

# interoperability

what does it mean for you?

**RAILWAY SAFETY**

Working for a safer railway



## Interoperability is happening **now!**

There are big changes happening in Europe's railways – and that includes the UK. Interoperability is already becoming a reality. It will affect every rail business, everyone who works in the industry and everyone who uses the railway.

## Interoperability means

A European railway that operates as a single system. A train from Edinburgh crossing continental Europe as readily as it crosses Great Britain. Operators in Great Britain and continental Europe with open access to run fleets across the EU. A completely open market for train infrastructure and equipment manufacturers.

The implications of this scenario are wide and deep. Full interoperability demands that every EU country has the same or compatible:

- regulations, operating rules and working practices
- safety and environmental standards
- track, signalling and telecoms
- IT systems and ticketing
- locomotives and rolling stock
- maintenance and repair programmes.

## The schedule

Target dates for trans-European interoperability specifications are:

**2002**

high-speed passenger services

**2004**

freight services

**2006**

conventional passenger services

From 1 January 2002, any equipment or systems put into use for high-speed rail will be subject to a new, Europe-wide system of certification, through Notified Bodies, as required by The Railways (Interoperability) (High-Speed) Regulations.



# Why we're doing it

A unified European rail system should increase efficiency, reduce costs and lead to more attractive freight and passenger services. Rail transport will be able to compete much more strongly against road and air, which will benefit the environment as well as the industry.

## The advantages

For people directly involved in the industry, interoperability could be good news all the way:

- passenger train operators gain a vastly enlarged market with opportunities for seamless cross-border operation, reduced journey times, joint fleets and joint services.
- freight operators will also have this freedom, allowing running from one side of Europe to the other without pausing at every border for locomotive changes, crew changes, inspections and form filling.
- equipment manufacturers will be able to offer the same product in every country, leading to economies of scale, lower costs, more competition and more choice for the buyer.
- the British rail industry will be able to compete openly across Europe for work.

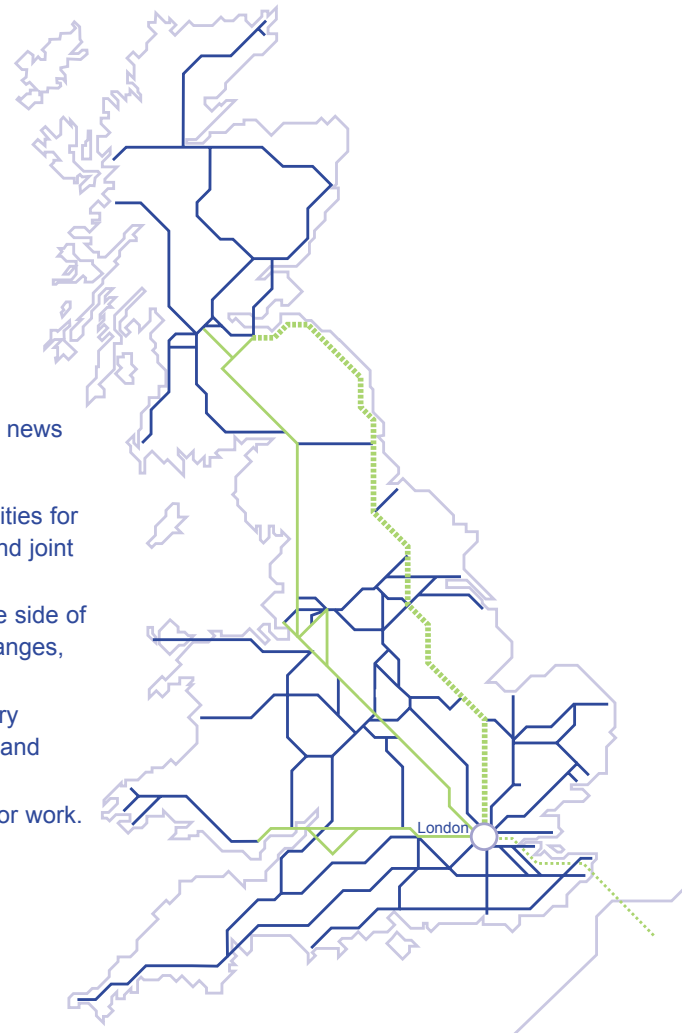
To turn our backs on such major advantages would have been unwise. But is there a downside? Well yes, there could be, if we don't get it right.

## The other side

The transitional changes are going to cost money, there is no doubt about that. There are also safety issues in changing from existing legislation and standards to new.

In the future, there will be pressures for the UK to keep up with new systems, technologies and equipment being introduced elsewhere. Or perhaps, so large a system may suffer from inertia, reducing our flexibility to innovate and improve.

But avoiding the pitfalls should be largely a matter of setting out in the right direction from the start and carefully managing the change process. Interoperability is happening anyway, so if you have concerns, voice them! Get involved!



In the UK, interoperability requirements for conventional and high-speed (Trans European Network) routes will affect at least half the network and possibly much more, depending on future EU developments.

- Planned high-speed lines
- Upgraded high-speed lines
- Planned upgraded high-speed lines
- Conventional lines



## The convergence **process**

Convergence towards interoperability is clearly not a simple business. For each category – high-speed, freight and conventional passenger traffic – there is a four-stage process:

- 1 – an EC directive to define the objectives and legal framework
- 2 – implementation of the directive in UK law
- 3 – publishing of the TSIs and European standards
- 4 – application of the TSIs to British train and infrastructure projects.

## What is Great Britain doing

The directive for high-speed rail was published in 1996 and that for conventional rail (freight and passenger) in 2001. Parliament will incorporate both into UK law.

The British rail industry is playing a role at all levels, from ongoing discussions with the European Commission to development of the TSIs (Technical Specifications for Interoperability) – including managing the transition from the national legislation and standards to the new EU legislation and standards.

Railway Safety, along with many others, is co-ordinating British involvement and working to increase awareness about interoperability so that the industry will be ready for the changes.

Up to now, the equipment manufacturers and infrastructure owners have shown the greatest interest, but the industry as a whole needs to play an active role. It is by no means too late to do that – there is a lot to be decided between now and 2006 when the process is scheduled for completion.

## Impact on Great Britain

The greatest impact on the UK rail system will probably come from implementing conventional, rather than high-speed, interoperability requirements, because there are more TSIs involved.

The first priority TSIs are for:

- freight wagons
- telematics (IT) for freight services
- control, command and signalling
- traffic operation and management
- noise.

The second priority TSIs are for:

- passenger vehicles and locomotives
- telematics (IT) for passenger services
- infrastructure
- maintenance
- energy and pollution.

## TSI development

The TSIs are produced by the European Association for Railway Interoperability (AEIF) in consultation with interested parties throughout the industry. The AEIF is a joint body of the International Union of Railways (UIC) and the European Railway Industry Association (UNIFE). The TSI approval process is co-ordinated by an AEIF committee with representatives from all EU nations including the UK.



## What you can do

European interoperability offers real benefits but also potential problems, which we need to pre-empt. To find out more, try the websites listed opposite. You can also contact Railway Safety with specific queries.

Whichever part of the rail industry you work in, you are going to be affected by interoperability. You can make your views known through Railway Safety, or an industry association, or even better, by offering to take part in one of the expert groups which is developing the TSIs.

## Who to contact

For general enquiries, please contact the Railway Safety enquiry desk on 020 7904 7518.

For further information on the contents of this brochure please contact Railway Safety or your industry association.

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### Websites for more information

European Association for Railway Interoperability (AEIF)

[www.aeif.org/default.htm](http://www.aeif.org/default.htm)

British Standards Institution (BSI)

[www.bsi-global.com](http://www.bsi-global.com)

European Committee for Standardization (CEN)

[www.cenorm.be/sectors/transport/railway/interoperability.htm](http://www.cenorm.be/sectors/transport/railway/interoperability.htm)

European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC)

[www.cenelec.org](http://www.cenelec.org)

Dept for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR)

[www.railways.dtlr.gov.uk](http://www.railways.dtlr.gov.uk)

European Commission

[www.forum.europa.eu.int](http://www.forum.europa.eu.int)

Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

Railway Safety

[www.railwaysafety.org.uk](http://www.railwaysafety.org.uk)

Railway Industry Association (RIA)

[www.riagb.org.uk](http://www.riagb.org.uk)

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