

# GCU 2026 Update: Interactive Webinar

## ECM in the GCU

02.02.2026 | 13:30 to 16:00 | Online (Zoom) / Paris |



## Online assistants

Adjust your headset.

**Select the appropriate language channel.**

Mute your microphone and turn off your camera when not speaking.

To activate your microphone, you can request permission from the host.

Stellen Sie Ihr Headset ein.

**Wählen Sie den entsprechenden Sprachkanal aus.**

Schalten Sie Ihr Mikrofon und Ihre Kamera aus, wenn Sie nicht sprechen.

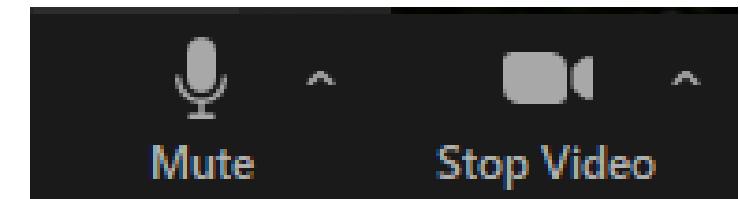
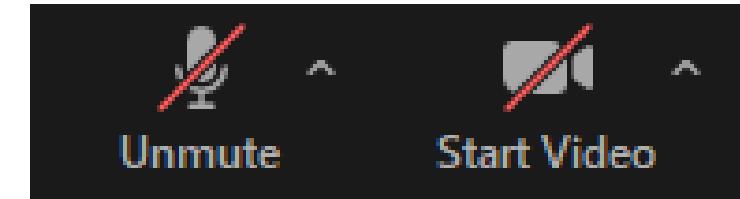
Um das Mikrofon zu aktivieren, können Sie den Gastgeber um Erlaubnis bitten.

Ajustez votre casque.

**Selectionnez le canal linguistique approprié.**

Éteignez votre micro et votre caméra lorsque vous ne parlez pas.

Pour activer le microphone, vous pouvez demander l'autorisation à l'hôte.



# How to Select Your Preferred Language During the Meeting?



Click the “**Interpretation**” button (globe icon) at the bottom right and select your preferred language: English, French, or German.

You can mute the speaker's original language (recommended).

Select “Off” to hear the speaker in the original language.

Klicken Sie auf die „**Dolmetschen**“-Schaltfläche (Globus-Symbol) unten rechts und wählen Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sprache: Englisch, Französisch oder Deutsch.

Sie können die Originalsprache des Sprechers stummschalten (empfohlen).

Wählen Sie „Aus“, um den Sprecher in der Originalsprache zu hören.

Cliquez sur le bouton « **Interprétation** » (icône du globe) en bas à droite et sélectionnez votre langue préférée : anglais, français ou allemand.

Vous pouvez couper la langue originale de l'orateur (recommandé).

Sélectionnez « **Désactiver** » pour écouter l'orateur dans sa langue d'origine.

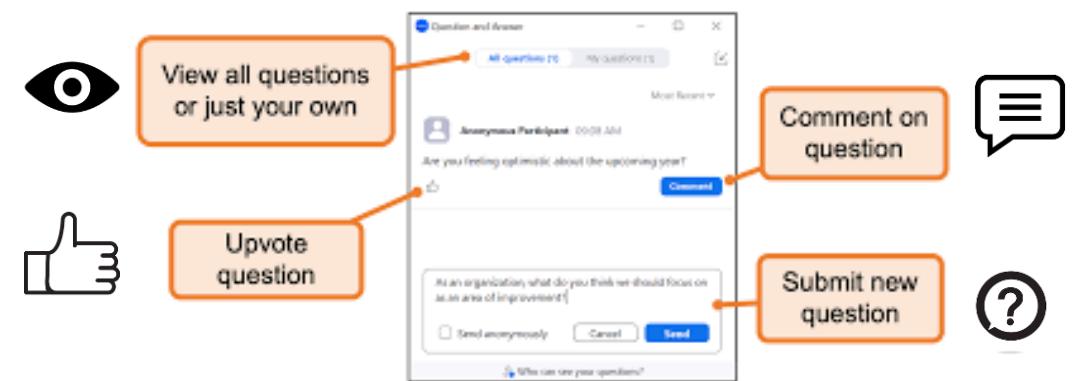
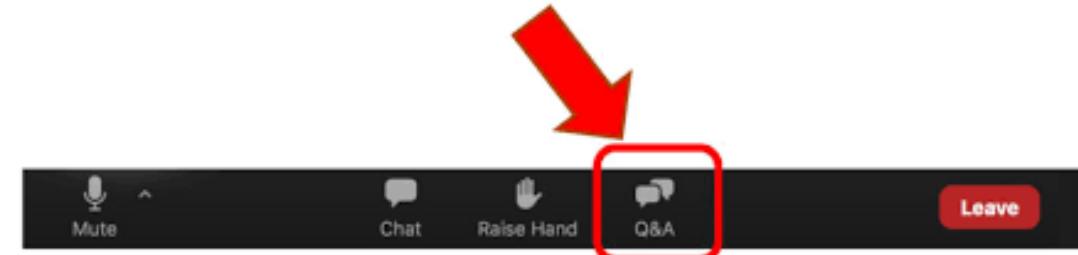


# How to Ask a Question?

## Q&A Questions and Answers

- Participants can **submit questions** (even anonymously), **view questions** (answered or unanswered), **Upvote**, and **make comments** on them.
- Questions will be **selected** to be answered live. The rest of the questions will be clustered and answered in writing form after the webinar. All questions will be recorded.
- If a question is considered inappropriate or irrelevant to the conversation, it will be deleted.
- Please make your questions as **concise, precise and clear** as possible.

Submit your question using the “Q&A” button (speech bubble).  
Senden Sie Ihre Frage über die „Q&A“-Schaltfläche (Sprechblase).  
Soumettez votre question en utilisant le bouton « Q&A » (bulle de dialogue).





– Leonardo Fogu



– Bettina Wotzlaw



– Nicolas Czernecki



– Christian Kühnast



– Enrico Paoletti



– Fabián Figueroa



– Gilles Peterhans



– Valerie Nicaise



– Karl-Heinz Fehr



– Floris Foqué

# Agenda

## Introduction of the speakers

### First Block

Problem statement & communication

Working group with ERFA, UIC und UIP members

### Second Block

Obligations of the signatories (RU / keeper)

### Solution of the working group

*Description of the process*

*Introduction of RTS and RTO*

New data exchange for RTS and RTO

### Break (Pause)

### Third Block

Outcome of legal assessment of the changes

Outcome of risk assessment of the changes

### Q&A session

### Conclusion and further development

# First Block



**Gilles Peterhans**  
UIP Secretary General



**Nicolas Czernecki**  
Co-chairman of the Joint Committee  
RLE - Head of Wagons

# Problem statement

- With Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/779 - ECM and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/762 - SMS in force, discussions and unilateral interpretations of railway actors, safety authorities and certification bodies on how the GCU fits in the framework have been on-going.

➤ GCU **needs to be amended** to ensure harmonised application and legal certainty.

## WHAT THE GCU DOES COVER

- Rights and obligations of user RUs and Keepers when wagons are under the custody of RU in a transport contract or handed over to another user RU
- Handling of damages and prerequisites for it when wagons are under custody of RUs
- Exchange of information between RUs and Keepers

## PREREQUISITES FOR HANDLING DAMAGED WAGONS

- Keeper has appointed a certified ECM and ensure ECM performs its tasks
- RU has in its SMS the competences to arrange for the wagon to be put back to running order in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 10
- RUs and Keepers exchanged appropriate information

## WHAT THE GCU DOESN'T COVER (NON-EXHAUSTIVE)

- Requirements regarding the competences of ECM (ECM Regulation)
- Requirements regarding the competences of RU (CSM on SMS regulation)
- Requirements on checks before departure and safety of load (TSI OPE / AMOC regulations)

## PRINCIPLES FOR HANDLING OF DAMAGES

**Appendix 9** = harmonised damage codes but doesn't rule the content of train inspection/pre-departure checks

**Appendix 10** = measures to restore fitness to run and minimum conditions/limit values but doesn't cover all specific maintenance instructions (level 3 & 4)

**Interface between codes (what) and measures (how) provided for in Appendix 10**

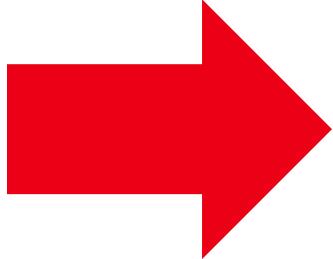
# Problem statement

Being a signatory of the GCU means that the signatory has agreed to the process described in it for taking care of damaged wagons and the information flow that belongs to it.

- Within the framework of the GCU, the **RUs** shall arrange for the wagons to have their **fitness to run** restored in order for the wagon to reach the destination station for which it was initially bound **but the processes and interfaces between RU and Keepers need to be clarified**
- The 2026 version of the GCU ensures that the existing processes **remain valid**, but **better coordinated**, and that they **better describe and follow** the "en route repair" for both RUs and Keepers
- The amendments to **Articles 7, 12, 15 and 19** and **Appendix 2** are intended to increase **legal certainty**
- To facilitate the **exchanges of information** related to those changes, ERFA, UIC and UIP are working on defining the necessary IT adaptations for **the GCU Broker IT Platform** to support the implementation of the new processes by the signatories and the exchange of relevant data

The further development of the GCU is a continuous process that welcomes constructive contributions from all stakeholders.

- The new version strengthens and clarifies duties and tasks of all parties involved. It creates a continuous chain of responsibility. RUs are not being turned into maintenance providers, but into responsible actors who are capable of action within the scope of their custody over a wagon.
- The new version creates an incentive to develop operational excellence and quality improvement throughout the sector but competencies on both side are a matter of industry development rather than contractual framework.
- The use of the GCU Broker as platform for data exchanges enable efficient communication that minimises efforts and enhances safety.



Cross-border wagon traffic with multiple handovers is the foundation of European train and wagon load traffic.

A rigid assignment of all repair activities to the ECM would effectively make this model impossible and massively disadvantage rail freight transport compared to road transport.

# Set up working group

- The Joint Committee assigned a special working group of ERFA, UIC and UIP with experts to find a solution.
- The work has been started 2022 to find a common solution with a lot of ideas
- Even the ERA and other NSA have been asked for their position with the result, that ERA have sent out a clarification note, which started a bigger discussion
- At the end more than 50 experts from more than 10 companies have been developed the solution that was unanimous approved by the members of ERFA, UIC and UIP and approved by the majority of the GCU signatories.



## Second Block



**Gilles Peterhans**  
UIP Secretary General



**Christian Kühnast**  
DB Cargo AG - GCU expert



**Valérie Nicaise**  
ERMEWA – Asset Manager Automotive



**Leonardo Fogu**  
Hupac - Director of Fleet Management



**Floris Foqué**  
GCU Trustee



# Obligations of the signatories (RU / keeper)

## Article 7

### Technical admission and maintenance of wagons

- Clarification** ensuring that the ECM (appointed from Wagon Keeper) integrates the maintenance provisions of the GCU, in particular of Appendix 10, into its maintenance system.
- Clarification:** The wagon keeper have the responsibilities of the entity in charge of maintenance for his wagons, even if he has designated a legally separate ECM. **ECMs are not parties in the GCU.**
- Clarification:** Provision (without delay) of information (technical wagon data, reliable maintenance information, restrictions and further information).
- New:** The keeper authorizes the RU to carry out repairs in accordance with the requirements of Appendix 10. The ECM's responsibility (subcontracted maintenance functions and for performance monitoring) remains unaffected.

## Article 12

### Technical admission and maintenance of wagons

- Clarification:** Each RU shall carry out the **legally required** inspections (Appendix 9).
- New:** Each RU shall ensure that the procedures and regulations set out in this contract for restoring **fitness to run** are integrated into its **safety management system**.

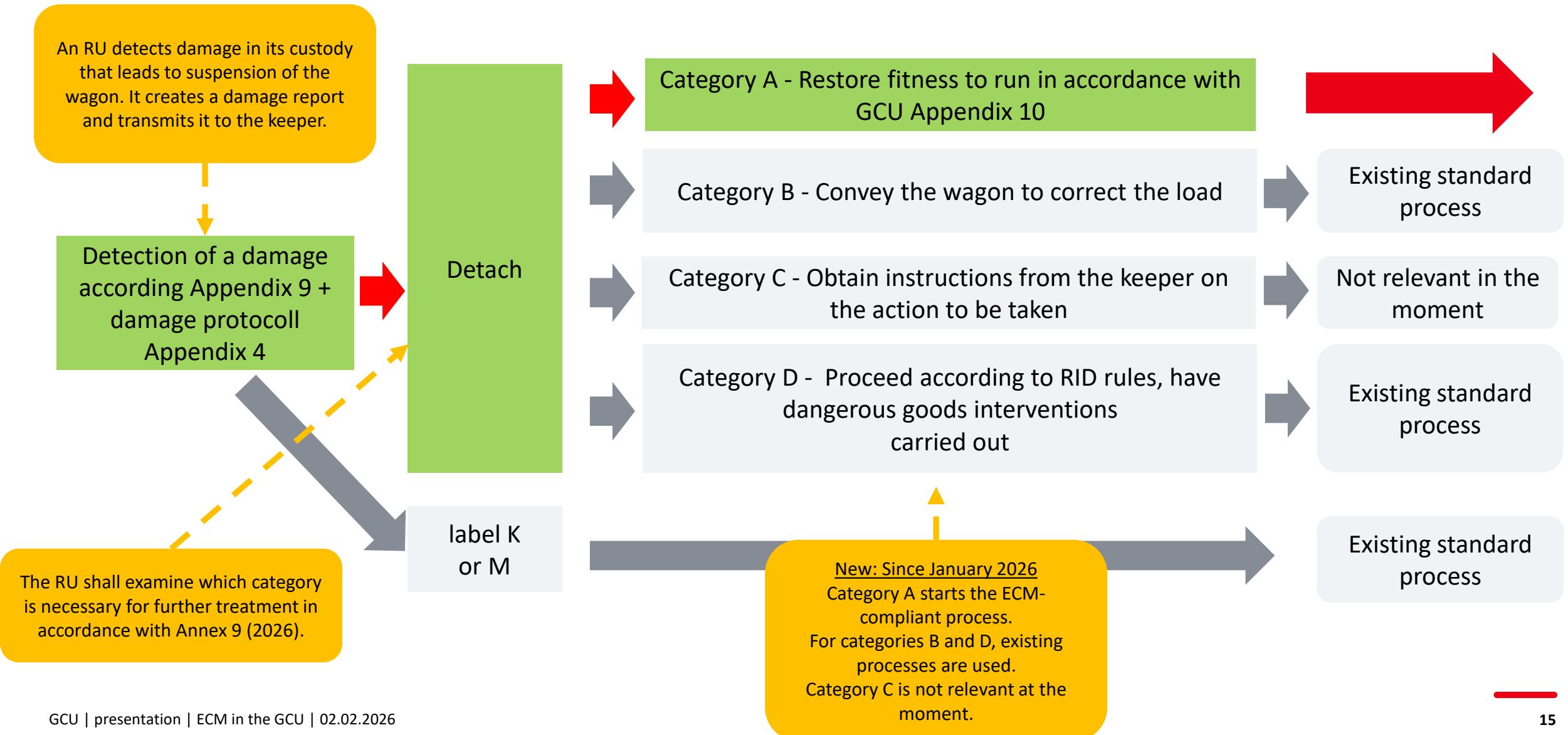
## Article 15

### Information to be supplied to the keeper

- Clarification:** User RUs shall supply the keeper with information on the use of his wagons in a timely manner, **via the communication platform (GCU Broker)**, in accordance with the national and international laws and regulations in force. Details are set out in Appendices 4 (Wagon damage report) and 15 (Wagon Performance Message (WPM)).

# Process: Detached wagons within the framework of the GCU

## RU detects damage that leads to the suspension of the wagon



# Process: Treatment of a detached wagon in the GCU, selected workshop restores the fitness to run

The RU selects the workshop according to the criteria of Article 19.5. The RU decides, if necessary, after consultation with the keeper, whether the wagon can still be transferred or must be repaired on site

RU organizes that the wagon comes to the workshop or the workshop to the wagon

RU triggers the repair of fitness to run in accordance with Appendix 10 on the basis of Appendices 4 and 9

The workshop uses the predefined repair packages according to Appendix 10 to restore the fitness to run. Any additional work may only be carried out after consultation with the keeper's ECM.

Workshop restores the fitness to run of the wagon according to Appendix 10

Release to service by the workshop in accordance with Article 19.6 on the basis of Appendix 10, Annex 6

The RU triggers the commercial order to the workshop. The content of maintenance is defined in Appendix 10, accepted by Keeper's ECMs as stated in Art 7.2.

After completion of the work, the workshop prepares a release to service permit and documents the work carried out there. The minimum requirements for a release to service confirmation must be met.

# Process: Return to operation after repair

## RU continues transport after repair if no RTO is required

In accordance with the provisions of Article 19.7, a decision is made, if a return to operation is necessary or not.

If yes, the keeper's ECM is requested to send a return to operation based on the release to service to the RU.

On the basis of the return to operation, the RU checks whether there are any restrictions of use for this wagon. Minimum requirements must be met for return to operation.

Is it necessary to have a return to operation by the keeper's ECM??

Yes

Recommissioning by the keeper's ECM is sent to the RU

RU continues transport

No

If not, the RU can take the wagon into operation immediately after the repair.

The wagon is transported to its destination. If only the fitness to run has been restored, but not yet usability, the keeper transports his wagon to his workshop to complete the repair.

## GCU Broker Platform as digital collaboration tool

**WHAT** Online platform which allows signatories to manage their **contact details**, register the **wagon fleet** and ensure smooth digital **exchange of data** with other signatories.

**HOW** *prod.gcubroker.org*

- Each signatory has **personalized login(s)** to the GCU Broker
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date information is vital
- Each signatory is responsible for ensuring the data accuracy and integrity

**WHY**

- **Harnesses network effects:** broader adoption strengthens operational performance for all signatories.
- **A practical tool** enabling sector-wide digitalization and standardized data exchange.
- **Low-threshold access for all GCU signatories**, supporting both large and small companies.

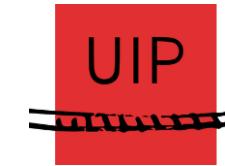
## RTS / RTO in GCU Broker Platform



Responsible Person or Department				
Contractual Term	Organisation	Phone	E-Mail	
Main Contact	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Reception of technical vehicle data (Article 7.4, app. 16)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Provision of technical vehicle data (Article 7.4, app. 16)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Provision of wagons by the keeper (Article 9)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Compensation claims for damage or loss of use (Article 13)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Instructions for the deployment of wagons (Article 14)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Delivery of wagon performance data (Article 15, app. 15)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Reception of wagon performance data (Article 15, app. 15)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Management of damage to wagons (Article 15)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Management of damage to wagons (Chapters IV - VI)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Delivery of spare parts (App. 7)	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Central Invoicing Address RU	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
Central Invoicing Address Keeper	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
<b>RTO - Return To Operation</b>	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	
<b>RTS - Release To Service</b>	GCU	+32 2 642 95 54	<a href="mailto:gcu@gcubureau.org">gcu@gcubureau.org</a>	

Add the contact information of the responsible for RTO/RTS.

So it becomes available on the GCU website for all signatories  
<https://gcubureau.org/signatories/>



Break (Pause) 15 min

## Third Block



**Karl-Heinz Fehr**  
VPI Legal advisor



**Bettina Wotzlaw**  
Captrain – Head of Law and Insurances



**Enrico Paoletti**  
Mercitalia Rail – Technical Director and Operational Safety Manager



# Outcome of legal assessment

## Title: Is the GCU with its amendments as of January 1, 2026, in line with current European Union legislation, in particular Regulation (EU) 779/2019?

- Legal opinion written by Prof. Dr. Rainer Freise, one of the founding father of the GCU and one of the most respected experts in Railway and transport law
- Order given by the GCU Joint Committee
- Motivation: re-assure the legal conformity of the changes in the GCU with maximum authority
- With the GCU, the associations represented in the GCU Joint Committee want to continuously provide a reliable contractual solution for the whole rail freight sector



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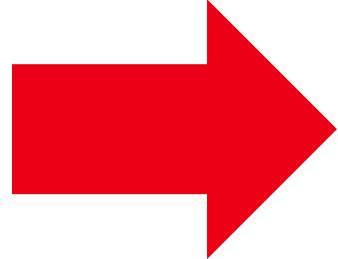


## Key contents and statements

- The Regulation (EU) 779/2019 (ECM Regulation) grants comprehensive and far-reaching options for the subcontracting of most ECM obligations
- Clarification: the ECMs are not (and have never been) contractual parties of the GCU
- The option for ECM to subcontract individual maintenance functions, especially to RUs, is being used
- Provisions concerning the technical transition inspection between railway undertakings and the controls to be carried out in this process are removed from the GCU because they do not belong in a contract between railway undertakings and wagon keepers
- It is stipulated that the ECM must integrate GCU Appendix 10 with its repair provisions into its maintenance system
- It is stipulated that the RU must include the procedures and operational provisions for restoring fitness to run in its SMS (Safety Management System)
- This ensures the most uniform possible application of the provisions of the GCU

## Key contents and statements

- The role of the GCU broker is strengthened for the exchange of information between RUs and Keepers
- The definitions in Appendix 2 for "release to service" (RTS) and "return to operation" (RTO) clearly refer to the ECM Regulation
- The GCU now provides a clear distinction between cases when an RTO is needed and when not
- The GCU – neither in the old version nor in the amended version – does not create any new or own obligations; those arise from the legislation. The GCU only regulates the specific implementation of these obligations.



**Overall, the amendments to the GCU effective January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026, meet the legal requirements for the activities of railway undertakings, wagon keepers and ECMs much more clearly than the current version of the GCU**

# Outcome of risk assessment (CSM RA EC 402/2013)

- The risk assessment have been checked the amendment proposal against the old version of the GCU.
- Experts from the three associations were involved in the evaluation
- The technical experts unanimously assessed all intended changes.
- All intended changes were assessed as not relevant to safety. The assessments for "significance" were therefore not carried out.
- For four intended changes, additional safety measures were documented.
- The intended change is approved for implementation after it has been signed by the proposer.



# Q&A session



# Conclusion and further development

- Proper implementation of the new process for RU in their SMS and keeper in their ECM
- Proper implementation of the RTO and RTS in the GCU
- shared view on the data, that have to be exchanged (link to GCU Broker)
- Collection of the experience of the new process from the signatories or NSA through the trustee or the three associations, evaluate and conclude for the further development

