

**2.2. Actions related to the funding objective “ensuring sustainable and efficient transport systems in the long run, with a view to preparing for expected future transport flows, as well as enabling all modes of transport to be decarbonised through transition to innovative low-carbon and energy-efficient transport technologies, while optimising safety”**

**Reducing rail freight noise, including by retrofitting of existing rolling stock**

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals:

*2.2.1. General objective*

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1304/2014<sup>1</sup> setting out the technical specifications for interoperability relating to the subsystem “rolling stock – noise” is under revision to strengthen the reduction of noise nuisance that affect people living close to railway lines. This revision aims to introduce operational restrictions on noisy wagons.

At present, the most efficient way to mitigate rail noise is by tackling noise at its source by retrofitting the existing freight wagons with composite brake blocks. This technical solution reduces rail noise by up to 10 dB, which equals to a 50% reduction in audible noise for humans. Therefore, the retrofitting of wagons with the most economically viable low-noise braking technology available is supported throughout the Union.

*2.2.2. Specific objectives*

Actions to be selected under this priority shall concern works to reduce rail freight noise by retrofitting existing freight wagons with composite brake blocks, and where necessary due to extreme weather conditions with disc brakes, in line with Article 13(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013.

*2.2.3. Essential conditions*

The essential condition triggering the payment shall be based on the outputs, namely the number of wagons retrofitted per type of wagon.

Monitoring on sampling evidence will be organised upon request by the Commission services and based on a copy of the official attestation from the contracted workshops where the retrofitting took place. Such attestation shall include the following:

- the type and batch number of the composite brake block or disc brake installed on the freight wagon;
- the freight wagon, type and its number as registered in the National Vehicle Register.

*2.2.4. Specific conditions*

The threshold of freight wagons covered by one application under this priority shall not be lower than 2000 wagons.

The freight wagons must be authorised for operation on the Union railway network prior to submission of the application and they shall be equipped with cast-iron brake blocks.

The low-noise technology to be deployed on the freight wagons shall be the composite brake blocks covered by an EC declaration of conformity or the composite brake blocks listed in

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Regulation (EU) No 1304/2014 of 26 November 2014 on the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem ‘rolling stock — noise’ amending Decision 2008/232/EC and repealing Decision 2011/229/EU (OJ L 356, 12.12.2014, p. 421).

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 of Appendix G of Commission Regulation (EU) No 321/2013<sup>2</sup> concerning the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem ‘rolling stock — freight wagons’, under the condition that their approval period has not expired yet. Disc brake is also considered as low-noise technology eligible for Union financial assistance where extreme weather conditions apply.

Only freight wagons and wagons intended for freight operation may be funded under this priority.

Two types of noisy wagons are eligible for the retrofitting:

- S-type wagon (100 km/h), not-automatic load-proportional braking system and brake linkage and slack adjuster in the middle;
- SS-type wagon (120 km/h), automatic load-proportional braking system and brake linkage and slack adjuster in the middle, requiring the replacement of the kink valve<sup>3</sup>.

Once retrofitted the wagons should remain in service within the Union for a minimum of 6 years, corresponding to the standard maintenance cycle.

#### *2.2.5. Deliverables*

Following the implementation of proposals selected within this priority area, the beneficiaries shall deliver a list of freight wagons which were retrofitted within the scope of the actions, including their numbers as registered in the National Vehicle Register.

#### *2.2.6. Form of Union contributions*

Union financial assistance shall take the form of unit contributions, as provided in Article 125(1)(c) of the Financial Regulation. Unit contributions are authorised by the Commission decision dated 03 September 2018<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Commission Regulation (EU) No 321/2013 of 13 March 2013 concerning the technical specification for interoperability relating to the subsystem ‘rolling stock —freight wagons’ of the rail system in the European Union and repealing Decision 2006/861/EC (OJ L 104 12.4.2013, p. 1).

<sup>3</sup> One-off installation costs of retrofitting of SS-type wagons which do not require the replacement of the kink valve will be considered in the same way the one-off installation costs of retrofitting of the S-type wagon.

<sup>4</sup> Ares(2018)4510586