

9th May 2006

Signing up to the General Contract of Use for Wagons (GCU)

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are pleased to inform you that the General Contract of Use for Wagons (GCU) negotiated by the undersigned associations has now been finalised together with all its appendices. The complete text of the GCU in the three official languages is displayed and can be downloaded from the website <http://www.uic.asso.fr/cuu>.

The GCU provides to railways and wagon keepers a multilateral contractual framework based on the Uniform Rules CUV (Appendix D of the 1999 COTIF) for the use of the wagons of all wagon keepers. It contains all relevant mutual rights and obligations of railway undertakings and wagon keepers regarding the use of wagons taking into account and balancing the different interests of the parties of the contract.

The GCU in many cases saves the parties of the contract the need of negotiating bilateral agreements and hereby materially contributes to ensuring wagon interoperability in a liberalised European rail market.

For the GCU to be optimally effective, preferably all railway undertakings and all wagon keepers in Europe should join it. The undersigned associations hereby expressly recommend doing so!

The GCU will enter into force on **1st July 2006** concurrently with the 1999 COTIF.

All keepers of wagons and all railway undertakings may join the GCU by sending an application to sign up the GCU. Until the GCU Bureau as per Appendix 8 of the GCU will have been set up the UIC for the time being will collect the applications. Forms for the application to sign up the GCU and the provision of the data required for the joining of the contract are also available from the website <http://www.uic.asso.fr/cuu>.

Important: The forms will have to be completed by all railway undertakings and wagon keepers that want to join the GCU, even if they have already declared their intention to join the GCU at an earlier stage.

For joining the GCU as of 1st July 2006 the following must be sent **until 31st May 2006** (date of receipt) **at the latest:**

- the **completed and signed** application form **by mail** to
UIC
Railway Department
16 rue Jean Rey
F-75015 Paris,

(keepers of P Wagons send a copy to the registering RU)

- the **completed** data request file **by email** to cuu@uic.asso.fr.

If **applications** are received **after 31st May 2006**, the earliest date for the admission to become effective will be 1st October 2006 (see article 2.2 GCU).

We take this opportunity to draw your attention to the following:

- the costs of the GCU Bureau in accordance with point 12 of Part I of the GCU Internal Regulation (Appendix 8 to the GCU), have to be covered by the signatories ;
- the GCU will replace the RIV Agreement and UIC Leaflets 433 (Standard General Conditions for the Introduction into Service and Operation of P Wagons) and 922 (Apportionment between railway undertakings of compensation for damage or injury resulting from the use of privately-owned wagons);
- the provisions of the RIV relating to technical matters, to the approval and registration of wagons (Chapter 2.2, paragraphs 21.1 to 21.7) will remain in force until such time as the corresponding provisions and procedures have been put in place in each country;
- when the GCU enters into force, registration contracts for P Wagons will need to be either terminated by the railway undertakings or will need to be adjusted, where appropriate.

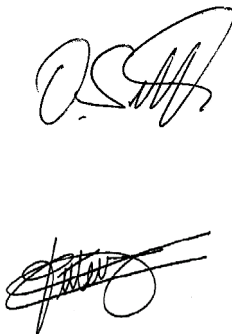
Recipients of this letter that are railway undertakings are kindly asked to forward this letter to all P Wagon keepers that have registered wagons with them, and to any railway undertakings that are not members of the RIV but which work with their company.

The UIC,ERFA and the UIP strongly recommend to their respective members to sign up for the 'opting in' procedure proposed to them and to become party to the General Contract of Use for Wagons.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and remain

Yours faithfully,

For UIC



For ERFA



For UIP

