

Notes on Numerical Fluid Mechanics
and Multidisciplinary Design 126

Jens C.O. Nielsen · David Anderson
Pierre-Etienne Gautier · Masanobu Iida
James T. Nelson · David Thompson
Thorsten Tielkes · David A. Towers
Paul de Vos *Editors*

Noise and Vibration Mitigation for Rail Transportation Systems

Proceedings of the 11th International
Workshop on Railway Noise, Uddevalla,
Sweden, 9–13 September 2013

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Preface

This volume contains the peer reviewed contributions to the 11th International Workshop on Railway Noise (IWRN11), which took place in Uddevalla, Sweden, on September 9–13, 2013. The workshop was organised by the Competence Centre in Railway Mechanics (CHARMEC) and the Departments of Applied Mechanics and Applied Acoustics at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden. It was supported by Bombardier Transportation, voestalpine Schienen, Lucchini and Chalmers / CHARMEC.

The workshop was attended by 160 delegates from 19 countries around the world: Sweden (33 delegates), Germany (18), United Kingdom (17), France (12), The Netherlands (11), China (8), Australia (7), Austria (7), Belgium (7), Czech Republic (7), Denmark (7), Switzerland (6), Japan (5), United States (4), Norway (3), South Korea (3), Spain (3), Finland (1) and Hong Kong (1).

Railway traffic is, in comparison with other modes of transportation, safe and environmentally friendly and is generally described as the most sustainable mode for regional and international transports. According to the White Paper on Transport, issued by the European Commission in 2011, one of the key goals by 2050 is a 50 % shift of medium distance intercity passenger and freight journeys from road to rail and water-borne transport. This will contribute to a 60 % reduction in carbon emissions by the middle of the century. To promote the shift from road to rail, the environmental impact induced by the railway in terms of noise and vibration needs to be further reduced.

Since the first IWRN in 1976, held in Derby (UK) with some 35 delegates, the workshop series has been established as a regular event that every three years brings together the leading researchers and engineers in all fields related to railway noise and vibration. The workshops have to a great extent contributed to the understanding and solution of many problems in railway noise and vibration, building a scientific foundation for reducing the environmental impact by air-borne, ground-borne and structure-borne noise and vibration.

Following the tradition from previous workshops, the scientific programme of IWRN11 was held as a single-session event (no parallel sessions) over three and a half days. The programme contained 55 oral presentations and 36 poster presentations, the latter including a three-minute oral presentation to introduce each poster. The present

volume contains the peer reviewed papers from 84 of these presentations, including 2 state-of-the papers on ground-borne vibration due to railway traffic and on railway noise generated by high-speed trains. IWRN11 covered 9 different topics of railway noise and vibration: 1. Prospects, legal regulation and perception, 2. Wheel and rail noise, 3. Prediction, measurements and monitoring, 4. Ground-borne vibration, 5. Squeal noise and structure-borne noise, 6. Aerodynamic noise generated by high-speed trains, 7. Resilient track forms, 8. Grinding, corrugation and roughness, and 9. Interior noise and sound barriers.

There is no formal organisation behind the IWRN but rather an informal, committed International Committee. It supports the chairman during the preparation process with the experience and expertise of its members. Assistance is given to formulate the scientific programme by reviewing the submitted abstracts, to act as session chairmen, and to act as peer review group and editors of the IWRN proceedings published in this volume.

The International Committee is grateful to Anders Frid, Wolfgang Kropp, Roger Lundén, Astrid Pieringer and Peter Torstensson of the local committee for their great commitment and care in organising the workshop. Special thanks to Pernilla Appelgren Johansson, Christian Johansson and Sara Nielsen for their work related to the administration, communication and graphic design of material for the Workshop, and to the staff of Bohusgården Hotel & Conference Centre.

The editors of this volume are grateful to Professor Wolfgang Schröder as the general editor of the “Notes on Numerical Fluid Mechanics and Multidisciplinary Design” and also to the staff of the Springer Verlag (in particular Dr Leontina Di Cecco) for the opportunity to publish the proceedings of the IWRN11 workshop in this series. Note that previous workshop proceedings have also been published in this series (IWRN9 in volume 99 and IWRN10 in volume 118).

We hope that this volume will be used as a “state-of-the-art” reference by scientists and engineers involved in solving noise and vibration problems related to railway traffic.

June 2014

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Contents

Session 1: Prospects, Legal Regulation, Perception – Part 1

Railway Noise Control in Europe: Current Status	1
<i>J. Oertli</i>	
Novel Legislation for Railway Lines and Motorways in The Netherlands . . .	7
<i>P.H. de Vos</i>	
Bearable Railway Noise Limits in Europe	13
<i>F.B.J. Elbers, E. Verheijen</i>	
State-of-the-Art of the Noise Emission of Railway Cars	21
<i>S. Lutzenberger, C. Gutmann, U. Reichart</i>	

Session 2: Prospects, Legal Regulation, Perception – Part 2

On Separation of Vehicle Noise for Limit Setting in Future Legislation	31
<i>T. Thron, S. Leth, B. Stegemann</i>	

Session 2: Wheel and Rail Noise – Part 1

Estimating the Performance of Wheel Dampers Using Laboratory Methods and a Prediction Tool	39
<i>B. Betgen, P. Bouvet, G. Squicciarini, D.J. Thompson, C.J.C. Jones</i>	
Estimating the Performance of Rail Dampers Using Laboratory Methods and Software Predictions	47
<i>M.G.R. Toward, G. Squicciarini, D.J. Thompson, Y. Gao</i>	
Experimental and Theoretical Studies on Impact Noise Generation due to Rail Joints	55
<i>T. Kitagawa, K. Murata, T. Kawaguchi, S. Tanaka, K. Nagakura</i>	

An Explicit Integration Finite Element Method for Impact Noise Generation at a Squat	63
<i>Z. Yang, Z. Li, R.P.B.J. Dollevoet</i>	
Poster Session 1: Prospects, Legal Regulation, Perception/Wheel and Rail Noise/Prediction, Measurements, Monitoring	
Future European Noise Emission Ceilings: Threat or Solution? A Review Based on Swiss and Dutch Ceilings	71
<i>E. Verheijen, F.B.J. Elbers</i>	
Comparison between Road and Rail Noise Cost per Transported Ton of Cargo	79
<i>M. Ögren, H. Andersson, T. Jerson</i>	
A Survey of Freight Locomotive Passby Noise Emissions	85
<i>B.E. Croft, B. Dowdell, D. Hanson, D.C. Anderson</i>	
On the Importance of Accuracy of Geographic Model Data for Noise Impact Studies	93
<i>A.H.W.M. Kuijpers, M.S. Roovers, G.H. Groenvelde</i>	
The Efficiency of Noise Reduction Measures on Railway Infrastructure in Normal Operating Conditions - NOVIBRAIL	101
<i>J. Hlaváček, L. Hejzlar, R. Kolmačka</i>	
Characterizing Wheel Flat Impact Noise with an Efficient Time Domain Model	109
<i>J. Yang, D.J. Thompson, Y. Takano</i>	
Study on the Sound Radiation Directivity of a Railway Wheel and the Relationship between Directivity and Mode Shape	117
<i>J. Han, X.B. Xiao, R.Q. Wang, X. Zhao, G.T. Zhao, X.S. Jin</i>	
Empirical Modeling of Railway Aerodynamic Noise Using One Microphone Pass-By Recording	125
<i>X. Zhang</i>	
Localizing Noise Sources on a Rail Vehicle during Pass-By	133
<i>J. Gomes, J. Hald, B. Ginn</i>	
Experimental Characterization of the Vibro-Acoustic Behaviour of a Switch	141
<i>B. Faure, E. Bongini, A. Renoncourt, A. Pouzet</i>	

Experimental Comparison of Maximum Length Sequence (MLS) and Impact Hammer Methods to Evaluate Vibration Transfer Functions in Soil	149
<i>G. Coquel, A. Kengni Kengang</i>	
sonRAIL Web Tool – A New Web Application of the Swiss Method on Railway Noise Calculation Released in 2013	157
<i>C. Czolbe, J.-M. Wunderli, F. Fischer</i>	
Concept for Measuring Aeroacoustic Noise Transmission in Trains Derived from Experience Gained in Aircraft Testing	165
<i>J. Galuba (formerly Kokavec), C. Spehr</i>	
Session 3: Wheel and Rail Noise – Part 2	
Innovative Measures for Reducing Noise Radiation from Track	173
<i>M. Beier, T. Lölgen, M. Starnberg</i>	
Innovative Noise Mitigation Measures in the Framework of “Konjunkturprogramm II” in Germany	181
<i>U. Moehler, M. Liepert, A. Martens</i>	
Session 3: Prediction, Measurements, Monitoring – Part 1	
Indirect Method of Rail Roughness Measurement – VUKV Implementation and Initial Results	189
<i>L. Phamová, P. Bauer, J. Malinský, M. Richter</i>	
Background for a New Standard on Pass-By Measurement of Combined Roughness, Track Decay Rate and Vibroacoustic Transfer Functions	197
<i>M.G. Dittrich, F. Létourneaux, H. Dupuis</i>	
Monitoring Rail Condition Based on Sound and Vibration Sensors Installed on an Operational Train	205
<i>T. Jensen, S. Chauhan, K. Haddad, W. Song, S. Junge</i>	
Session 4: Prediction, Measurements, Monitoring – Part 2	
Transposition of Noise Type Test Data for Tracks and Vehicles	213
<i>H.W. Jansen, M.G. Dittrich, G. Squicciarini, D.J. Thompson, B. Betgen</i>	
Virtual Testing within the TSI Noise: How to Introduce Numerical Simulation into a Certification Process?	221
<i>E. Bongini, R. Cordero</i>	
A Study of the Measurement Technology of Noise Sources of High-Speed Trains	229
<i>H.I. Koh, A. Nordborg, H.M. Noh</i>	

Determination of Insertion Losses for Vibration Mitigation Measures in Track by Artificial Vibration Excitation	237
<i>R. Garburg, D. Heiland, M. Mistler</i>	
The Prediction of Vibration Transfer for Railway Induced Ground Vibration	245
<i>H. Verbraken, N. Veirman, V. Cuellar, G. Lombaert, G. Degrande</i>	
Session 5: Ground-Borne Vibration – Part 1	
Invited Paper: Ground-Borne Vibration due to Railway Traffic: A Review of Excitation Mechanisms, Prediction Methods and Mitigation Measures	253
<i>G. Lombaert, G. Degrande, S. François, D.J. Thompson</i>	
Prediction of Railway Induced Vibration and Ground Borne Noise Exposure in Building and Associated Annoyance	289
<i>M. Villot, S. Bailhache, C. Guigou, P. Jean</i>	
Attenuation of Railway Noise and Vibration in Two Concrete Frame Multi-storey Buildings	297
<i>D.E.J. Lurcock, D.J. Thompson, O.G. Bewes</i>	
Session 6: Ground-Borne Vibration – Part 2	
Developing a Good Practice Guide on the Evaluation of Human Response to Vibration from Railways in Residential Environments	305
<i>J.S. Woodcock, E. Peris, D.C. Waddington, A.T. Moorhouse</i>	
Vibration Control at Sound Transit	313
<i>J.T. Nelson, D.L. Watry</i>	
Recent Developments in the Pipe-in-Pipe Model for Underground-Railway Vibration Predictions	321
<i>K.A. Kuo, S.W. Jones, M.F.M. Hussein, H.E.M. Hunt</i>	
Prediction of Railway-Induced Ground Vibrations: The Use of Minimal Coordinate Method for Vehicle Modelling	329
<i>G. Kouroussis, G. Alexandrou, J. Florentin, O. Verlinden</i>	
Poster Session 2: Interior Noise, Sound Barrier/Grinding, Corrugation, Roughness/Resilient Track Forms	
Transfer Path Analysis on a Siemens Combino-Plus Tram in Almada – Seixal (Lisbon)	337
<i>G. Schleinzner, T. Kern</i>	

Characteristics of Sound Insulation and Insertion Loss of Different Deloading Sound Barriers for High-Speed Railways	345
<i>B. He, X.B. Xiao, X. Zhou, J. Han, X.S. Jin</i>	
Optimizing Capacity of Railroad Yards within Noise Limits Using a Dynamic Noise Model	353
<i>S.N. Hoogzaad, M.S. Roovers</i>	
Modeling of Wheel-Track Interaction with Rail Vibration Damper and Its Application for Suppressing Short Pitch Rail Corrugation	361
<i>T.X. Wu, Y.R. Wang</i>	
Investigating the Effects of a Network-Wide Rail Grinding Strategy on Wayside Noise Levels	369
<i>N.J. Craven, O.G. Bewes, B.A. Fenech, R.R.K. Jones</i>	
Acoustic and Dynamic Characteristics of a Complex Urban Turnout Using Fibre-Reinforced Foamed Urethane (FFU) Bearers	377
<i>S. Kaewunruen</i>	
Ensuring Acceptable Vibration Levels in Listed Buildings by Means of Precise Vibration Measurements and Highly-Efficient Floating Slab Track	385
<i>T. Jaquet</i>	
An Assessment of the Effectiveness of Replacing Slab Track to Control Groundborne Noise and Vibration in Buildings above an Existing Railway Tunnel	393
<i>O.G. Bewes, L.J. Jakielaszek, M.L. Richardson</i>	
Mitigation Measures against Vibration for Ballasted Tracks – Optimisation of Sleepers, Sleeper Pads and the Substructure by Combined Finite-Element Boundary-Element Calculations	401
<i>L. Auersch, W. Rücker</i>	
Session 7: Squeal Noise, Structure-Borne Noise	
Innovative Measures for Reducing Noise Radiation from Steel Railway Bridges	409
<i>D. Stiebel, T. Lölgen, C. Gerbig</i>	
Modelling of Railway Curve Squeal Including Effects of Wheel Rotation ...	417
<i>A. Pieringer, L. Baeza, W. Kropp</i>	
FASTSIM with Falling Friction and Friction Memory	425
<i>E.A.H. Vollebregt</i>	
Towards an Engineering Model for Curve Squeal	433
<i>I. Zenzerovic, A. Pieringer, W. Kropp</i>	

An Investigation of the Influence of Track Dynamics on Curve Noise	441
<i>J. Jiang, I. Ying, D. Hanson, D.C. Anderson</i>	
Field Trials of Gauge Face Lubrication and Top-of-Rail Friction Modification for Curve Noise Mitigation	449
<i>D. Curley, D.C. Anderson, J. Jiang, D. Hanson</i>	
Session 8: High-Speed Trains, Aerodynamic Noise – Part 1	
Invited Paper: Railway Noise Generated by High-Speed Trains	457
<i>F. Poisson</i>	
Component-Based Model for Aerodynamic Noise of High-Speed Trains	481
<i>E. Latorre Iglesias, D.J. Thompson, M.G. Smith</i>	
Analysis of Aerodynamic and Aeroacoustic Behaviour of a Simplified High-Speed Train Bogie	489
<i>J.Y. Zhu, Z.W. Hu, D.J. Thompson</i>	
Derivation of Sound Emission Source Terms for High Speed Trains Running at Speeds in Excess of 300 km/h	497
<i>T. Marshall, B.A. Fenech, R. Greer</i>	
Session 9: High-Speed Trains, Aerodynamic Noise – Part 2	
Mastering Micro-Pressure Wave Effects at the Katzenbergtunnel – Design of Measures, Prediction of Efficiency and Full-Scale Test Verification	505
<i>M. Hieke, C. Gerbig, T. Tielkes</i>	
Aerodynamic Noise Reduction of a Pantograph Panhead by Applying a Flow Control Method	515
<i>T. Mitsumoji, T. Sueki, N. Yamazaki, Y. Sato, M. Ikeda, R. Takinami, H. Gejima, K. Fukagata</i>	
Session 9: Ground-Borne Vibration – Part 3	
Reduction of Train Induced Ground Vibration by Vehicle Design	523
<i>A. Mirza, A. Frid, J.C.O. Nielsen</i>	
RIVAS – Mitigation Measures on Vehicles (WP5); Experimental Analysis of SBB Ground Vibration Measurements and Vehicle Data	531
<i>Ph. Huber, B. Nélain, R. Müller</i>	
Stiff Wave Barriers for the Mitigation of Railway Induced Vibrations	539
<i>P. Coulier, A. Dijckmans, J. Jiang, D.J. Thompson, G. Degrande, G. Lombaert</i>	

Poster Session 3: Ground-Borne Vibration/High-Speed Trains, Aerodynamic Noise/Squeal Noise, Structure-Borne Noise

Ground-Borne Vibration Mitigation Measures for Turnouts: State-of-the-Art and Field Tests	547
<i>R. Müller, J.C.O. Nielsen, B. Nélain, A. Zemp</i>	
Reducing Railway Induced Ground-Borne Vibration by Using Trenches and Buried Soft Barriers	555
<i>J. Jiang, M.G.R. Toward, A. Dijckmans, D.J. Thompson, G. Degrande, G. Lombaert, J. Ryue</i>	
Pantograph Area Noise and Vibration Transmission Characteristics and Interior Noise Reduction Method of High-Speed Trains	563
<i>J.Q. Guo, J.M. Ge, Z.J. Sun, S.Q. Liu, Y.J. Zhao, J.S. Lin</i>	
Micro-Pressure Wave Emissions from German High-Speed Railway Tunnels – An Approved Method for Prediction and Acoustic Assessment ...	571
<i>C. Gerbig, M. Hieke</i>	
Three Noise Mitigation Measures for Steel Railway Bridges	579
<i>H. Venghaus</i>	
The Mechanisms of Curve Squeal	587
<i>J. Jiang, D.C. Anderson, R. Dwight</i>	
Proposals for Improved Measurement Methods for Curve Squeal and Braking Noise	595
<i>M.G. Dittrich, H.W. Jansen</i>	
Curve Squeal in the Presence of Two Wheel/Rail Contact Points	603
<i>G. Squicciarini, S. Usberti, D.J. Thompson, R. Corradi, A. Barbera</i>	

Session 10: Resilient Track Forms

A Review of Measurement Data on the Performance of a Resilient Track Form as a Mitigation Measure for Ground-Borne Noise	611
<i>S.J. Cox, D. Herron</i>	
Challenges in the Design and Fabrication of Elastomeric Springs for Floating Slab Tracks	619
<i>S. Rajaram, H.J. Saurenman</i>	
Vibration Mitigation by Innovative Low Stiffness Rail Fastening Systems for Ballasted Track	627
<i>B. Faure, E. Bongini, G. Lombaert, C. Guigou-Carter, D. Herron</i>	

Control of Railway Induced Ground Vibrations: Influence of Excitation Mechanisms on the Efficiency of Resilient Track Layers	635
<i>B. Nélain, N. Vincent, G. Lombaert, G. Degrande</i>	
Session 11: Grinding, Corrugation, Roughness	
Measurement of Long Wavelength Irregularities on Rails	643
<i>S.L. Grassie</i>	
Statistical Description of Wheel Roughness	651
<i>G. Squicciarini, M.G.R. Toward, D.J. Thompson, C.J.C. Jones</i>	
Rail Corrugation Growth on Curves – Measurements, Modelling and Mitigation	659
<i>P.T. Torstensson, J.C.O. Nielsen</i>	
Effects of Track Stiffness and Tuned Rail Damper on Rail Roughness Growth and Rail Vibration Levels on Metro System	667
<i>A. Wang, Z. Wang, Z. Zhao, Y. Zhang, Y. Duan, T. Lei, M. Du</i>	
Session 11: Interior Noise, Sound Barrier – Part 1	
Prediction of Acoustical Wall Pressure Levels of Rolling Stock Vehicles	675
<i>A. Bistagnino, A. Vallespín, J. Sapena</i>	
Session 12: Interior Noise, Sound Barrier – Part 2	
Study on Effective Sound Barriers for High Speed Trains	683
<i>T. Kitagawa, K. Nagakura, S. Tanaka, K. Murata</i>	
Study on Abnormal Interior Noise of High-Speed Trains	691
<i>J. Zhang, X.B. Xiao, G. Han, Y. Deng, X.S. Jin</i>	
Interior Noise Prediction of High-Speed Train Based on Hybrid FE-SEA Method	699
<i>Y.J. Zhao, X. Deng, S.Q. Liu, R. Shuai, Z.J. Sun, J.Q. Guo, Y. Xu</i>	
Attractive Train Interiors: Minimizing Annoying Sound and Vibration	707
<i>U. Orrenius, U. Carlsson</i>	
Author Index	715

Railway Noise Control in Europe: Current Status

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Summary. Railways are a sustainable means of transport. Nonetheless, railways do have an influence on the environment. The most important effect is noise, especially the noise emitted from freight trains.

European Union policy supports noise reduction and has addressed the issue in interoperability directives and corresponding technical specifications. The Environmental Noise Directive (END) requires member states to submit noise maps and action plans. The EU is mostly responsible for noise creation aspects, while member states may additionally enact specific legislation for noise reception. Numerous studies have considered the economics of railway noise control, comparing the costs and benefits of different noise control possibilities. Based on these studies, the railways have adopted the following noise control strategy: 1) Reduce the noise of all new freight vehicles by introducing TSI limit values. 2) Promote the retrofitting of existing freight vehicles with composite brake blocks. 3) Build noise barriers and install insulated windows. 4) Pursue further solutions in special cases.

Noise differentiated track access charges (NDTAC) have been proposed as the main incentive for retrofitting the rolling stock by the EU and several European countries such as Switzerland.

Although the railways have made considerable progress in railway noise reduction, several problematic trends may be observed: 1) There is a tendency towards protecting capital instead of people, for example by introducing compensation for home owners based on property values. 2) Whole system optimizations are rare and infrastructure measures may counteract noise reduction efforts. 3) There are exaggerated expectations from certain new technologies. 4) Often the overall picture is not considered, such as the trade off between noise control and the modal split between road and rail. 5) Simplifications may lead to wrong conclusions, for example the noise reduction potential of a given measure often depends on local conditions and generalizations are not possible.

1 Introduction

Railways are a sustainable and climate friendly means of transport. Nonetheless, railways have an influence on the environment, the main effect being noise, especially

the noise emitted from freight trains. This paper summarizes the main railway noise activities in Europe in terms of policy, economics, technical possibilities as well as the strategy of the railways to deal with noise issues. It concludes with some problematic trends.

The author is chairman of the UIC (International Union of Railways) Network Noise and Vibration. This article is based on the information gained through the work and contacts of this network.

2 European Policy and Incentives

European sustainability policies include promoting the railways. A recent activity in this field is the Greening Transport Package (COM/2007/0551). To enable this, railway noise concerns must be addressed. European noise legislation includes the Environmental Noise Directive (END, 2002/49/EC) which requires noise maps and actions plans, the recast of the first railway package (Directive 2012/34/EU), adopted in November 2012, which foresees an optional introduction of noise-differentiated track access charges, and the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) which define noise creation values for certain types of rolling stock. The TSI set maximum levels of noise produced by new (conventional) railway vehicles. In addition reducing the existing noise limits for new wagons and locomotives is on the agenda and a revised TSI Noise is planned for the end of 2013 or the beginning of 2014.

European research framework programs include numerous railway noise projects. A financing for silent freight rolling stock may be possible through the Connecting Europe Facility (COM/2011/665/3) with a substantial budget earmarked for transport projects. It allows the EU to co-fund retrofitting of existing freight wagons with silent brake blocks with a maximum of 20 % of the eligible costs. As of this writing (May 2013), the proposal was in discussion between the Parliament and the Council.

In a recent (April 2013) road map [1], the EU Commission describes different options for promoting the retrofitting of freight wagons with silent composite brake blocks. These include a baseline scenario where no action is planned, increased financial support for retrofitting, NDTAC, mandatory application of TSI Noise limits to existing railway wagons (which would lead to a de facto ban of cast iron brake blocks), introduction of noise limits along the Trans European railway network. An assessment of the impact of these scenarios is planned until the mid 2014.

3 National Legislation and Incentives

National legislation differs throughout Europe. Many countries have reception limits for new and significantly altered lines, however only Switzerland, Italy and Norway have limits for existing lines. Usually limit values apply to the façade of buildings but in some cases (e.g. Norway) they apply to indoor areas. In The Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland noise differentiated track access charges are in effect. Germany, France and Austria spend considerable amounts on existing lines, even though noise

abatement is not stipulated by the legislation. Finally, there is a Swiss plan to ban cast iron brake blocks by 2020.

Most European countries have national incentives and policies promoting the implementation of retrofitting the rolling stock with silent brake blocks. The most prominent examples are Switzerland, where all Swiss rolling stock is in the process of being retrofitted with composite brake blocks. This programme is financed by the government, which in turn receives the funds mostly from the road sector. Switzerland has also introduced noise differentiated track access charges (see chapter 6). The Netherlands are also very active in promoting retrofitting. Some of the activities include the launching of numerous studies and pilot projects to test composite brake blocks and the introduction of noise differentiated track access charging. Also, in Germany, noise differentiated track access charges have come into effect. Additionally Germany has strongly supported the development of LL-brake blocks (see chapter 5). A summary of national initiatives and legislation is given in the 2010 UIC state of the art report on railway noise [2].

4 Economics of Railway Noise Control

Numerous studies (e.g. the STAIRRS project [3]) have considered the economics of railway noise control, comparing the costs and benefits of different noise control possibilities and combinations thereof. In general, noise barriers, especially high ones have a poor cost-benefit ratio, while retrofitting the freight fleet has a beneficial cost-benefit ratio. To date network wide cost benefit studies for other measures (e.g. rail dampers, rail grinding) however are lacking.

5 Noise Control Strategy of the Railways

The railways have adopted the following noise control strategy: 1) Reduce the noise of all new freight vehicles by introducing and adopting TSI limit values. 2) Promote the retrofitting of existing freight vehicles with composite brake blocks. 3) Build noise barriers and install insulated windows. 4) Pursue further solutions in special cases. Such further solutions include rail dampers, acoustic rail grinding, solutions for trains parked in depots and stations, solutions against curve squeal, measures on steel bridges, and to improve the noise situation in railway freight yards. The current situation in terms of retrofitting and noise barriers is as follows:

Retrofitting: Railway rolling noise is caused by rough wheels on rough rails, significant noise reduction can be achieved by replacing cast-iron brake blocks with composite brake blocks. Two types of composite brake blocks are available: 1) The K-blocks are homologated however require adapting the wheel set due to the different braking characteristics. This makes retrofitting a fairly expensive option. 2) The LL brake block has similar braking characteristics to the cast iron brake block. This makes retrofitting less expensive than with K-blocks. The EuropeTrain project tested the LL brake block on 200'000 km throughout Europe. Homologation of this brake block was approved