

UIC launches new ticket control service provided by Hit Rail

The Electronic Ticket Control Database (ETCD) enables real-time control of passenger tickets

Utrecht, 19 May 2020 – The International Union of Railways (UIC) has awarded Hit Rail B.V., the European rail industry's IT specialist, a contract for the provision of its Electronic Ticket Control Database (ETCD). The new service vastly improves the ability of railway companies to issue and control rail passenger tickets across multiple countries and will increase security and help prevent fraud.

The contract is for a period of up to five years, effective from 1st January 2020. Under the new ETCD service UIC now offers a centralised, real-time passenger ticket control system for use by railway companies around the world. The aim is the on-line exchange of ticket control information between ticket issuers and passenger carriers. These exchanges increase ticket security, prevent fraud and reinforce electronic ticketing capabilities.

The ETCD service is provided by Hit Rail in a Software as a Service (SaaS) mode. It has been operational since February 2020 and already several European ticket issuers and passenger carriers are establishing connections to it.

UIC is the world-wide organisation for international cooperation among railways and for the promotion of rail transport at world level to meet the challenges of mobility and sustainable development. The organisation has 200 members on all five continents and is headquartered in Paris (www.uic.org). It is a non-profit organisation governed by its members.

UIC members have now agreed on a common specification for the exchange of ticket control data between ticket issuers and rail carriers controlling the passenger tickets. The ETCD service now provides a central implementation of the ticket control specification, allowing UIC members to exchange information with the central system, involving less complexity and lower implementation costs on their side. The ETCD will

become an important foundation for passenger travel based on the increasing adoption of e-tickets.

Hit Rail B.V. is a private Dutch limited liability company created in 1990 and owned by European railway companies. It operates on a not for profit basis. Its purpose is to help European railway companies to carry out international projects in the fields of data communication and information technology, of which the ETCD is now one.

The ETCD service provided by Hit Rail meets the demanding scalability, performance and security objectives set by UIC. The architecture supporting the service leverages powerful cloud technologies and is designed from the start to reach a high volume of tickets and downloads and to be capable of supporting future UIC services requiring the storing or checking of ticket data.

The technical components of the solution are deployed in a fully virtualised, leading edge, enterprise-grade cloud environment, for a high degree of flexibility in response to varying loads and future changes. While advanced, these technologies are conceived for corporate use, offering high scalability, performance and availability, all while maintaining a reasonable cost.

Enrique Ruiz, technical director and ETCD project manager at Hit Rail, said: “The ETCD is a major technological leap forward into using leading edge cloud services, such as serverless applications and cloud databases, to deliver a robust and secure service potentially involving millions of railway tickets.”

Marc Guigon, UIC Passenger Director, said: “ETCD is a new UIC IT solution which is a major application in UIC’s Rail Distribution ecosystem. Indeed, in combination with MERITS (Timetables), PRIFIS (Prices) and Hermes (Reservations), ETCD (Control) will complete the UIC IT distribution framework to offer to all European Railways members a cost efficient, robust and standard solution for international rail ticket business.”

About UIC

UIC is the industry association which represents the rail sector at global level, supported by regional strategies developed by railway operators and infrastructure managers. And that UIC’s purpose is to promote international cooperation between railways and global bodies, to represent and to promote the interest of rail transport at global level.

About Hit Rail B.V.

Hit Rail B.V. is a private Dutch company created in 1990 and owned by European railway

companies. Its purpose is to help European railway companies to carry out international projects in the related fields of data communications and information technology.

Hit Rail B.V. provides secure telecommunications and IT services to the growing and rapidly changing European Railways community. It connects more than 50 railway companies from 23 countries through its secure IP-based Hermes virtual private network (VPN). The company also provides a range of IT services based on a cloud middleware platform directly connected to the Hermes VPN.

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

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