

The European Railway Safety Culture Declaration

United for Railway Safety


This declaration demonstrates the commitment of European railway leaders to raise awareness and promote a positive safety culture throughout the entire industry. A positive safety culture reinforces the effects of a Safety Management System, improving the capability and efficiency of safety management.

As railway leaders signing this declaration, we agree the following:

- *Safety is a main driver of the efficiency and reliability of railway services. Safety should not be compromised when different business goals conflict. Our vision statements, targets and indicators, resource allocation, and all aspects of daily operations will support this. Good safety management is always risk based.*
- *Our organisations will promote safety, reporting and just culture principles amongst management and employees and with other parties, including our contractors, suppliers, and service providers. Together, we will actively foster mutual respect, support and cooperation to build trust across our organisations and create a shared understanding of workplace reality.*
- *Safety is an individual responsibility commensurate with the training, experience, and professional standards that fit the role or function. Our organisations are responsible for encouraging positive safety behaviour and providing the appropriate environment to allow work to succeed safely, including job design, tools, training and procedures.*
- *In an operational railway environment, individuals, despite their training, expertise, experience, abilities, and good will, may be faced with situations where the limits of human performance combined with unwanted and unpredictable systemic influences may lead to an undesirable outcome.*
- *Investigation and analysis of occurrences should focus first on system performance, the conditions and factors that influence the work practice rather than on apportioning blame or individual responsibility. This approach is to be followed all times except in cases of gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts which seriously compromise the level of railway safety.*

- *Positive safety behaviour and initiatives are to be captured and shared within the railway industry to demonstrate that our organisations value the continued improvement of safety.*
- *Staff at all levels in our organisations will define how they intend to continuously develop, promote and regularly assess organisational principles and practices to foster a positive safety culture.*

Together, we can reach our goal for the European Union to be the world leader in railway safety.



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ERA – Safety Culture understanding

Safety culture refers to the interaction between the requirements of the Safety Management System, how people make sense of them, based on their attitudes, values and beliefs and what they actually do, as seen in decisions and behaviours.

A positive safety culture is characterised by a collective commitment by leaders and individuals to always act safely, in particular when confronted with competing goals.

Legal references

Recast Railway Safety Directive (2016) Recital 10: *Member States should promote a culture of mutual trust, confidence and learning in which the staff of railway undertakings and infrastructure managers are encouraged to contribute to the development of safety while confidentiality is ensured*

Recast Railway Safety Directive (2016) Article 9(2): *Through the safety management system, infrastructure managers and railway undertakings shall promote a culture of mutual trust, confidence and learning, in which staff is encouraged to contribute to the development of safety while ensuring confidentiality.*

Recast Railway Safety Directive (2016) Article 29(2): *The Agency shall evaluate the development of a safety culture including occurrence reporting. It shall submit to the Commission, by 16 June 2024, a report containing, where appropriate, improvements to be made to the system.*