded project dealing with the investigation on the viability of an integrated management system to achieve an optimised energy usage in European mainline railway systems, and comprising 18 partners, is currently held in Antwerp.

This Conference, hosted by the UIC Energy Efficiency Days 2014, bringing together around 70 participants, is devoted to the presentation of the intermediate outcomes of the European project; MERLIN. In this EU-funded project, UIC leads the dissemination tasks and plays a supporting role in the work package dealing with Recommendations, Market Uptake and Standardisation. UIC furthermore brings its expertise by bringing together the MERLIN Rail Reference Group that has been set up to take into account operators and Infrastructure Managers in developing the outcome of MERLIN.

Franco Cataldo, Technical Affairs Manager at UNIFE and MERLIN Project Manager, gave an overview of the project. He highlighted the importance of the MERLIN project, evidenced by the strong participation of the key actors from the sector. He said: *“Energy management is a key issue for railway systems MERLIN will propose the architecture for future smart energy management systems.”*

Mr Hans Günther Kersten, Director of the Rail System Department of UIC, said:

“Amongst research and development projects, MERLIN is a good example of the long and fruitful technical collaboration between UIC, UNIFE and other partners. With this background of successful collaboration, UIC in its capacity as representative of the railway operators, wishes to highlight that this project has been conceived to help us not only to improve our environmental friendliness but also to enable us to be cost effective. As regards energy efficiency, the usual conflict between ecology on the one hand and profitability on the other hand does not exist. Here, both vectors are pointing in the same direction, as every amount of energy saved with the same performance output is a plus for both the environment and the economic profit. Thus leading to a classic win-win situation to which the results of MERLIN will no doubt contribute. It is therefore of utmost importance that the industry and the railway companies share the same vision of the market that is represented by the customers travelling by railway or using it to transfer goods. Once all stakeholders will share this vision, a renaissance of the railway transport will be possible, if not we may miss a lot of important opportunities.”

Monica Pelegrin of ADIF gave a presentation on “The Needs of Railway Operators in terms of Energy Management”, which gave the opportunity to present the five MERLIN Scenarios and their objectives; Ruth Arregui (CAF) gave an introductory presentation to the architectures of the MERLIN railway energy management system, with Roberto Palacin going into more detail with regard to the strategic decision making tool, followed by an in-depth presentation on the operational energy management system by Valerio Recagno (D’Appolonia).

At the end of the day, Franco Cataldo and Eduardo Prieto (FFE) gave a presentation on the legislative and standardisation interactions that MERLIN will intend to have. The MERLIN steering board chairman brought the conference to an end with concluding remarks that summarised the day's event.

All panel sessions gave rise to a very rich exchange between speakers and participants raising relevant issues about smarter use of energy in the railway system.

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