



**Joint Declaration by UIC/CER and FIATA/CLECAT on
"Quality in international conventional and combined railway freight traffic"
(15 April 2005)**

At its meeting on 1 March 2005 in Paris, the UIC-FIATA Permanent Contact Group announced the launch of joint efforts to boost quality standards in international rail freight traffic, both conventional and combined.

This joint initiative is based on moves to develop a set of quality indicators, building on the Quality Charter published by CER and UIC in July 2003 in conjunction with the CIT. These indicators, which offer a response to market demand and must also be realistically achievable for the Railway Undertakings, enshrine the customer's right to incorporate quality parameters in individual contracts concluded with the railway undertakings, with the necessary consequences for both parties in the event of non-compliance. In an initial phase, the idea is to begin with block trains in conventional wagon and combined transport, before moving onto a subsequent stage in which wagon groups or less-than-trainload operations are also included.

UIC and FIATA have agreed that, in an open market, an improvement in the quality of rail freight services can only be introduced and developed by the market protagonists themselves.

Any intervention on the part of the EU would distort the free play of market forces and consequently jeopardise the economic viability of the transport operations, with the railway undertakings liable to lose business as a result.

UIC is planning to discuss the results of this joint work with other customer associations, to ensure that the work rests on a broad spectrum of customer requirements.

CER and CLECAT welcome and support this initiative and see it as a confirmation of their existing position in relation to EU moves to develop a freight quality regulation.

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