Five new rail freight companies extend interconnection and enhance cross border freight handling thanks to Hit Rail

High performance networking and messaging interoperability simplifies goods exchange throughout Europe

Utrecht/Brussels, 12 February 2018 – A host of new customers making use of Hit Rail connectivity and interoperability solutions has significantly improved the interconnection of European Railway Undertakings (RUs) and Infrastructure Managers (IMs), helping to facilitate rail freight movements across Europe. Five new contracts signed in 2017 with companies from three countries see Hit Rail's cybersecure Hermes Virtual Private Network (VPN) more and more at the heart of the continent's rail freight movements, delivering common messaging and communication protocols that provide soft compliance with TAF-TSI (Telematics Applications for Freight services - Technical Specifications for Interoperability) requirements.

Two Swiss companies, Cross Rail AG and BLS Cargo, are among the new Hermes users, managing their freight messaging with other companies including SBB and their own subsidiaries in other countries through the platform. Other new users include Rotterdam Rail Feeding of the Netherlands, and two Italian freight operators, InRail and Captrain. These companies join many other Hit Rail customers – more than 50 railway companies in 21 countries - who have already chosen the cybersecure Hermes VPN to create an ecosystem that extends the reach of interoperable TAF-TSI compliant communications, improving freight services across Europe.

These operators use the Hermes VPN for the exchange of H30 train composition messages, the well-known standard defined by the UIC (Union Internationale des Chemins de fer), whose latest version V2 is almost identical in content to the TAF TSI Train Composition message. For this reason, the ERA (European Union Agency for Railways) has established a task force discussing, among other things, whether such H30 messages can be considered TAF (soft) compliant.

The Hermes VPN has built-in cybersecurity with a range of measures to ensure the highest levels of protection - a significant and vital benefit for sensitive information passing between rail organisations. Hit Rail has given the highest priority to the question of cybersecurity and recently held a CyberSecurity4Rail conference in Brussels. An increasing number of railway companies are signing up to use Hit Rail's Hermes VPN network allowing them to communicate with other rail

companies seamlessly. Independent freight operators and smaller RUs can make use of Hit Rail's high-performance Hermes IP-based virtual private network (VPN) and its 24/7/365 operational and maintenance support services. Access to Hit Rail's Hermes VPN services ensures they can have the best and most secure possible message interoperability for their cross-border goods exchanges.

For international business-critical applications, the IP Virtual Private Network (VPN) model is the best and most cost-effective way to secure interconnections. The Hermes IP VPN model provides guaranteed response times, better performance and reliability, with specific Service Level Agreements (SLA). The Hermes VPN service is fully cybersecure, with a proven record of no external intrusions. This means that there is no danger on the Hermes VPN of application downtime caused by Internet cybersecurity threats like DDoS attacks.

Hit Rail is a Dutch based company, owned by 12 European rail companies, that operates a private communications infrastructure and delivers messaging services for its customers throughout Europe. Its Hermes VPN is a platform that enables the interconnection and interoperability of disparate rail reservation and rail freight messaging services despite the use of varying standards in different countries. It is used by most of Europe's major incumbent Railway Undertakings for passenger and freight services, and increasingly so by newcomers and smaller RUs, as is the case for CrossRail, BLS Cargo, RRF, InRail and Captrain.

Antonio Lopez, General Manager of Hit Rail, said: "*Hit Rail is becoming well-established as the "de facto" standard in data transmission for Europe's main rail operators. We already have a high level of understanding in the TAF and Tap TSI regulations and the working requirements which allow rail companies to work together and communicate effectively. So it makes sense for rail freight operators to use the Hermes VPN for their messaging, especially such activities as international H30 train pre-advice messaging, which require the high levels of cybersecurity our Hermes VPN can offer. Our customers highlight the reliability and performance of the system and Hit Rail's commitment to service and support as their reasons for choosing and using the Hermes platform.*"

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Hit Rail B.V.
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 secure international private data communications infrastructure and message brokering services on behalf of its shareholders and customers. Its services are used by some 50 railway companies from 21 countries. All Hit Rail customers' data centres and company networks are interconnected by a pan-European secure 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.