

30.9.2011

## **News concerning European Passenger Rail Authorities**

(Mailing list: Passenger Rail Authorities in Europe)

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are sending you this newsletter because we have identified your organisation as a Passenger Rail Authority that is responsible for organising and/or financing (regional) passenger rail transport in your country. We have already been in contact with many of you, either through the Central European project INTER-Regio-Rail, or else in order to gather information for our brochure on the organisation of regional passenger rail transport in Europe, which will be published soon.

The aim of this newsletter is to inform you about our current activities in order to enhance networking between and lobbying by passenger rail authorities in Europe. We plan to send you updates via this newsletter from time to time.

If you have further questions or suggestions about our work, or if you no longer wish to receive our information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,  
Susanne Henckel

General Manager, German Association of Passenger Rail Authorities

### **Our aims**

The experience of the various passenger rail authorities in Germany is that each authority's work is greatly facilitated if they liaise on their activities with the other German passenger rail authorities and jointly communicate their positions to the political decision-makers in our country. 12 years ago, therefore, they founded the German Association of Passenger Rail Authorities (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Schienenpersonennahverkehr, BAG-SPNV), via which body they have since successfully cooperated.

In recent years, new challenges have emerged: our work is increasingly influenced by European policy, be it the EU railway packages, European Commission white papers or many of the Technical Specifications for Interoperability. These documents heavily influence our national legislation, many of them become binding for the rail sector, and thus have either positive or negative effects on our work.

It has come to our attention that many rail service stakeholders are involved in debating European legislation in Brussels, but that to date the voice of passenger rail authorities as such has been underrepresented, although we have specific points of view that differ in certain aspects from those of,

for example, the state railway undertakings (CER), non-incumbent railway undertakings (EPTO) or passengers (EPF).

With the help of the INTER-Regio-Rail project, implemented with financial support from the CENTRAL EUROPE programme, we therefore aim to convey our own points of view in Brussels, and to comment on and discuss European rail transport policy.

### **Our activities: Compendium on the organisation of Passenger Rail Transport in Europe**

Thanks to support from the German Federal Transnational Cooperation Programme (Bundesprogramm Transnationale Zusammenarbeit), we are currently preparing the publication of a comparative study on the organisation of regional passenger rail transport in the EU 27 countries plus Switzerland and Norway. In recent months we have collected significant quantities of information and data and checked them with the passenger rail authorities in all these countries. The output of this work will also contain the contact details of the passenger rail authorities, thus enabling us to stay in touch more easily. It will be published as a compendium entitled "Regional Passenger Rail transport in Europe - An Overview and Comparison of its Organisation and Structure".

### **Our activities: Best practice examples for improving regional rail transport**

As part of INTER-Regio-Rail, we are working on a collection of best practice examples for improving regional rail transport. The goal is to gather examples from all over Europe that can serve as a source of inspiration for authorities involved in rail transport. They focus on customer orientation, and may be examples of good marketing, technical innovations improving access for the disabled, or projects that support recreational use of trains such as bicycle trains etc. *The project is structured as a "work-in-progress" - if you have projects you would like to add, we would be happy to receive a short contribution!*

Here is a brief taster to whet your appetite: the "GroeneHalte" project in Belgium, which tries to improve the usability of public transport for leisure travel.



The Belgian passenger association TreinTramBus started the "Groene Halte" (Green Stops) initiative in 2004. The idea was simple: the walker travels by public transport to "Groene Halte A" and there finds the beginning of a hiking trail that leads him to "Groene Halte B". The advantage compared to trips using cars is obvious - there is no need to walk back to the starting point.

All walks have similar features: the walk is between 7 and 15 km long and can therefore easily be accomplished within a day. The start and end points of the walk are served by train at least once per hour. The routes are described in a brochure using both words and pictures. Background information on the region, nearby restaurants and useful phone numbers is also included.

Today 30 "Groene Halte" hikes exist in Flanders. The project served as an inspiration for "Groene Halte Netherlands", where several hiking routes have also been established in Gelderland. Several

thousand copies of the booklets have been sold to date, although sales for the different booklets vary. Especially popular are the routes along the coast. Booklets are sold for about €2 to €2.50 via the internet, in tourist information centres or at train stations. The hikes are advertised with a "Groene Halte" logo and a map of the hiking trail at each station and over the internet.

### **Our positions on European regional passenger rail policy**

In recent months we have discussed our positions on the recast of the first EU railway package and on the European Commission's white paper on transport within BAG-SPNV. We are currently trying to make ourselves heard in the ongoing discussions within the European Parliament's TRAN Committee, and with this aim have drafted two specific policy briefs - see annexes 1 and 2. **If you would also like to sign them you are most welcome. Please give us your feedback by the end of next week, since the discussion in Brussels continues.**

For future position papers, we promise we will involve you much earlier, and will be back in touch with you soon with concrete proposals.

### **Upcoming events: Rencontres nationales du transport public, 12-14 October 2011 in Strasbourg (F)**

The French association of passenger transport authorities, GART (Groupement des Autorités Responsables de Transport) will be organising a round table discussion on future cooperation between European passenger transport authorities during the Rencontres Nationales du Transport Public (National public transport meeting) on **13 October 2011 in Strasbourg**. Participants in the discussion will include Jean-Paul Martinerie, president of the commission "Europe" of GART, Alfredo Peri, president of Federmobilità, the Italian association of transport associations and passenger transport authorities and Bernhard Wewers, president of BAG-SPNV.

We warmly invite you to attend this event, which promises to lay the groundwork for our future cooperation!

### **Upcoming events: INTER-Regio-Rail partner meeting, 19-21 October 2011 in Liberec (CZ)**

The partners in INTER-Regio-Rail will be meeting from 19 to 21 October 2011 in Liberec (Czech Republic) in order to discuss, inter alia, the lobbying of passenger rail authorities for regional rail transport at national level. If you are not an INTER-Regio-Rail partner but are interested in attending this meeting, we suggest you contact Ludger Sippel at BAG-SPNV: [sippel@bag-spnv.de](mailto:sippel@bag-spnv.de).

Do you have further questions about our work, or do you no longer wish to receive this newsletter? Please contact [INTER-Regio-Rail@bag-spnv.de](mailto:INTER-Regio-Rail@bag-spnv.de)