



IWT Submission to the Joint Committee on Transport

Founded in 1981 International Warehousing & Transport (IWT), is an indigenous privately-owned Irish company with offices in Dublin, Rotterdam Hamburg and Ballina Co. Mayo and is a leading provider of European and global shipping services.

Since 2009 we have chartered in excess of 3000 freight trains serving Ballina and Dublin Port, and currently offer customers 14 cross-country rail freight services weekly. This is the only intermodal/container rail service on the island of Ireland currently.

It is the ambition of IWT to expand and develop its services across the country. Having invested heavily in our rail freight operations in Ballina we see an urgent need in the Post-Brexit era for rail connectivity to the Ports of Waterford and Foynes (when reconnected) and others. We are confident that many new business opportunities would arise if it were indicated that this infrastructure was to be made available.

The restoration of the rail freight connection from Mayo southwards to those southern ports, as proposed by the Transport Minister recently, would allow for greater flexibility and alternative exit points for current business as well as the development of such new business opportunities.

In order to support this rail service IWT have invested in excess of €2 million in our depot in Ballina Co. Mayo with a capacity to operate the first and last mile 24/7. We have a modern fleet of trucks trailers and heavy lift port type reach stackers for lifting laden and empty containers.

In mainland Europe Ballina would be referred to as an inland Port and countries such as The Netherlands consider inland Ports of strategic importance for competitive advantage to local industry.

Our existing rail freight service is a significant addition to our portfolio of international services. We are the largest single freight customer of Iarnród Éireann. IWT charter the train thereby taking all the commercial risk and slots are available for the entire market to use.

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We fully intend to grow current rail services where possible with a focus on reducing costs, reducing transport's annual carbon footprint and providing a statistically safer mode of transport.

In 2015 a study by the Western Development Commission estimated that the rail freight market share in the western region could be increased four-fold. We are now interested in expanding our rail freight operations serving locations on the Western Rail Corridor. A number of other potential customers have been identified including potential traffics from Cork to Ballina, Foynes to Ballina and Waterford to Tuam/Claremorris and Ballina.

In addition to facilitating direct access to southern ports such as Waterford and potentially Shannon-Foynes and Cork, the restoration of the rail link between Claremorris and Athenry would provide us with an alternative route to Dublin in the event of unforeseen interruptions/congestion on the radial line from Claremorris to Athlone. There is already evidence of traffic congestion on the existing radial route from Dublin to the West. As our operations continue to increase this becomes a more pressing issue.

There is a quick and available opportunity to commence a new service from Waterford to Ballina immediately and IWT is willing to commit to this.

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Environmental Factors

- Rail freight emissions are 60-70% lower than road freight.
- Rail is one of the most environmentally sustainable forms of transport.
- The benefits of moving freight from road to rail in order to reduce carbon emissions are widely recognised in other EU countries and are championed by governments.
- The promotion of increased rail freight by the Irish Government would send a strong signal to Europe that we are serious about meeting our carbon targets.
- In line with our company's commitment to the environment our charter trains contribute directly to carbon savings by displacing approximately 13,000 truck movements or 3 million truck kilometres annually.
- With a CO2 saving that amounts to an annual CO2 reduction of 1,463,703 kgs.
- Our Rail service currently displaces approximately 85 million tonne kilometres from Irish roads annually.
- Each train removes up to 36 HGVs from our roads.

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We are actively seeking to increase the volume of suitable container traffic by rail.

Despite the fact that we are supposed to be incentivising carbon savings in the area of transport, **Ireland currently has the second highest Track access charges in Europe at approximately twice the average in the EU.**

Remarkably there are no subsidies towards rail freight unlike most countries. **By contrast, the Scottish Government has recently allocated £25million to support the country's rail freight industry over the next five years.**

We feel that more ambition is called for in these areas.

In order to address these issues we believe it is necessary to invest in the integration and expansion of the Irish rail network, including the revival of strategically important disused lines, which can also contribute significantly to Ireland meeting its emissions targets and obligations, and increasing GDP in areas outside the Greater Dublin Area.

It is important to note that to date there has been no financial risk to Irish Rail, all the commercial risk lies with IWT the charter party.

This demonstrates the success of a Public Private partnership which brings significant Societal, Economic, and Environmental benefits with significant scope for further expansion.

Thank you.

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Joint Managing Director.

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