
SNCF Network sets up system to keep rail freight flowing

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French infrastructure manager SNCF Network has set up an organisation to maintain rail freight services, in particular the transport of essential goods, despite the coronavirus pandemic.

To achieve this, SNCF Network organised a system to define traffic priorities. Provided daily, seven days a week, it aims to organise day-to-day freight traffic and to anticipate transport plans as far as possible.

The national supervision of access to the network (Sonar) works in very close consultation with the national centre of railway operations (CNOF), the production zones, the EIC infrastructure operation establishments, SNCF Network's commercial department and customers. EICs are able to adapt traffic according to the resources available and find, if necessary, solutions that meet customers' needs, with the help of the sales team.

"SNCF Network teams quickly organised themselves throughout the country to carry as much freight traffic as possible, while ensuring strict compliance with the safety and health of its staff and customers," SNCF says.

"Up to now, practically all of the traffic requested by the various railway companies has been carried," says Mr Arnaud Sohier, SNCF Network's commercial director. "The network sees more than 600 daily freight trains and this collective performance is welcomed by all our partners and customers."

For example, Sonar was able to resolve a problem relating to the transport of alumina for the energy and automotive industries between the Trimet plant in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne and the port of Marseille following the closure of the Arenc and Le Canet terminals in Marseille. SNCF Network undertook the necessary sanitary measures, such as setting up barriers and disinfection, to reopen them quickly.

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