

Preface

Dear FTE-Colleagues

For almost a year now, most of us have worked mainly in the home office. You might be feeling the same as me: I am a little bit fed up with “online-only” meetings and look forward to the time when we can hold conferences, meetings and workshops face to face. Many of you experienced the FTE conferences virtually. We will use of course your experience for the further development of the conferences.

Despite the virtual meetings and home office, it has been an intense time for FTE, during which we have driven change. Last year included the finalization of the FTE IT Strategy, first PCS Change Requests implemented “by RUs” according to the cooperation agreement with RNE and of course the continuous work and lobbying for RU needs in TTR.

In future, we would like to support our members in more areas of timetabling and capacity management and have included several new topics for this purpose in our portfolio. I am glad this approach has been approved on the Joint Commissions for Passenger and Freight Traffic on the 24th November and on the Plenary Assembly on the 25th November 2020. Hence the workplan for 2021 has already started with new topics such as allocation/priority rules, TCR handling, Timetabling process, capacity forecasts, processes on RU side for TTR, conference adaptations etc. Of course, our further constructive and critical support of the TTR programme will remain an important task of the FTE office. TTR now also has a higher management attention, especially in freight traffic. For example, in the RailFreightForward (RFF) Initiative, it is on the priority list through the alignment of DCM (digital capacity management) with TTR IT.

I would be happy to see you in person later this year and until this is possible, I look forward to your online participation in the various working groups and workshops. Only with your help and active contribution we can sort out RU positions and then lobby for them.

Stay healthy!

Edgar Schenk

Current Information

General information from FTE

Vision / Mission

To manifest the revised direction, the association has given itself a vision and a mission. The formulation was discussed with the members at the commissions on 24th November 2020 and finally decided by the Executive Board on 13th January 2021 based on the input.

The Vision is as follows:

FTE is the European platform for Railway Undertakings for Capacity Management and Timetabling.

The mission statement should give a more concrete picture in which framework the work of FTE takes place.

The final mission statement is decided as follows:

- 1. We are the think tank in the field of capacity management and timetable planning by promoting exchange among the middle managers and professionals of our members.**
- 2. We promote European-wide standardization of processes and tools and help to increase the competitiveness of rail in intermodal comparison by supporting RUs in the relevant working groups and projects and doing a targeted stakeholder management.**
- 3. We provide and develop the platforms enabling RUs to coordinate European train services. Our core business encompasses the design, harmonization and agreement of cross-border timetables and train compositions**
- 4. We promote the voice of RUs towards other European organisms involved in capacity management by aligning RU-opinions and bringing consolidated positions into projects and to key stakeholders.**

The Executive Board stated the following points:

- Some member representatives may have thought about a more ambitious vision. The discussion in the Commissions did not lead to a realistic proposition. The main ambition is the doing - to fulfil the envisaged tasks.
- The Vision/Mission do not need to represent all tasks. It should give the association goals and direction and the framework.

New statutes

The Plenary Assembly approved new statutes, e.g. considering the possibility for online meetings. These are to be found on FTE's website: [Forum Train Europe - Downloads](#)

Anniversary FTE

Next year we will celebrate three jubilees: 150 years of FTE (European Timetable Conference), for 100 years the FTE office has been based at SBB and for 25 years FTE has been an independent association. Celebrating activities will be proposed at the Plenary Assembly. Please contact me if you have any ideas and proposals.

Edgar Schenk



FTE Conferences

FTE Workgroups on Feb. 4th, 2021 discussed how we can adapt the conferences to the new TTR process, whether to incorporate the Capacity Needs Announcements (CNA), Temporary Capacity Restrictions (TCR), the changed timeline for Annual Planning and Rolling Planning into the coordination conferences.

A first draft of concept will be discussed at the next meeting of the WG P/F in May 5/6 and approved by the FTE Plenary Assembly in Nov. 21. Implementation is at the earliest in 2023 with a pilot in 2022.

FTE A Passenger Traffic, January 2021

A satisfaction survey after FTE A Passenger Traffic Conference which took place virtually was sent out. Almost half of the participants answered that the desired results can be better achieved by personal meetings rather than online. Especially the coordination of new complex products is difficult via telcos. Many participants missed the faster and easier coordination, the networking platform, the physical contact and the exchange between meetings in the conference hall. The well-being of the people after one week of online FTE was good. The majority prefers physical attendance and 28.1% would like a hybrid conference.

Freight Traffic Conferences

At the request of many conference participants in freight traffic, we further developed the member area of our website and the following functions have been added:

1. The whole process has been completely digitalized, i.e., there is no paper anymore. Meeting requests including attachments can be submitted online, the meeting request then becomes the decision and can be signed online by all participants.
2. If the meeting request is submitted, now each participant of this respective meeting sees that something is pending for them, before one did not know what was submitted until the work program was published.
3. The sessions can be exported as iCal to the Outlook calendar.

FTE B Freight and Traffic Conferences, March 2021

Unfortunately, the epidemiological situation with European-wide lockdowns and travel restrictions still in place will not permit it to have the FTE B Freight and Passenger Traffic Coordination Conferences in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Therefore, once again they will be held online. FTE B Passenger Traffic will be held from 16-19 March 2021 online and FTE B Freight Traffic from 22-25 March 2021 online. We are still hoping that it might be possible for FTE C/D and will inform you as the time approaches.

Marisa Emery

News from our Projects and Activities

TTR

Overall

TimeTable and Capacity Redesign (TTR) is the joint program by FTE and RNE adapting the capacity management process by incorporating different business needs. Core expectations are Earlier final and stable path offer

- Safeguarded capacity for rolling planning (path requests during the course of the timetable)
- Multiannual path/capacity commitments
- Early and coordinated TCR planning with detailed path calculations well ahead
- Harmonized processes and rules and harmonized execution (including aligned tools) with all neighboring IMs.

Organisation:

After the conceptual work and first pilots in recent years, the focus now is on the implementation (“Migration”). The organisation was adapted in 2021 with three streams: continuous development, national implementation and European pilots – the latter covering the so called “first wave implementers”. These first wave IMs currently identify parts for earlier implementation (in a so-called MVP approach; MVP=minimum viable product). Proposals are expected for March with first MVPs being worked on from acceptance by the RNE GA in May 2021. RUs shall be involved latest from march on to ensure that MVPs deliver business benefits.

FTE has teamed up with ERFA and RailFreightForward to strengthen the RU view in TTR.

FTEs Members may join the TTR RU Core Team for regular updates and alignment of RU positions.

Content:

The Process finetuning continues, with minimum requirements for first wave implementation described and the next month working on TCRs in timetabling. → The RU internal process on capacity needs is handled in a separate article below. The IT landscape is adapted e.g. to incorporate RUs input (e.g. no IT support for Capacity Needs Announcements). A TTR IT Pilot starts in which RUs and IMs are invited to test business use cases but also have the possibility to test your companies TAF/TAP implementations.

The legal implementation of TTR remains key, with the TTR Legal Task Force identifying the changes required in European legislation. This process may take more time to be in ligne with wider political discussions.

Commercial Conditions are currently pre-discussed amongst IMs and a common project with RUs will re-start in spring. It is advisable for all RUs to get in touch with their IMs and let them know about RUs core expectations: reciprocity (meaning that RUs **and** IMs shall be liable to incentive fees to stick to the process) and European harmonization on rules.

Sebastian Naundorf

Capacity Forecasts

In order to define the process for RU harmonization of capacity needs announcements, FTE intends to obtain information from the experts in this regard. In a first step, during the Joint Working Groups in February, FTE's members have been presenting their insights and best practices regarding capacity needs announcements and been asked to nominate experts for this topic. With these experts FTE aims to create a common process, to enable RUs to create forecasts regarding their capacity and ensure that IMs can create a capacity model which considers all needs fairly. Any member interested in this topic can contact Fabian Hunkeler or Edgar Schenk at the FTE office.

Fabian Hunkeler

Improving timetabling – WG Freight and Passenger

The Working Groups Freight and Passenger have started a new work plan in 2021 aiming to improve core aspects of timetabling. Within the first meetings, the best practice exchange on network statements started with a first focus on allocation/priority rules in annual timetable planning. By exchanging experience, FTEs members want to identify best practice that shall be used in national network statement consultations.

With continuous experience on the yearly timetable process having difficulties by different actors, the WGs work on watch fields, including ways of measurement for a more fact-based discussion with IMs. A first output of that was the FTE letter to RNE covering the experience in the planning phase for the 2021 timetable. That letter was used by RNE to address issues such as the unharmonized shifting of deadlines by IMs.

In the long run, the WGs continue to identify possible KPIs (or alternative ways) to assist problem identification and solving. A challenge is the easy collection of comparable KPIs from different companies.

Any member interested in improving the timetabling work may join WG Passenger (contact Stephane Faivre-Rampant) or WG Freight (contact Richard Herrmann) and me.

Sebastian Naundorf

TCR

The permanent execution of maintenance and construction works by IMs has a major impact on the available capacity for the RUs as well on the stability of already published timetables for national and international trains.

The rules defined in Annex VII of Directive 2012/34 regarding the coordination, consultation and publication of TCRs at fix deadlines are a first very important step in the right direction. Nevertheless we are convinced that other additional measures are necessary in order to put the provisions provided by the Annex VII into practice.

For this reason, the FTE Joint Working Groups Passenger and Freight decided on 5th of February 2021 to set up a Working Group TCR composed by TCR RU experts which will define the RU business.

In view of the excellent cooperation that we had with our partner organization ERFA in that field we decided to create one common RU experts Working Group FTE / ERFA in order to join forces.

The first concrete work package to be carried out in 2021, together with TCRs' task forces of RNE, plans to

- fine-tune the function Publication in the TCR Tool
- define the Consultation process RU-IM based on Annex VII

Further tasks will be defined by the members of the FTE / ERFA Working Group TCR, which will meet for the first time in the second week of March 2021.

If you are interested in the activities developed in this new FTE / ERFA Working Group and you would like to contribute with your own experiences, please contact Matteo Soldini.

Matteo Soldini

News from FTE IT activities

FTE – IT Strategy

The FTE Plenary Assembly on November 25, 2021 approved the first FTE IT Strategy. Created by the Working Group IT together with the business Working Groups and Commissions, the strategy points out how to support RUs timetabling and capacity planning with common approaches on IT.

As strategic approach the role of FTE shall be on the alignment of RU positions for IT in this functional scope, striving for common standards and/or influencing tools. FTE shall initially not be in the role of IT development or IT operations.

Further, the following guidelines are created

- Make use of the existing standards wherever possible
- Support the implementation of business needs (e.g. TTR)
- Respect the IT security policy of the members
- balance of minimum cost approach and benefit of digitalization of the sector
- allow sector solutions that can be useable for all RUs

Minimum requirements for IT shall follow state of the art requirements on IT security, transparency, architecture and requirements engineering.

In the execution of this IT Strategy in 2021, the WG IT will work on RUs input to the planning aspect in TAF/TAP TSI, TTR IT and on RUs requirements for PCS. Further envisaged projects such as the Train Harmonization and Path Request Management have not started yet due to availabilities of members resources.

The full description of the FTE IT Strategy can be found on FTEs website here

[Forum Train Europe - Downloads.](#)

Sebastian Naundorf

PCS (RU Change Requests for PCS)

Phase 1

Since October 2020 until January 2021 all 25 FTE change requests belonging to phase 1 have been implemented in a step-by-step manner in PCS Production. The FTE members can thus use the developed functions for the preparation of the PCS dossiers for timetable 2022. The always necessary fine-tuning of the single function based on practical usage in real life is regularly discussed between the FTE RU PCS Core Team and the system owner RNE. We hope that these developments make your job easier during the intensive months of preparation of the path requests for the international trains.

Phase 2

The FTE Plenary Assembly decided on 25 November 2020 to implement 7 additional change requests in 2021. According to today's implementation plan agreed between FTE and RNE, the new functions should be developed, tested and implemented in PCS Production between February and July 2021. At the moment, we plan to implement 2 important functionalities by the end of June 2021 at the latest, which should facilitate your work during the Observations phase for timetable 2022 in July 2021:

- Path Variant Calendar
- Missing of running days

Phase 3

From November 2020, FTE members have the possibility to announce to the FTE RU PCS Core-Team the needs for new functionalities to be implemented and therefore to participate actively in the development of the PCS System. We recommend you take this opportunity to express your needs in order to make your working system even more efficient. The deadline for registering your change requests is mid-April 2021.

Matteo Soldini

During the year 2020, the FTE TOM Working Group worked out a solution proposal describing the function of the Train Object in the technical communication between the national information systems of Railway Undertakings (RU) and of Infrastructure Managers (IM) in Path Management based on TAF / TAP rules.

The development of this new Train Object Model (the so called "RU Model") was achieved in October 2020 with several steps. After having gathered and agreed on the requirements the FTE TOM Working Group worked out the solution scenarios. Owing to the large number of basic requirements it became clear that a single solution won't be feasible to cover all of them. Therefore, the experts worked out a solution landscape with several different communication flows to meet the raised requirements in better way. Based on this communication schema, it was decided to focus on

- the definition of a stable Train-ID (technical key)
- the design of train data exchange in path management (path request)

During this project, the IMs and RNE have been actively involved in the reflections carried out by the RUs in order to be able to develop, as far as possible, a solution shared by all the actors concerned.

As the work moved forward, it became evident that the FTE as an association of RUs could not solve this complex task alone and therefore the decision was taken by the FTE Plenary Assembly on 25 November 2020 to hand over per the end of December the continuation of the work to the TAF TAP TSI Framework, where the RUs as well as the IMs are represented, under the responsibility of the Joint Sector Group.

From January 2021, the Telematic Expert Groups Planning and Operations of TAF / TAP are responsible for identifying a common, standardized solution for the entire sector.

In order to document all the work that has been done since 2019, a final report has been drawn up which describes in detail the "RU model" developed by the FTE Working Group TOM.

If you are interested in the conclusions of this report and you would like to receive a copy of it, please contact me.

Matteo Soldini.

Next meetings with FTE participation

Latest FTE meetings can be found on FTE website [Forum Train Europe - Events](#)













Date	Topic	Location	Main responsible
Meetings 2021			
Every 2 nd Thursday	TTR RU Core Team	Online	Sebastian
04.03.	Executive Board	Online	Edgar
16.03. – 19.03	FTE B Passenger	Online	Marisa
22.03 – 25.03	FTE B Freight	Online	Marisa
14.04	Working Group IT	Online	Fabian
21.04	Executive Board	Online	Edgar
05.05	CMAG	Online	Sebastian
05.05 – 06.05	Working Group P	Online	Matteo
05.05 – 06.05	Working Group F	Online	Sebastian
May	FTE Executive Board	Online	Edgar

09.06	FTE Commissions Passenger/Freight	Online/Bern	Edgar, Thorsten, Catherine
09.06	FTE Plenary Assembly	Online/Bern	Stephan/Edgar
17.06	CER High Level Freight Meeting	Online	Edgar
17.06	CER Passenger Working Group	Online	Edgar
23.06	CER High Level Infrastructure Meeting	Brussels	Edgar
05.07 – 08.07	FTE C Passenger / FTE D Freight	TBD	Marisa
16.09	CER Passenger Working Group	TBD	Edgar
08.10	CER High-Level Passenger Meeting	Hungary/TBD	Edgar
23.11	FTE Plenary Assembly	Online/Bern	Edgar











Who are we?

FTE Office

contact: info@forumtraineurope.eu

<p>Edgar Schenk Managing Director FTE</p> <p>Topics: Managing the organisation, representation within the executive board, TTR, Communication and exchange platforms</p>  	<p>Sebastian Naundorf Deputy Managing Director</p> <p>Topics: Timetable and capacity Redesign (TTR), Working Groups Passenger, Freight and IT</p>  	<p>Matteo Soldini Senior Project Manager</p> <p>Topics: PCS, TCR, Working Group Passenger</p>  	<p>Marisa Emery Event and Admin. Manager</p> <p>Topics: FTE Conferences, general administration, communication</p>  	<p>Fabian Hunkeler Project Manager / Finances</p> <p>Topics: TTR, PCS, Communication, internal organisation, FTE Conferences, Working Groups Passenger and IT</p>  	<p>Peter Jäggy Senior Project Manager</p> <p>Topics: TTR National Implementations liaison, Finance and accounting, Working Group Freight, TCR</p>  
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Executive Board

<p>Stephan Pfuhl SBB Holding</p> <p>President</p>  	<p>Maurizio Capotorto Trenitalia Passaggieri</p> <p>Vice President</p>  	<p>Thorsten Dieter DB Cargo Germany</p> <p>Head of the Commission for Freight Traffic</p>  	<p>Catherine Perrinelle SNCF Voyageurs</p> <p>Head of the Commission for Passenger Traffic</p>  	<p>Wolfgang Fritz Rail Cargo Austria</p> <p>Board Member</p>  
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