

PRAGUE, 24 April 2020

## **Cooperation Agreement between Správa železnic and SNCF Will Speed Up and Make the Preparation of HSL Cheaper**

Today, Správa železnic signed an agreement with SNCF on the provision of services in preparation for the construction of high-speed lines (HSL) in the Czech Republic. The agreement is another logical and follow-up step that will ensure continuous control of documentation for zoning decisions and continuation of works on next technical regulations, which will enable not only further stages of HSL project preparation in the future, but also their construction, putting into operation, regular operation and maintenance.

*"In order to meet the strategic goal of starting the construction of HSL in 2025 and putting it into operation three years later, the continuation of cooperation with SNCF is the optimal solution. Quality project preparation will reduce the costs of the following construction and operation of HSL as well," says Jiří Svoboda, Director General of Správa železnic, and continues: "Cooperation with SNCF provides us with a model proven and practice-optimised technical solutions. All lines of the French high-speed LGV system are being constructed as new builds and form a progressively developing comprehensive network of lines with a number of connections to modern conventional railway. The price of HSL construction in EU countries is the lowest just in France."*

The agreement concluded through a videoconference Jiří Svoboda, Director General of Správa železnic and President of SNCF International Diego Diaz.

In this year and the following years, the pre-project preparation of HSL consisting mainly in the preparation of documentation for zoning decisions proceedings, will be fully started. For the next phases, it is essential that the relevant manual is completed for the designing of the HSL at the stage of the building permit documentation by 2023 at the latest.

Quality project preparation will reduce the costs of subsequent construction and operation of HSL. SNCF experts are able to pass on not only 50 years of French high-speed know-how, but also their foreign experience in building a HSL system, for example in Morocco. The essential concept of the French solution was utilised in high-speed railway development in various EU member states and several third countries. The involvement of experts, who have real experience with the operation of this technically very advanced system minimises the risk of errors. The cooperation will allow consultation with SNCF's highly competent experts on the technical HSL solution designed for work at the documentation for zoning decisions and in the field of RAMS as well, i.e. the Reliability, Availability, Maintainability and Safety management of the entire HSL system, which has been proven in practice. It will contribute to acceleration of the completion of advanced technical standards needed for further preparation,

construction and putting into operation of HSL and, above all, to further savings of funds spent on preparation and construction.

The subject of the introductory contract, which was concluded by both parties in April 2019, was to create a Manual of Správa železnic for the HSL designing at the level of Documentation for the issuance of a decision on the location of the construction. The Manual is completed and approved and the values, requirements, recommendations and solutions of individual HSL systems and subsystems contained in it will be used by employees of Správa železnic and its suppliers and subcontractors for the processing of HSL documentation for zoning decisions.

The elaboration of the Manual was the first detailed contact of Správa železnic with the HSL system and it was the first real experience with the implementation of HSL in the Czech Republic, respectively in the Czech legislative and technical environment.

During the preparation of the original contract, SŽDC at that time did not have the knowledge of the HSL system. During the elaboration of the Manual the necessity of following cooperation with SNCF was clearly shown, even for further stages of documentation and acceptance of next parts of the technical standards of the French HSL system, including active involvement of SNCF specialists in consultations, which allow continuous control of documentation for zoning decisions, other stages of project preparation of HSL, as well as construction, putting into operation, subsequent regular operation, inspection and maintenance.

The pursuit to completely develop unique HSL solutions would lead not only to a significant delay in construction, but probably also to a significant increase in the price of the final solution, because it would not be possible to make the best out of a substantial part of the benefits of the French solution.