Hit Rail and Raildata, a special group within UIC, agree on cooperation to bring enhanced services to railway undertakings and freight users across Europe

New interoperability benefits as European railway landscape is transformed by EU liberalisation measures and the introduction of telematic interoperability legislation (TAF/TAP TSI)

(Utrecht/Basel/Paris 22 April 2015) Hit Rail b.v. and Raildata, two of Europe's leading railway organisations in the promotion of interoperability and cooperation between railways across borders, have signed a new agreement that will see them work more closely together to promote existing services and combine their services to offer enhanced benefits to their users. Raildata is a special group within the International Union of Railways (UIC) founded in 1995 by several European railway undertakings (RUs) and is active in the fields of development and production of central information and data exchange systems for European freight rail transport. Its principal office is in Basel, Switzerland. Its prime objective is to provide IT services to freight RUs and ensure compliance of these services within new EU interoperability regulations (TAF-TSI).

The agreement is in response to the ongoing transformation in the European railway community with railway liberalisation which has led to the entrance into the market of new smaller operators with fewer IT applications. It also responds to the introduction of EU Regulations requiring all EU railway undertakings to communicate using standard messages and a common interface.

The agreement, signed initially for two years with automatic ongoing one-year renewals, will see both organisations promoting each other's services as being complementary and building a strategy of support and cooperation to provide enhanced services through a combined offering. Both parties will seek to provide services to the European railway community whereby Raildata concentrates on services to the freight community and Hit Rail aims to connect railway players together and both to provide interoperability services.

The cooperation agreement will see Hit Rail managing the connections of Raildata's existing members, mainly freight railway undertakings, and being the recommended option for new member's network connections. Hit Rail will offer Raildata members a 'built-in' link to Hit Rail's path request app provided they use a Hit Rail Hermes VPN connection. The parties will also work jointly on the strategy for migration of the train composition message (known as H30) to the new version.

Both organisations will recommend that their customers use each others' services, and have agreed to hold an annual joint meeting to review the cooperation and to also plan future cooperation.

Francis Bedel, Raildata General Assembly Chairman, said: "*This is an important step forward for our two organisations and the cooperation will allow us to improve the amount of wagon data available and provide member railway undertakings with easier connectivity and standard connections. It will also help us to increase our IT expertise, specifically in new technologies. For both organisations it is expected to help us increase our customer base as our combined services provide benefits for users. We are particularly pleased to be able to address new customers for ISR as HitRail has good contacts with railway companies in Eastern Europe.*"

On behalf of Hit Rail, Antonio Lopez, Managing Director of Hit Rail, welcomed the agreement with Raildata, saying: "*Working with Raildata will allow us to increase our data volumes and also widen the scope of our services to include many of the organisation's customers, increasing the number of organisations that are interconnected. This will give added benefits to everyone and our combined offering gives greater support forrailway operators in the areas of TSI - RU-IM and RU-RU for passenger services. This will certainly lead to increased customer satisfaction.*"

About Hit Rail b.v.
Hit Rail b.v. is a private Dutch company created in 1990 and owned by 12 European railway companies. Its purpose is to help European railway companies to carry out international projects in related fields of data communications and information technology. HitRail is responsible for managing international private data communications infrastructure and message brokering services on behalf of its shareholders and customers. Its services are used by some 40 railway companies from 21 countries. All Hit Rail customers' data centres and company networks are interconnected by a pan-European IP-based VPN (Virtual Private Network) named Hermes VPN, which is supplied by British Telecom (BT) and managed by Hit Rail. In 2013 the company launched its HEROS message interoperability service which aims to enable interoperability across disparate platforms in railway companies across Europe.

For more information please visit http://www.hitrail.com/ or send an email to info@hitrail.com.

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