Reducing Bottlenecks at Borders: an Infrastructure Manager’s Viewpoint

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Rail-related bottlenecks - a rail structural issue
...especially in the European context

- Bottlenecks are intrinsic to the railways: limited capacity, limited number of tracks - lots of single tracks, especially in tunnels / on bridges-, security requirements.

- Particularly at border crossings
  - **Interoperability issues** => different track gauge, electrification system, signalling/communication systems, organisations
  - Need for cooperation / coordination between IMs (+ “administrative bottlenecks”)


Rail-related bottlenecks - Some causes
(From EC Bottlenecks exercise)

- Poor quality infrastructure - railway bridge over Oder (new bridge was built) (DE-PL)
- Insufficient capacity of infrastructure - Dordrecht-Lage-Zwaluwe-Roosendaal-Essen-Antwerpen (for freight) (NL-BE)
- Insufficient number of tracks - single track sections on Stuttgart-Singen-Zurich (DE-SW)
- Absence of electrification on border section - Montzen-Aachen West (BE-DE)
- Different train specifications (weight, length) - Brenner axis
- Difference of track gauge - Iberian gauge and the UIC standard adopted in most of Europe (ES-FR)
- Different electricity and signalling systems - electrification systems between Sweden and Denmark (only one operator can pull trains over the Oresund bridge) (SE-DK)
Bottleneck because:

- Trains from Belgium heading south after Aachen need to spin around in Aachen station
- Problems of perspicuity in relation to priorities of train services - some trains waiting over 24 hours for reforwarding/connection
- Necessity to add a banking locomotive due to the climbing slope from Germany to Belgium
- Until end 2008, only diesel locomotives could operate on the Belgian stretch
- Very limited level of coordination between IMs (+ministers and local administrations)
Aachen [DE] - Monzen [BE] Bottleneck (2)
First improvements...

- Missing section of line **electrified** on 14/12/08
- Use of **same train numbering** on the whole section (before change of train number required)

...and possible solutions

- A **common regulator** for dispatching should be created
- Parking **charging should be harmonized**, to incentivise RUs not to park too long (charging is too low in Aachen West)
- Infrabel proposed to DB-Netz to have loopline at Aachen Hauptbahnhof (750 meters)
Rail Bottlenecks at borders

*Lessons*

- Technical solution exist for many bottlenecks (e.g. electrification, ERTMS, building new infrastructure)

- But **coordination** between IMs remains crucial
  
  e.g.: bottlenecks between France and Spain (Hendaye-Irun and Port-Bou-Cerbere): French and Spanish do not share the same analysis of situation and thus do not suggest the same solutions

- Corridor structure are a good mean of bringing responsible around the table
  
  - *ERTMS corridors*
  - *TEN-T priority projects*
  - *upcoming (?) freight corridors*
Improving Performance on Corridors

European Task Force between the Infrastructure Managers

• Goal: To allow technical, operational and safety discussions and agreements on:
  – Harmonisation of administrative procedures,
  – Conditions of use of infrastructure,
  – Priority rules,
  – One-stop shop for cross-border path allocation

• The Task Force will be:
  – A light flexible non structure
  – Operationally oriented
  – With effective short objectives
  – With operational defined objectives
Freight Oriented Network

- **Objective:** Create trans-European corridors on which priority, both in path allocation and traffic management, would be granted to certain types of freight traffic.

- **Permanent governance bodies (EEIG) will give the opportunity for IMs to coordinate (consulting terminal managers and Railway undertakings) on:**
  - Infrastructure needs along the corridor - including existing bottlenecks
  - Planification of works
Thank you for your attention

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