

Marathon2Operation Kick off meeting Press Release

Marathon2Operation - M2O is the acronym for a new Shift2Rail project called: **MAke RAIl The HOpe for protecting Nature 2 Operation**

The **M2O project**, financed by the Shift2Rail initiative of the European Commission, had its kick off meeting in Rome, Italy on the 17th December 2018. The objective of the project is to increase the rail freight competitive profile by exploiting the results of the **FP7 project “Marathon”**, developing and testing twice the next generation of longer, commercially faster and heavier trains in Europe.

M2O project is a step further to implement and to overcome the results of the Marathon project which has shown the feasibility of the long heavy consist created by coupling two trains with distributed traction: one locomotive (Traction Unit) at the head of the train and one other remote controlled in the middle. The Marathon train, tested twice in France in 2014, has a total length of 1524m, and is composed by 72 wagons for a total of 210 TEUs carrying 4036 tons. M2O aims at overcoming the configurations of the Marathon project with long and heavy consists involving up to four active locos. The project develops and delivers a reliable radio communication system based on GSM-R, compatible with various types of locomotives, and simulates the in-train forces in all possible operational situations ensuring safety and security. The consortium incorporates partners of the FP7 Marathon project having already experienced the tests performed in 2014 and the specialist of TrainDy, a software that simulates the in-train forces in all various operational situations in nominal and degraded modes.

A qualifying part of the M2O project development is the intense correlation with the partners of the FR8RAIL II project. This synergy will deliver the safety and certification-related (TRL5) part necessary for the running of two test trains in 2019 and 2020, so that the solutions developed are ready for exploitation into the marketplace.

The M2O Consortium is Coordinated by the [University of Rome Tor Vergata](#) in Italy and is composed of leading European companies, associations and universities engaged in the field of Research, Technology Innovation and testing, GSM-R manufacturing, Inspection & Safety assessment, Transport engineering. The presence in the consortium of specialists of safety engineering will make it possible to prepare the necessary files to get the “green light” to test such a train on the network, paving the way towards its future certification. [UIC](#), the worldwide organization for railways, is also part of the M2O consortium.

For further information, the website www.marathon2operation.eu will be soon available online

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