

Prague, July 7, 2017

Press Release

Prague has become the capital city of European railways today

A meeting of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of leading European railway companies and associations has been held today in Prague within the framework of the planned summit, in order to discuss current trends in railway transport. The summit is attended by 17 CEOs of railway organisations. The organisers of this event are this time České dráhy, a.s. and Správa železniční dopravní cesty, s.o.

These meetings are held on an annual basis. Last year the summit was held in Lugano, Switzerland, two years ago in Lisbon, Portugal, and this year there were three candidate cities - Prague, Madrid and Stockholm.

“This is a unique event for the Czech Republic which occurs once in tens of years. The meeting of CEO’s of the railway companies represents a platform for discussion about the topics which we all are dealing with across the Continent. These are mainly the issues of how to increase protection of passengers from the risks of terrorist attacks, as well as development topics, such as introduction of uniform systems for informing and check-in of customers or improving the quality of train services in the East-West direction. For example between Prague and Munich, which would help to increase competitiveness of both passenger and freight railway transport,” says Pavel Krtek, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Director General of ČD, a.s., who is at the same time a member of the Steering Committee of the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER).

Pavel Surý, Director General of Správa železniční dopravní cesty, s.o., adds the opinion of the infrastructure manager: *“From the viewpoint of the railway infrastructure manager we consider the increase of the level of operation safety through gradual implementation of the GSM-R and ETCS systems to be a matter of priority. By implementing these technologies it is possible to prevent railway accidents with fatal consequences from occurring, or to mitigate these consequences. The actual fact of existence and operation of the ETCS system is one of the factors leading to an increase in attractiveness and competitiveness of the railway transport. At present the Břeclav – Brno – Česká Třebová – Kolín section is almost completed, we are working on the ETCS system implementation in the Petrovice u Karviné – Přerov – Břeclav section and other sections, namely Kralupy nad Vltavou – Prague – Kolín and Přerov – Česká Třebová, will follow.”*

Selected topics of the summit

- **Protection from the threat of terrorist attacks** – preventive measures, common data sharing
- **Interconnection of Europe - North/South** – for the Czech Republic it is very important to improve the East/West connection, for example in Prague – Munich and Prague – Berlin relations
- **Uniform information and check-in system** – building up of a mutually compatible system of information and check-in of customers

- **Automatic Train Operation** – The aim is to increase operational safety, reduction of consumption of electrical energy and assurance of a higher level of railway traffic punctuality,
- **ERTMS** – European Rail Traffic Management System and **ETCS** – European Train Control System
- **Opening of the railway transport market in Europe, the Fourth Railway Package**
- **TEN-T** – Trans-European Transport Network, the aim is the development of corridors of basic networks according to requirements of the TEN-T Regulation, with regard to main obstacles of railway freight corridors.

The agenda includes also two presentations from renowned world consulting companies, dealing with impacts of global trends, such as warming, population growth or massive migration, on railway transport business, and also with new European rules on personal data protection.

“One of the seriously discussed topics is protection of passengers and railway from the threat of terrorist attacks. There are a lot of systems aimed at its improvement, including sophisticated camera systems, security frames or detectors of explosives. Another possibility is the obligatory register of passengers,” says Pavel Krtek, pointing out to one of the current problems of the railway system, and stresses: *“Czech Railways (ČD) takes part in this discussion and considers the security topic to be extraordinarily serious. Measures for its improvement can, however, decrease competitiveness of the railway at the same time. At the moment when we require security checks or stating of personal data from our customers it is highly probable that we will lose some of them. For this reason it is difficult to find a solution acceptable for the public.”*

Another discussion is aimed at the topic of regulation and rules on the part of the European Commission. *“An example consists of strict technical standards, the European Train Control System (ETCS), silent brakes, renewable energy resources, etc. These measures lead, on the one hand, to increase in operation safety, noise reduction, protection of the environment, but on the other hand they create an encumbrance affecting the environment-friendly railway transport with expenses which road carriers do not have. This means that railway transport could become uncompetitive. It is necessary to speak about these topics as well,”* concludes Pavel Krtek.

Mgr. Petr Šťáhlavský

ČD Press Spokesperson

T: 972 232 299

Hot-line of the ČD Press Department for Extraordinary Events: 724 977 822, press@cd.cz

About České dráhy, a.s.

The joint-stock company České dráhy (“Czech Railways” or “ČD”) performs the role of the national carrier in the Czech Republic and on the basis of orders of the government and regional authorities it ensures basic transport services in the country. Last year its services were used by approx. 171.5 million customers. Its rolling stock has undergone an extensive rejuvenation process in recent years, in both regional and long-distance transport. In the effort of making railway transport more attractive and increasing the competitiveness on the open market the firm invested dozens of millions of crowns in the procurement and modernisation of vehicles.