

# CT Operations Members' News



**In 2016 European Combined Transport (CT) traffic grew by 0.66% in terms of consignments and by 3.03% when measured in tonne-kilometres as compared to a year earlier. The pace of development has been lagging if comparing the number of consignments to the expected EU GDP growth of 1.8%, while it was outstanding on a tonne-kilometre basis. Cross-border unaccompanied CT was the engine of growth at 1.2% and 4.52% as expressed in number of consignments and tonne-kilometres respectively. On the other end of the spectrum, shorter distance domestic relations and accompanied CT (RoLa) declined at the rate of 4.48% (tonne-kilometres) and 7.44% (consignments).**

## Unaccompanied Combined Transport

Road-Rail Combined Transport operations may be divided into two major categories: unaccompanied and accompanied.

Unaccompanied CT is the forwarding of intermodal loading units (containers, swap bodies and semi-trailers) that are transhipped between the various transport modes (trains, barges, seafaring vessels and trucks) either using gantry cranes or mobile reach-stackers in what is known as the vertical method, or horizontally using a variety of different, less well proliferated techniques such as Modalohr, Cargo Beamer, Rail Runner, Innovatrain, BoxTango, etc.

The place for transhipment is called a transhipment terminal, which is a facility equipped with the necessary technologies to connect various transport modes; most of the time road-rail, but not infrequently also offering links to inland waterways and sometimes seafaring vessels. More on CT Terminals, a separate member category of UIRR from CT Operators, can be found on pages 12-17.

The economic and ecological attributes of the so-called sustainable modes of transport - electric rail, inland waterways and shortsea shipping - more than justify the increased complexity that comes with the transhipment needed to combine the various modes of transport. The longer distance transport chains of intermodal freight transport offer exceptional properties when it comes to energy efficiency, low emission of pollutants, very low greenhouse gas emissions and efficient land use, coupled with exceptional safety and security.

## Accompanied Combined Transport

Accompanied CT, or Rolling Motorway (RoLa), is a system of transport where the complete truck together with its driver is transferred to a train, as a kind of rail ferry, to facilitate the efficient crossing of geographical obstacles, such as the Alps or the English Channel. The system is based on the very low land-use of rail transport, which lends itself well - through tunnelling - to the task at hand.

The three types of Rolling Motorway services found in Europe today are:

- Rolling Motorways provided using the RoLa wagon design of WBN operated on several Trans-Alpine routes,
- The lorry rail connection between Torino (Orbassano) - Lyon (Aiton), and
- The Channel Tunnel shuttles.

Efficient electric traction and attractive average speed of rail travel complement the positive traits of competitive accompanied CT. This specialised form of Combined Transport makes up about 5% of the output performance of UIRR Operators.