

3- Le Nul n'est prophète en son pays.

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World Cargo News avait bien mis Résorail à la une lors du salon international de la logistique d'Amsterdam.

Mais rien d'exceptionnel sinon que le proverbe voulant que nul ne soit prophète en son pays se vérifie encore une fois.

Rien donc de surprenant si ce projet de boucles ferroviaires rencontre un franc succès auprès des autorités Européennes qui voient une première application concrète sur une boucle des deux mers tournant sur Bordeaux - Saragosse - Barcelone - Toulouse.

Relier la façade Atlantique et Méditerranéenne en disposant de deux ports secs dont l'un à Saragosse qui concrétise ses ambitions au travers du projet PLAZA et l'autre à Toulouse, où le centre multimodal à déjà pris des accords avec le port de Barcelone. Quand aux responsables Français que les concepteurs de Résorail n'avaient pas manqué d'informer, toujours une ignorance feinte.

Le Directeur de Fret SNCF, Monsieur Roll Tanguy interpellé par le journaliste de World Cargo News, avoue tout ignorer du projet.

S'il est avouable de protéger le projet concurrent, il est maladroit de montrer ses carences quand à l'actualité ferroviaire.

Il est vrai que dans la France même, la cohérence des annonces semble un vœu pieux. Il ne reste qu'à prier pour se rassurer et penser que la liaison Ayrton - Orbassano a été annoncée en Italie. Cela permettra d'équiper la fameuse plate-forme italienne de la route roulante de demain avant l'arrivée du premier train.

Mais que dit-on le Lyon - Turin serait remis en question?

Quel drame pour Montpellier - Perpignan dont les travaux débiteront dans quinze ans et qui ne verra son salut que par un accroissement du fret Espagne - Italie.

Mais entre Espagne et Italie, n'y a t'il pas simplement la Méditerranée?

Alors qui se laisse mener en bateau? pas nous...

Towards rail freight buses

While C. Modulohr Express moves on, another innovative French concept is less well-known. Like Modulohr and the EU-backed CargoSpeed (which is for unaccompanied trailers - see *Hot/Cargo News*, March 2002, p15), Résor@il allows for simultaneous, partial or total (un)loading of standard road equipment with random access, so it leads to "bus stop" services on short- and medium-haul freight as well as long hauls, with trucks joining and leaving at any stop on the route.

Indeed, Résor@il's co-inventor, Robert Claraco, a Toulouse-based transport consultant, says that Résor@il is aimed at "belt-type" (circular) routes which can regenerate areas that have been bypassed by point-to-point freight corridors linking major centres. The loops would be self-contained but, of course, could overlap at junctions where HGVs could be exchanged. Certain aspects of the Résor@il belt network are covered by an NPI patent issued in July this year.

Each stop should be able to cater for maximum length trains (790m) composed of 32 wagons (ie 32 HGVs). As stated, the whole train can be (un)loaded in much the same time as any individual wagon slot. The wagon has a raisable floor. The lowered position is the rail transport mode while the raised position is level with the truck staging and manoeuvring area, so trucks are simply driven on and off (portable decking can be provided if needed). Hence a raised truck platform has to be built beside the track; alternatively, the track has to run in a trench.

Sliding lift

Instead of a powered lift, the wagon is fitted with retractable, lateral profiles which engage with greased metal slides built into the platform along its whole length. As the train slowly pulls in, the floors gradually rise automatically. A patent for this was issued in May this year.

Like Modulohr, Claraco has dismissed the classic, small wheel *RoLa* solution on grounds of excessive M&R costs and out-of-service times. At 120 kph the wheels rotate as fast as the wheels of a 300 kph TGV and, combined with the high axle loads, this means frequent and expensive reprofiling is required. Furthermore, some

freight trains in France operate at 140 kph and even 160 kph, for which only bogies with normal wheels with disc brakes will suffice.

The Résor@il wagon has 950mm diameter wheels approved for 140 kph speeds. As it is not a well wagon it would normally need to operate on UIC C gauge track to carry a 4m high load, although with modifications it could run on the French B+ gauge.

Claraco himself acknowledges that certain sections of major routes in France are B+ or UIC B and considerable works may be required to obtain UIC C clear-

ance. The infrastructure investments look more daunting than the rolling stock.

Résor@il has got round the UIC wheelbase problem in an interesting way. The maximum speed is 18.4m which, other than with small wheel technology, makes it impossible to carry a 16.5m LOM HGV (16.8m is needed to allow for play). This is why the Modulohr carrier is split into a section for the trailer with another (optional) section for the tractor head. In the Résor@il design, the bogie pivot point is located behind the rear axle, thus separating the load-carrying and the steering functions. This is an Alstom patent.



Résor@il loading system. (Note: tractor heads would drive off after positioning the trailer)

Résor@il was placed on a list of projects worthy of public support by Dominique Basseureau when he was president of the PREDIT "think tank." Now transport minister, Basseureau is following

through the financial commitment made by his predecessor Jean-Claude Gysot to Modulohr. With funding scarce, it remains to be seen whether Résor@il can attract wider European support. □