



## Press release

### **Leading rolling stock lessors join forces to create the Association of European Rail Rolling Stock Lessors, established to promote open access to railway infrastructure**

- **AERRL is a new international non-profit association to promote interoperable, efficient, sustainable, and safe rail rolling stock in the European Union and Switzerland.**
- **AERRL aims to:**
  - **enhance technical collaboration between all European rail industry players, especially on all issues relating to locomotive and train leasing operations for lessors in the EU;**
  - **become a new and relevant key player, engaging directly with public authorities at the European level and representing the interests of lessors and their clients (businesses, states, regions, passengers, etc.).**
- **The founding members are Akiem, Railpool and MRCE, Northrail is joining as effective members and Cargounit, ELP and Beacon Rail Finance are joining as associate members.**

**Brussels, 26th May 2021** – European train and locomotive lessors Akiem, Railpool and MRCE have established the international non-profit Association of European Rail Rolling Stock Lessors (AERRL), headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. The purpose of AERRL is to promote interoperable, sustainable, efficient, and safe passenger and goods rolling stock for European railways.

As key members of the rail transport ecosystem, rail rolling stock lessors have an important role to play in giving railway operators the opportunity to develop efficient, innovative, and sustainable passenger and goods transport services. AERRL is strongly determined to support this through:

- contributing to the dialogue on issues relating to rail rolling stock and railway ecosystems at European level and developing strong ties with existing representative bodies in order to assist the EU to meet its 2030 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions targets.
- extending access to rolling stock, supporting development of European rail freight corridors, including realistic and affordable upgrades of rolling stock to ETCS, promoting a more competitive European market in maintenance and spare parts.

Fabien Rochefort, AERRL chair, comments: *“AERRL represents the majority and diversity of European locomotive and passenger train lessors. Our organisation will be a voice contributing to a stronger competitive position for all forms of rail transport throughout Europe. We understand that the EU is currently at a crossroads, seeking to strengthen its industrial base, further consolidate territorial cohesion and decarbonise its economy. As our rolling stock are strategic assets that convey passengers and cargo by rail, we are convinced we can contribute to meeting these challenges. AERRL exists to promote these processes by contributing to the dialogue on issues related to rail rolling stock and railway ecosystems at a European level and developing strong ties with institutions and existing representative bodies.”*



Carole Coune, AERRL secretary general, continues: *“I am thrilled to support this positive initiative from the rolling stock leasing industry, which plays a strategic role at the interface between railway operators, manufacturers, maintenance providers, financiers and regulators throughout Europe. I am convinced that this new voice for our members, active across the European Union, will make a powerful contribution to all initiatives and dialogues promoted at EU level that seek to improve the competitiveness and performance of the European railway transport industry. I am proud to represent them.”*

### **An organisation fully representative of European lessors**

Most European lessors have already joined AERRL, including Northrail, Beacon Rail Finance, Cargounit and ELP. AERRL members own over half the entire rolling stock leasing fleet in operation in the EU, Switzerland and Norway:

- over 1,850 EU locomotives in a market of 2,850 units, representing two-thirds of rolling stock lessors’ locomotive fleets in the EU, Switzerland and Norway;
- over 400 passenger coaches and multiple unit trains.

As of May 2021, AERRL members have over 150 locomotives on order for delivery from 2021. This will secure further growth in the leased locomotive fleet and will increase the market share of the association’s members.

AERRL’s leadership team comprises key players and experts from the railway sector:

- Fabien Rochefort, CEO of Akiem, has been elected chair of AERRL
- Bart Lam, Chief Commercial Officer of MRCE and Torsten Lehnert, CEO of Railpool, have been elected vice chairs
- Carole Coune, previously acting secretary general of ERFA, has been appointed secretary general

#### **About the rolling stock leasing market**

- The locomotive leasing market experienced sustained rapid growth from 2010 to 2020. The locomotive leasing fleet will continue to grow in the years ahead. In 2016-2020, 40% of new locomotive deliveries in the EU, Switzerland and Norway were to lessors, up from 25% in 2011-2015, with a strong focus on mainline electric locomotives.
- Locomotive lessors offer railway companies a fleet that delivers above average performance in terms of technologies and emission-friendly traction.
- 64% of the locomotive leasing fleet is electric traction, 34% diesel traction, with 2% alternative drive.
- 40% of the locomotive leasing fleet is equipped with ETCS, 65% is cross border.
- Around 75% of lessees are competitors to state railways. In total, over 150 rail freight and passenger rail companies use leased locomotives. Around 75% of these companies lease fewer than ten locomotives. The remaining 25% of the locomotive leasing fleet is leased to state railways.



### **About AERRL**

An international non-profit association under Belgian Law, created in May 2021 and based in Brussels, AERRL represents most EU rail rolling stock lessors and seeks to directly promote interoperable and safe European rail rolling stock, the growth of rail transport and better collaboration between lessors and European institutions. AERRL members are active in more than 14 EU countries.

AERRL members: four effective members (Akiem, Railpool, MRCE, Northrail) and three associate members (Cargounit, ELP, Beacon Rail Finance). Six of them are established in the EU (D-PL-F-L-NL), one in Switzerland.

### **About ETCS**

For further information, please visit the EU railway agency website: [www.era.europa.eu/activities/european-rail-traffic-management-system-ertms\\_en](http://www.era.europa.eu/activities/european-rail-traffic-management-system-ertms_en)

### **For more information**

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