



24 March 2009

### **Rail signs European Road Safety Charter**

The railways in Europe – including Great Britain - have taken a major step forward in engaging with high level EU decision makers on level crossing safety. The European Level Crossing Forum (ELCF), which is facilitated by RSSB, was one of four major signatories of the European Road Safety Charter – a new European Commission initiative designed to develop firm action to reduce traffic accidents and fatalities through exchange of best practice across the EU.

The EC Vice President and Transport Commissioner, Antonio Tajani welcomed Jurgen Menge, ELCF chairman, to a signing ceremony on 20 March at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels.

ELCF brings together rail and highway safety professionals from across Europe, in order to exchange information and provide experiences and lessons for improving the management of level crossings.

Level crossings present a risk to both road and rail safety, and the ELCF, with support from RSSB, has been keen to engage with high level political decision makers on the issues concerned.

Alan Davies, project manager at RSSB, and ELCF secretary said: 'This is crucial recognition from the European Commission of level crossing safety issues – both from a perspective of the relationship between rail and road safety, and in terms of encouraging awareness of what the rail industry in particular is doing across Europe to tackle public behaviour.'

He continued, 'Level crossing accidents account for just two per cent of all road deaths in Europe, but in signing this Charter, the European Level



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Crossing Forum is showing it's a serious team player, and by the same token, the European Commission has shown its willingness to acknowledge and value rail's zeal to engage with others on a notable area of rail safety risk.'

ELCF is also planning a pan European education campaign at level crossings. Twenty countries have so far committed to take part in the event, planned for 25 June 2009 – including Britain and involving both RSSB and Network Rail. With railway companies, road sector groups, government agencies, law enforcement authorities and media expected to participate, the campaign will be a collaborative effort building on existing national programmes – including in Britain, the work undertaken by Network Rail on the *Don't Run The Risk* campaign.

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For further information including copies of the photos below, please contact the press office at Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) on 020 7904 7524 / 7525 / 7593 or email [pressoffice@rssb.co.uk](mailto:pressoffice@rssb.co.uk) or visit the website on [www.rssb.co.uk](http://www.rssb.co.uk)

### Photos:



Left photo: Enrico Grillo Pasquarelli, Director for Inland transport for DG TREN at the European Commission (left) welcomed Jurgen Menge, the Chairman of the ELCF, to a signing ceremony in the Commission's headquarters in Brussels on 20 March.

Right photo: Pictured left to right: Ilyas Daoud (UIC), Michael Robson (Secretary General, Association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers, EIM), Luc Aliadiere (Chief Executive, International Union of Railways, UIC), Jurgen Menge (Chairman, ELCF), Libor Lochman (Deputy Executive Director, Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies,



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CER) and Alan Davies (Secretary, ELCF) after the signing ceremony at the Commission Headquarters.

### Notes to editors:

1. Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB) builds industry-wide consensus and facilitates the resolution of difficult cross-industry issues. We provide knowledge, analysis, a substantial level of technical expertise, powerful information and risk management tools. This delivers a unique mix to the industry across a whole range of subject areas. Working with our partners RSSB's purpose is to help the industry to:
  - Continuously improve the level of safety in the rail industry
  - Drive out unnecessary cost
  - Improve business performance
2. ELCF is an informal group formed in 2005, that brings together rail and highway safety experts from European countries including European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) and the European Railway Agency (ERA), in order to exchange information, provide experiences and lessons for improving the management and performance of level crossings. RSSB participates and provides the secretariat for the group. For more information go to [www.levelcrossing.net](http://www.levelcrossing.net)
3. The European Road Safety Charter was signed at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels on 20 March 2009. The four signatories are:
  - The European Level Crossing Forum(ELCF)
  - The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER)
  - The association of European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM)
  - The International Union of Railways (UIC)
4. For more information about the European Road Safety Charter, go to the website [www.erscharter.eu](http://www.erscharter.eu)
5. UIC also issued a press release on the signing of the European Road Safety Charter – to download go to [http://www.uic.asso.fr/compresse.php/commun/cpc\\_001\\_en.pdf](http://www.uic.asso.fr/compresse.php/commun/cpc_001_en.pdf)