

Hit Rail signs new contract with Dutch railway NS to provide enhanced rail connectivity between Netherlands and Belgium

Hit Rail's Hermes VPN provides enhanced connectivity for improved passenger information and reservation services for NS and partners

Utrecht/Brussels, 21 February 2017 – International rail connectivity specialist [Hit Rail B.V.](#) has signed a three-year contract with Dutch railway operator [NS](#) to improve and upgrade its connectivity with other rail organisations through use of Hit Rail's MPLS-based Hermes VPN (Virtual Private Network). The agreement also covers the migration of the company's connectivity with international ticketing joint venture [BeNe Rail International](#) to the Hermes VPN.

Under the agreement, Hit Rail already helped with the relocation of NS's routers to two new sites in Amsterdam and Apeldoorn set up to provide 6Mbps Ethernet links from each site to the Hermes VPN. At the same time, work was carried out to upgrade the connection of BeNe Rail International in Brussels with 6Mbps Ethernet links via the [Infrabel](#) network, with migration of its data traffic to the Hermes VPN. Once these works have been completed all three organisations will benefit from a robust and open connectivity solution with built-in redundancy and future-proofing.

Access to Hit Rail's Hermes VPN services will ensure the three Benelux rail organisations have the best possible message interoperability for passenger reservations in-country and internationally. The Hermes VPN is already the connectivity choice for all railway reservation systems in Europe using the UIC 918 international reservations protocol, including, amongst others, ResaRail, EPA, Thalys and Eurostar. The enhanced service for NS, together with the connection of BeNe to Hermes, opens up a vast pool of reservation opportunities for passengers within the region and throughout Europe.

NS is the principal railway operator in the Netherlands for passenger traffic. NS runs 4,800 scheduled domestic trains a day, serving 1.2 million passengers. It also provides international rail services from the Netherlands to other European destinations. Infrabel is the infrastructure manager of the railways in Belgium and BeNe Rail International is a joint venture between NMBS

(Belgian Rail) and NS, created to manage the sales and distribution of international and high speed train tickets and help shape the Dutch and Belgian rail systems.

The Hermes VPN, already used by NS and Infrabel, was the logical way forward for NS, BeNe and Infrabel because of its reliability, performance and security and the fact that it is used by so many of Europe's rail operators, enhancing connectivity and interoperability for all.

Erik Dekkers of NS said: *"We have been working with Hit Rail for many years and wanted to upgrade our services and connectivity to enable a greater use of the service. Hermes is already widely used throughout the European passenger rail system for reservations and international messaging so it made sense to recommend that BeNe should also migrate to the VPN."*

Antonio Lopez, General Manager of Hit Rail, added: *"This is an excellent solution for NS and its partners - we are pleased that all three organisations have chosen to connect to our Hermes VPN and have therefore been provided with enhanced connectivity, delivering better information and reservation services to their passengers."*

Press enquiries Hit Rail:

Sheila Lashford

Splash PR

Tel: +44 (0) 7986 514240

sheila@splash-pr.biz

About Hit Rail B.V.

Hit Rail B.V. is a private Dutch company created in 1990 and owned by 12 European railway companies. Its purpose is to help European railway companies to carry out international projects in related fields of data communications and information technology. Hit Rail is responsible for managing international private data communications infrastructure and message brokering services on behalf of its shareholders and customers. Its services are used by some 40 railway companies from 21 countries. All Hit Rail customers' data centres and company networks are interconnected by a pan-European IP-based VPN (Virtual Private Network) named Hermes VPN, which is supplied by British Telecom (BT) and managed by Hit Rail. In 2013 the company launched its HEROS platform as a family of solutions that delivers benefits to the railway companies across Europe, by enabling message interoperability across disparate platforms between railway applications in passenger, freight and infrastructure for IT communications.

For more information please visit <http://www.hitrail.com/> or send an email to info@hitrail.com.