

RFC Rhine-Alpine

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN Update 2023

ANNEX F: Opinion of the Railway undertaking Advisory Group December 2023



Date: 23.11.2023

Topic (Chapter)	Comment by RAG	Reply by Management Board
Objectives (Chapter 5.4)	The objectives set in chapter 5.4 are very unambitious. We understand that objectives must be realistic and that the heavy constructions works in Germany (Hochleistungskorridore) will have a further negative impact on volumes and punctuality compared to the last years. But the constructions works are known well in advance so that it should be possible to work on alternative concepts to enable trains in time and that growth of rail freight is possible.	<p>In the coming years additional capacity on RFC Rhine-Alpine is scarce. Currently, there are several major construction works ongoing on the Corridor lines, which will not be finished until 2030, for instance the Emmerich-Oberhausen line and the enhancement of the route between Karlsruhe and Basel.</p> <p>Due to further upgrades of the Corridor lines in the coming years, significant restrictions in the available capacity can already be foreseen now.</p> <p>Due to capacity bottlenecks and the high utilisation of the Corridor lines, punctuality on RFC Rhine-Alpine has come under increasing pressure for several years now.</p> <p>The main task of the Corridor work in the coming years will be to stabilise punctuality at an acceptable level despite increasing construction activity on the Corridor lines.</p> <p>With the merger of RFC 1 and RFC 2 on the horizon, we propose target levels for the year 2025; after the merger, new, longer running targets can be implemented.</p> <p>As capacity and punctuality are two intertwined issues, we set realistic targets that still are ambitious taking into account the aforementioned challenges.</p>
Objectives (Chapter 5.4.1) Delta RFC entry and exit punctuality (30-min threshold)	From 2018 to 2022 the KPI got worse every year. The aim of the RFC should be to contribute to an improvement and not to stagnate on the lowest quality level of the past 5 years. Punctuality is one of the criteria we need to improve to shift more traffic from road to rail. End customers need reliability and the RFC should do its utmost to support RUs to meet customer expectations. If in 2018 a KPI of -10 % was possible: Why shouldn't this be possible in 2025? The construction works are announced and planned according to Annex VII so that timetables could be adjusted to construction periods in advance. This shouldn't be a reason for lower punctuality KPIs.	Punctuality on RFC Rhine-Alpine has been down significantly after the Covid pandemic. Through different Working Groups and taskforces, supported by both the Infrastructure Managers and the Ministries, RFC Rhine-Alpine is striving for finding solutions for the ongoing punctuality issues on Corridor lines. Taking into account that punctuality and capacity are correlated, the Management Board of RFC Rhine-Alpine anticipates that the main target to keep the punctuality levels stable is ambitious.
Objectives (Chapter 5.4.2) Number of trains per border	All national Ministries and the EU set ambitious objectives to shift transports from road to rail! How should these aims be met if one of the most important European Rail Freight Corridors is anticipating that train numbers will stagnate in 2025 on an average of the years 2018 – 2022. 30% intermodal market share of rail freight in 2030 is the agreed European aim. This means a growth of 50% until 2030. RFC 1 should think about how the corridor could contribute to this aim. Enabling of re-routings to take over more traffics, shift of passenger traffic to road and other measures should be defined by the RFC instead of adapting the forecasts to an average of the years 2018 – 2022.	The Management Board understands that the target level is not in line with the European targets for modal shift, but as mentioned above, the Corridor organisation anticipates that due to major construction works in the upcoming years, the available capacity on Corridor lines as well as on re-routing lines will decline. Thus, keeping the overall number of trains on RFC Rhine-Alpine stable will already be a challenging task. Currently, most of the Corridor is at the capacity limit already, which makes future growth without additional capacity through technological advances as well as construction unlikely.

<p>Objectives (Chapter 5.4.4) KPI Average Planned Speed of PaP</p>	<p>Speed is not the most important criteria for RUs to order a PaP. Rather, it is relevant that the PaP fits the production concept in terms of stops for handling, routing, departure time and train parameters. Therefore, increasing speed does not always equate to an advantage. The PaP wish list or dialogues with the RUs on how to design PaPs are more helpful to increase satisfaction than this KPI.</p>	<p>The average planned speed of PaPs is used to indicate how well the PaP product offered by the C-OSS of RFC Rhine-Alpine matches the production schemes of applicants. The Management Board acknowledges, that this KPI cannot show the quality of PaPs to the full extent.</p> <p>The KPI used includes necessary stops on the route, as well as parts with restricted speed (e.g., cities). On RFC Rhine-Alpine, it is constantly adjusted from year-to-year to better fit the needs of IMs and applicants respectively, for instance taking into account necessary stops for train drivers or necessary waiting times at borders on that O/D relation. Thus, increasing the speed of a PaP does not directly lead to better quality. It is not the aim of RFC Rhine-Alpine to increase the PaP speed, but instead find the best solution for applicants and their production schemes, which will be further improved by the wish list and direct customer contact of the C-OSS mentioned by the RAG.</p>
<p>ERTMS (Chapter 6.3)</p>	<p>The RUs very much regret that ERTMS plans are constantly being postponed and adjusted. ERTMS implementation is not just a matter for IMs. RUs also have to prepare for large investments and define strategies for converting locomotives so that, on the one hand, it is economically viable and, on the other hand, the resources to be converted are not missing during ongoing operations. In addition, the RUs fear that uncoordinated measures between countries along the corridor will create new border obstacles instead of overcoming them, as was the original idea of ERTMS. So ERTMS Deployment Plans are essential information of the Implementation Plan and should be available in time.</p>	<p>The Management Board understands that in the past years there have been several changes to the ERTMS roll-out on Corridor lines and that this has a negative effect on the long-term planning of RUs. The issue will be addressed in the Executive Board as well as in a dedicated meeting of the RAG of RFC Rhine-Alpine in 2024, where the revised planning of ERTMS on Corridor lines, specifically in Germany and Italy, will be discussed with the technical experts of the RUs. Moreover, the Management Board will also explicitly address the topic of the correlation of investments in locomotives and the role out of ERTMS to the members of the Executive Board.</p>
<p>740 m trains (Annex A)</p>	<p>It doesn't help the RUs if the network is enabled to run trains of 740m length, but due to timetabling reasons only some trains per day are really able to run with 740m length. A theoretical possibility of 740m which couldn't be used in practice isn't the aim of the TSI regulation.</p>	<p>The Management Board of RFC Rhine-Alpine will discuss the points raised in relation to 740 m trains together with the Infrastructure & Terminals Working Group. A more in-depth discussion of the problems will be offered at an upcoming RAG meeting.</p>