



Minutes of the Mediterranean Rail Freight Corridor 17th TAG RAG Meeting

Venue: Online meeting with Microsoft Teams

Date: 14/09/2021 Time: h 09:00-13:00

	Topic	Speaker	Time
1	Welcome From the corridor.	Management	09:00 09:10
2	Last TAG RAG follow-up and pre-meetings feedback	TAG RAG Spokesmen	09:10 09:50
3	Feedback from Med RFC to last meeting issues	Managing Director	09:50 10:10
4	Taskforces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Villa Opicina monitoring and taskforce actions state of play ➤ Modane taskforce actions state of play 	Managing Director	10:10 10:50
5	Brainstorming about CEF 2 Projects	Managing Director	10:50 11:30
	<i>Coffee break</i>		11:30 11:40
6	COSS state of play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities • Offer 2022 Request and suggestions from TAGs and RAGs.	COSS Leader	11:40 12:00
7	Developments of various topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Train Performance Management – Linking of trains ➤ International Contingency Management - RUs 	Deputy Director Project Manager	12:00 12:30
8	Wrap-up of the meeting and main conclusions	Managing Director	12:30 13:00
	End of the meeting		13:00

1. Welcome

The MD welcomes the participants.

The agenda was accepted.

The secretary nominated is Pamela Chiarappa.

The Project manager reminds about the user satisfaction survey ongoing this month. The collaboration of the RUs and Terminals is requested and important. The deadline is 01/10/2021.

2. Last TAG RAG follow-up and pre-meetings feedback

The TAG spokesman presents the issues collected by the terminals at the pre-meeting, and the 6 chosen topics are the following:

1. Multiplicity of terminal info points:

The issues in this 1st point is described as follows



All the information now must be implemented into these platforms,

- Mediterranean RFC CID Book 3: terminal description
- Rail Facilities Portal <https://railfacilitiesportal.eu/>
- RNE CIP Customer Information Platform <https://info-cip.rne.eu/>
- ADIF – Corredor Mediterraneo <https://corredor-mediterraneo-adif.hub.arcgis.com/>

There should be an interaction among the parties to ease the work of the terminals when filling in. It should be required one action and automatic filling of the info in all the platforms.

2. CEF 2 funds:

The New call CEF 2 expected in 2021, with about 6000 M€ expected for each year (2021, 2022 and 2023). The question raised among terminals concerns how to support small terminals in the application for the EU funds. The TAG speaker suggests doing a survey to identify funding needs, and find out collaborative projects alongside Med CNC in order to ease the procedure and the success of the action.

3. SC disruptions

There are many events that are complicating the work of the terminals, here is a list of them:

- Covid-19
- Blank sailings
- Highest freight rates ever (x5)
- Suez Canal blockage
- Yantian Port closure
- Partial closure of Ningbo Port
- Delays in American ports

All of these facts bring to a memorable moment for the logistic chain which is deeply affected.

There are:

- Container shortage
- Higher costs of SC
- Shift from maritime to rail
- Near shoring
- Congestion in terminals

Since these are not going to disappear soon there is a very different reality to deal with and terminals and all the supply chain are suffering.

4. New rail motorways

There is good news, and this regards the new proposals for rail motorways in the West of the Corridor: Perpignan – Calais, Perpignan – Saarbrücken, Valencia – Madrid, Algeciras – Zaragoza, Sete – Paris. There are many projects in all Europe related to RM so this could change a lot the big picture but this means also many problems:

- Multiple systems: Modalohr, CargoBeamer, craneable trailers etc.
- Need of space in terminals
- Terminal congestion.

At this point a new analysis on the meaning of all the Intermodality aspects with its features should be done, because the necessities to make the terminal work in a proper way will change.

5. Unlock of the Montpellier-Perpignan section

This is a project that will help to solve one of the most important bottlenecks in the corridor, also in view of the current infrastructure developments undergoing in Spain.

The terminals are requesting the Corridor to accelerate it. The Finance agreement among French state, Occitan region and other organizations is done and hits 8000 M€.

There is a real need to go faster because it is crucial for the traffic which is already suffering for the reasons listed before.

6. TAG spokesman resignation

New representatives of Port of Barcelona have been nominated:

- Jordi Torrent, head of strategy
- Noelia Martín, hinterland strategy officer.

The new position in any case is still open and Med RFC gives the opportunity to all the terminals to send their candidacy by the end of October. In November it will be decided the final candidate and the communication will be done on the 15/12/2021.

RAG Spokesman feedback from pre-meeting:

The rag speaker starts its feedback with the West side of the RFC:

1. The RUs ask the MedRFC to support the possibility of obtaining financial support from the Iberian government through the provision of grants due to many Spanish developments on the infrastructure which will force many RUs to face extra cost in the view of the necessary and important technological transition in the next years.

2. Frejus tunnel: the RUs would like to know and discuss the future technological equipment in details. Because they will need some fleet upgrade, so RUs ask to organize an *ad hoc* meeting.

The MD replies:

Both item have been discussed with the proper people and are under analysis.
The MD understands the critical issues.

Regarding the East side of the RFC

3. The RAG spokesman underlines the interest in the continuation of the Villa Opicina and Modane task forces, these have been interesting and a great tool to increase success thanks to the direct collaboration among RUs and IMs. Then RUs request that Villa Opicina - Sezana should be considered a "border line": having the possibility of using Sezana as a border station where trains can be picked up / delivered in order to use the Villa Opicina-Sezana line as a "border line" with simplified common operating rules (to be defined). However, among the variety of aspects to consider there are:

- The voltage of the line is the same therefore it does not represent a constraint
- It is a simple line (no branches, no intersections)
- Introduction of the bilingualism of the personnel involved in the Villa Opicina-Sezana line
- Extension of the Italian and Slovenian safety certificates to Sezana and Villa Opicina respectively.

The MD informs that regarding the Villa Opicina – Sezana point, the idea is to have an extended border line. At the moment there is a collection of the information to understand how to organize not only Sezana but all the terminals near Villa Opicina.

4. The next point regards the short notice announcement about Ljubljana – Brezovica line's closure and about the Withdrawal of pre-booked PaPs in Westbound direction, the information were not given in time and RUs were not able to plan the international traffics with alternative routes. RUs would like to have a monthly update from SZ-Infra containing the timeline and the expected end-date of the works, in order to avoid overlapping with works scheduled in Tarvisio.

The MD recognises that TCRs are one of the big issues in all the rail system, works are not always easy to be predicted and there can be problems. The model to be applied is not easy and corridor is trying to facilitate the exchange of information and support. We are trying to manage in a better way.

5. The RAG speaker illustrated the final point which is the RNE TIS linking of trains cross border but also inside countries: RUs are looking forward for the possibility of linking trains inside countries and not only border stations, as there are a lot of cases when trains are changing train numbers inside countries (such as terminals or greater hubs like Zagreb).

The Med RFC is aware that the system TIS is not fully working and it is currently pointing out all the criticalities and addressing the issues.

DB Cargo representative intervenes on the first two points. He thanks for the meeting held in June, but underlines that the transition period on the Spanish network will be difficult and they fear the shortage of loco able to run on the network, he asks to continue the dialogue to understand possible solutions. ADIF representative confirmed their availability for a more specific and technical insight on the topic and will bring forward at the bilateral meeting of the ministries the issue of the construction of the new line Perpignan – Montpellier raised by the TAG speaker.

For Frejus Tunnel he thanks for the presentation at last TAG-RAG, but RUs need a more technical meeting. To get into more details. Even if the technical details will be available in a later stage, it is important to have discussions in advance to anticipate the difficulties.

The MD said that for the Frejus it takes time to have a precise plan.
Agreed to discuss about it more in anticipation.

The DD informs that regarding TIS more positive updates will be given in the next part of the meeting.
The MD asks to send more remarks by end of the week to finalize the minutes.

3. Feedback from Med RFC to last meeting issues

The MD gives a feedback on the issues raised in the last meeting.

Most of them have been solved, as shown in the presentation, point 1,4 and 5 have been replied and started the necessary actions. On going are the activities 3, 6. As for point 2 RFI informed that the line Venezia – Trieste will be upgraded at

740m in 2031, according to current planning and no intervention is foreseen in S.Stino di Livenza. If RUs are interested, RFI is available to evaluate the request in more detail if suitably justified. RFI representative underlined that the RUs can also make the request to the RFI "Tavolo Tecnico di Ascolto", providing reasons and technical details (operating model, type of future traffic) to evaluate possible developments.

- ✓ 1. **Evaluate the possibility of exchange trains between Slovenian and Italian RUs also in Sežana other than in Villa Opicina**
- ✗ 2. **Increase in terms of train length of line Venezia –Portogruaro**, bottleneck of 575m in S. Stino di Livenza - this section is restricting the rest of the line which is 650m
- 🔄 3. **Request of information about the Frejus base tunnel**, Turin-Lyon feeder lines and connected terminals: the progress of the works, state of the art of line design, in particular on the expected technical features and the hypothesized operating model
 - **St. Jeanne de Maurienne site**, information about the plant and exchange at border point
- ✓ 4. **Evaluate the Improvement/enhancement of Villa Opicina border station**
 - electrification of the lines, increase length of shunting tracks and improve shunting operations.
- ✓ 5. **Strong interest in a Quality Circle Operation (QCO) at Villa Opicina** as soon as possible
- 🔄 6. **UIC track gauge lines in Spain (line Mollet – Castellbisbal – Barcelona port)** information on parameters, geometry of pantograph, ETCS implementation. The RUs asked for a dialogue on the possibility, as a derogation, for operation of existing multi-system locomotives with authorization for French area of use without any additional technical requirement but exclusively with operational obligations, like reduced speed.

It follows a presentation by Giuseppe Borzillo (RFI) representing the Department for Freight traffic reprogramming and scheduling for Friuli Venezia Giulia, related to point 4, showing the improvements in Villa Opicina station. Available here: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

In 2021 the following improvements were performed: now are active new 4 small tracks for parking the locos. By 2023 other improvements will be performed. The station Aurisina and Bivio di Aurisina will be modified to act as a remote-control plant. The station of Aurisina will be closed and included into the Bivio to use the remote mode; then 2 tracks will be kept to make them become for maintenance. An intermediate block will be created, section of the line to increase the capacity of the line and overall increase of length and speed in the plant. The tracks from 8 to 11 will be directed by a new management tool keeping their length. 4 secondary tracks will become directed by the new central management and from 16 to 20 realized new tracks length 420metres to increase more the capacity. Then, other 2 short tracks will be added as well. It will take 2 years and half from the beginning of the construction.

Andrea Galluzzi asks clarification about the request of QCO in Villa Opicina, considering that we have already a taskforce. The MD confirms that it is just a matter of labelling, that refers to the taskforce. The MD remarks is that the idea of MedRFC is to facilitate the discussion and support also this phase.

The next point are the ones that are ongoing:

- 🕒 7. **Linking of trains in TIS**
- 🕒 8. **Involvement of the RUs in the ICM simulations**
- 🕒 9. **Simplification of procedures in case of ICM** simplified procedure to get driving licence abroad or if our drivers has to drive on some kms of line in Switzerland it needs to have the licence for all the Swiss network, it would be preferable to get licence by line.

The Deputy Director will explain the state of play in the next points.

4. Taskforces

- Villa Opicina monitoring and taskforce actions state of play

The MD gave a presentation about the set up and developments of the taskforce work. The idea is to show the number of meetings, people involved, the issues and the results and deliverables reached.

The number of requests and planned actions.

At the moment the corridor is collecting names that could work for each issue listed.

- Modane taskforce actions state of play

The PM presented the action taken and the issues identified during the meetings. The issues have been listed and now the RFC is organizing the prosecution applying the prioritization of the activities, the definition of the proposals and actions and identifying a planning and the experts for each topic.

The group should restart the activity by October/November.

5. Brainstorming about CEF 2 Projects

The MD presented a general view on the funding opportunities for the future.

The developments possible for the next future. The idea is to create common projects the area at the moment are smart application of transport and transport interoperability these 2 areas could be divided into 5 main subareas, the focus of the projects are:

CEF 2021-2027- Actions related to smart and interoperable mobility eligible for RFCs

- ✓ Cross-border links capacity and performance upgrade
- ✓ Rail Connection to Freight Terminals and Ports capacity and performance upgrade
- ✓ Support Railway interoperability
- ✓ Collect and share accurate and up-to-date rail traffic data, enabling collaborative logistics and multimodal supply chains
- ✓ Support New Technologies and Innovation
(in the field of telematic applications, automation, integrated infrastructure and traffic management, enhanced transport services, modal integration and track&trace management)

Main CEF Areas

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



The next step is the call for proposal and the collection of ideas.

CEF 2021-2027 – Next Steps

The first call under the Connecting Europe Facility Energy programme for the period 2021-2027 has been published by CINEA on 7 September 2021.

The new call for proposals addresses studies and works for Projects of Common Interest (PCIs) in the field of trans-European energy infrastructure, and it will be open until 19 October.

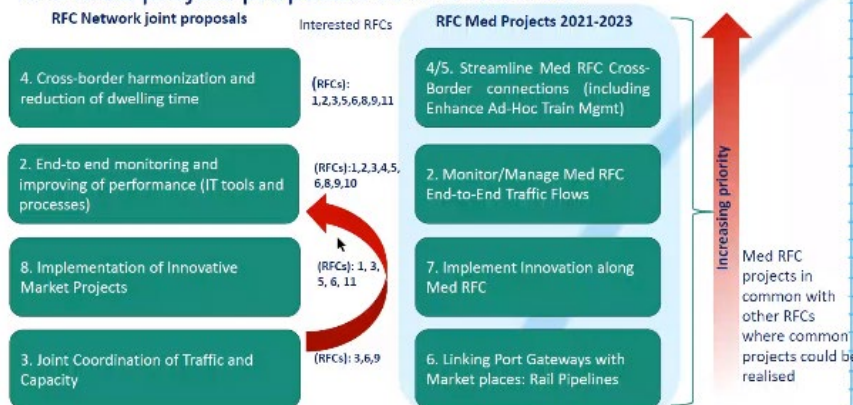


- ⇒ The first call under the Connecting Europe Facility Transport programme for the period 2021-2027 is planned on **16 September 2021**.
- ⇒ A virtual info day to present the call, explain its policy context and inform about the application and evaluation process is planned on **27 September 2021**.



The MD then shows in details the projects that the corridor is thinking to focus on, possibly in cooperation with other RFCs.

RFC Med project proposals vs RFC Network



The MD listed them and described the activities and then speaks about the resources needed, time slot, number of hours of work etc.

The main areas that can include all the smallest single projects to be considered are 4:

1. The streaming of med rfc cross border connection
2. The monitoring and managing by MedRFC of the End-to End traffic flows
3. The linking of port gateways with market places: called Rail pipelines;
4. The implementation of innovation along the corridor.

The MD asks the participants for further new proposals or suggestions.

The RFI Andrea Galluzzi remarks about the possibility to extend a project to other corridors.

The MD confirms depending on the activities and the actual situation that each corridor is experimenting which could be different for example the management of border issues which could change corridor by corridor.

The proposal from the TAG speaker remarks the need to reinforce inland terminal collaboration like it happens for the ports, and to collaborate with motorways. There are many projects in which ports are working together. He gives samples of ports development IVG and developing OCS.

The collaboration between multimodal and intermodal terminals could help procurement of funds.

In addition to this, DB Cargo representative suggested some possible additional projects to be funded:

- Language Programme at Spanish/French border;
- Improvement of locomotive interoperability in the interim phase on the Spanish section of the RFC.

6. COSS state of play

- Activities
- Offer 2022
- Request and suggestions from TAGs and RAGs.

The COSS Leader informs about the state of TT22 OFFERS. For a total of 78 dossier and 38% of the total offer was requested. There is indeed a general decrease of 14% for the MedRFC. The total volume is 5.3mil.km which is less compared to last year. This is due to a loss of flows on the east (flows exist but not requested in the international process) and modification exchange point between RFC2 and RFC6 (Avignon instead Lyon).

Then, he compares 3 main flows East, Center and West. Compared to last year the percentage of offers there is a good increase for west, similar on the center parts of the corridor, instead a decrease in the east. It follows more details, IMs by IMs and country compared to last year achievements. Good results for HZI and RFI.

Then the COSS Leader explains about the final offer results:

Of the 78 dossier requested in April there were 66 offers which reach the final offer at the deadline.

But the COSS leader confirms that the situation improved respect previous year.

Regarding the difficulties there are main troubles 2022 :

- Difficulties for the Allocation in Slovenia;
- Difficulties for the Paris – Novara: 35% of the requests no provide;
- Western, 4 dossiers in observations must to be totally reconstruct with schedules change of 4/5 hours;
- Always the TCRs that has an impact for the construction then after borders' harmonization

Manuel Galindo-ADIF would like to have the KPIs in detail to understand better the Spanish situation about PaPs concerning the decrease in Spain and know what is the ratio of capacity allocated by the RFC6. The COSS leader says that the total volume in Spain is the same but the PaP level is less (less requests in PCS) we can see how will be the situation and more information are in the Annual Report. For TT 2022 the result will know in early 2022, so in the Annual report 2021.

Due mainly to the late expression of needs collection, and the difficulties to receive the wish lists from the applicants in East despite reminder, the elaboration has been construct with the customers wish lists and also with 2022 wish lists and FTE requests, the overall gave as result an increase on the West and East (28 and 58%), unfortunately a drop in Center (- 34%). The Med RFC will try to provide common offer with RFCs neighbouring (3, 5, 7 and 11). For what concerns the TCR. COSS showed some TCRs maps and where to find these maps in the MedRFC website. The main information is that as foreseeable the constructions in Slovenia and Italy but not only, at the same time will bring a decrease of capacity. The idea is to work on rerouting.

Andrea Marco Penso complains about the management of the traffic after the news of the total closure of RFC5 and the following reduction of the capacity for Med RFC. Asking for a better coordination above all on the timing of the sharing of the information respecting the European Commission instructions of having a consultation with RUs to get their information and collect their inputs as well.

COSS leader agrees but these information came too late: In any case all the corridors are working to limit the damages and give best solutions.

Denis Prigent express doubts, the COSS leader explains that exchange among RFI and SNCF Reseau were already done for TCR 2020 – 2022 and now it must be found the best way to support the RUs in this long period of constructions happening at the same time.

Not all the answer about the TCR can be satisfactory, and there is always difference from the plans done and the real time situation and this is not easy to organize before. Annex 7 is not easy to be followed when it comes to actions. The reality is more complicated.

Then there is also a gradual process to reinforce the communication among parties which demands technological updates.

For instance, a solution is that the MedRFC is improving on having a good estimation of the traffic and evaluate with the IMs how to manage it. In this specific case the dimension of these events is bigger than our capability of decide and make changes as too many parties are involved.

7. Developments of various topics

- Train Performance Management – Linking of trains
- International Contingency Management - RUs

The Deputy Director (DD) presents the state of play of the linking of trains, which topic has a reference to point 3. In May 2021 RNE GA approved RNE Guidelines Basic TIS requirements on data delivery for reporting purposes. In this regard it is the obligation of the IMs, with contribution of the RUs. Each data provider (IM) shall implement either standard train linking procedure or alternative procedure listed in the Guidelines, including train composition message under TAF TSI by the RUs, be sent directly to TIS. This could help a lot on the borders for the dispatcher to identify the trains on both sides of the border. In case of yearly timetable related trains there is automated procedure available, unfortunately case of ad-hoc trains manual linking is required with a risk doing mistakes.

In TIS train linking is based Linking regions, pre-defined by RNE as per the border crossing. Inside of the country linking is possible, the linking points are defined by the RUs. So, a linking point is requested by the RUs, which will be forwarded to RNE to create Linking regions inside the country.

Access to Train Information System (TIS) is mandatory to do the linking by any RU. A TIS User Agreement is required to sign, the details are available at <https://tis.rne.eu/contact/>.

MED RFC intends to organise with RNE a Workshop for TCC dispatchers of the IMs together with interested RUs early 2022.

NEW Revised ICM Handbook

The DD informs that new, revised ICM Handbook has been approved by RNE GA in May 2021, applicable 1 January 2022, one exception Capacity allocation procedures, effective from TT2024. The changes are basically clarifications to make everyone's life easier and more comfortable s.

There are 11 Annexes These Annexes provide additional information (e.g. templates, recommendations, proposals).

Annex 1: The list of companies committing to this handbook

Annex 2: Re-routing scenarios template

Annex 3: Check list preparation for the implementation of the ICM processes

Annex 4: Process and responsibilities for managing/updating the ICM relevant information in CIP

Annex 5: Detailed instructions how to use TIS Incident management tool

Annex 6: The template for Incident manager's telephone conference agenda/minutes

Annex 7: The template agenda/minutes for communication telephone conference

Annex 8: Access to ICM related contact lists

Annex 9: Organisation of the telephone conferences

Annex 10: Requirements on evaluation report for disruptions/simulations

Annex 11: Detailed process maps

Important Annexes for Applicants are as follows:

Annex 2: Re-routing scenarios template – new, updated, harmonised/standardised all over Europe (attached). Same template with the same columns and content is applicable. Only these excel files of 11 RFCs, are required

to use to be published on the website of the RFCs and the same content will be displayed in CIP, available at [https://cip.rne.eu/apex/f?p=212:65::: .](https://cip.rne.eu/apex/f?p=212:65:::)

Annex 5: Detailed instructions how to use TIS Incident management tool. The IT tool is available <https://tis-prod.rne.eu/incident-management/interruptions-message-list>. The system is feeded by the IMs. The incident related messages are transferred by direct e – mail notifications, to the users, like RUs, RFCs. Using it an access to TIS is mandatory for everyone. If there is some interest, an RNE Workshop can be organised.

Annex 10: Requirements on evaluation report for disruptions/simulations. The objective of the evaluation report is to understand, how the interruption / simulation was handled, identify the main problems and obstacles that were faced to identify the improvements for the future. The IMs together with the RFCs organise simulations of incident management processes defined in the Handbook in order to test and improve their international cooperation. The simulation should be organised on a yearly basis unless a real interruption occurs on the RFC. RUs can be involved in simulations as far as they are part of the ICM Handbook processes tested in a simulation. To ensure the regular collection of experiences and identification of the best practises from the simulations, after every simulation the evaluation report is created.

It follows the list of the next steps for the new ICM Handbook.

New Capacity & path coordination procedures will be effective TT2024. It will have a direct link to RNE Procedures for Alteration of Allocated Paths. Soon, a new preparation phase will come with international assessment of capacity, accompanied by New allocation principles (as distribution rule of last resort). A supporting tool of the Capacity allocation processes will be also developed and introduced.

8. Wrap-up of the meeting and main conclusions

The MD summarized the conclusions from this meeting.

The MD thanks Carles Rua for the fruitful and long collaboration with the Port of Barcelona and appreciates their candidacy to continue the role, but all the ports and terminals are invited to send their candidacy as well by the end of October. The new representative will start in January 2022.

Regarding the CEF projects it is requested to follow the presentation of the next weeks. MedRFC is open to collect more proposals as well like already did from the TAG speaker.

RUs will see and receive materials from the projects. The big issue is to concentrate on the most important things: cross border which is linked to the innovations, technological developments which are important, and a good partnership can help the exchange of views.

About End- to -End monitoring this work includes improving the automatic tools and continue the works for the innovations of all the lines.

The MD recognises the necessity of an improvement about TCRs management.

Then, good news regarding the ICM simulation and TIS linking, were communicated. Here the focus is on the priorities. Automatic linking is possible, in case of annual timetable train, then for the ad-hoc trains a manual work is needed.

Before ending the meeting the MD asks for more questions or remarks. Then he thanks the participants and closes the second advisory group meeting, the last of the year.