



PRESS RELEASE

Levallois, France, 7th of February 2017

The VIIA Britanica rail motorway returns to service

The Calais-Le Boulou rail motorway resumes service this Tuesday, 7th of February 2017. After traffic was suspended last July following an increase in semi-trailer damage, security measures in Calais have been increased.

The VIIA Britanica rail motorway service resumes on Tuesday, 7th of February. It will start with one daily return service.

Rail freight protection security measures in Calais have been increased. The implementation of these measures was carried out in collaboration with the Port of Boulogne-Calais and SNCF Réseau, and with consultation from the State.

The rail motorway system has already proven itself. The line operating between Bettembourg, Luxembourg, and Le Boulou was at 91% capacity on average in 2016, transporting 1.5 billion metric tonnes of freight. This is equal to 67 million truck kilometres shifted away from roads and onto rail.

Thierry Le Guilloux, VIIA Chairman: *"We are happy that service is resuming, strengthening the rail motorway network. The State's commitment to improving access to the port of Calais has been essential, and clearly shows how important this new innovative mode of transport is. Our clients say they are very interested in this service, which offers a direct link between Spain and the United Kingdom at 10-15% below the cost of road transport. Opening new rail links from Calais is the first step to building a multi-modal transport corridor between Southern and Northern Europe."*

Jean-Marc Puissesseau, Chairman & CEO of the Port of Boulogne-Calais: *"I'm happy that VIIA's determination and the considerable support we received from the authorities have allowed service to resume on the VIIA Britanica rail motorway out of the port of Calais. This innovative service is the answer to transporters' economic, environmental, and logistics efficiency needs, and naturally, we all expect it to grow and grow. This line is a model for the kind of services we want to promote in Calais today. We hope to be even more ambitious in the future, with the Calais Port 2015 initiative."*



Photo credit: VIIA / M. Guilbert

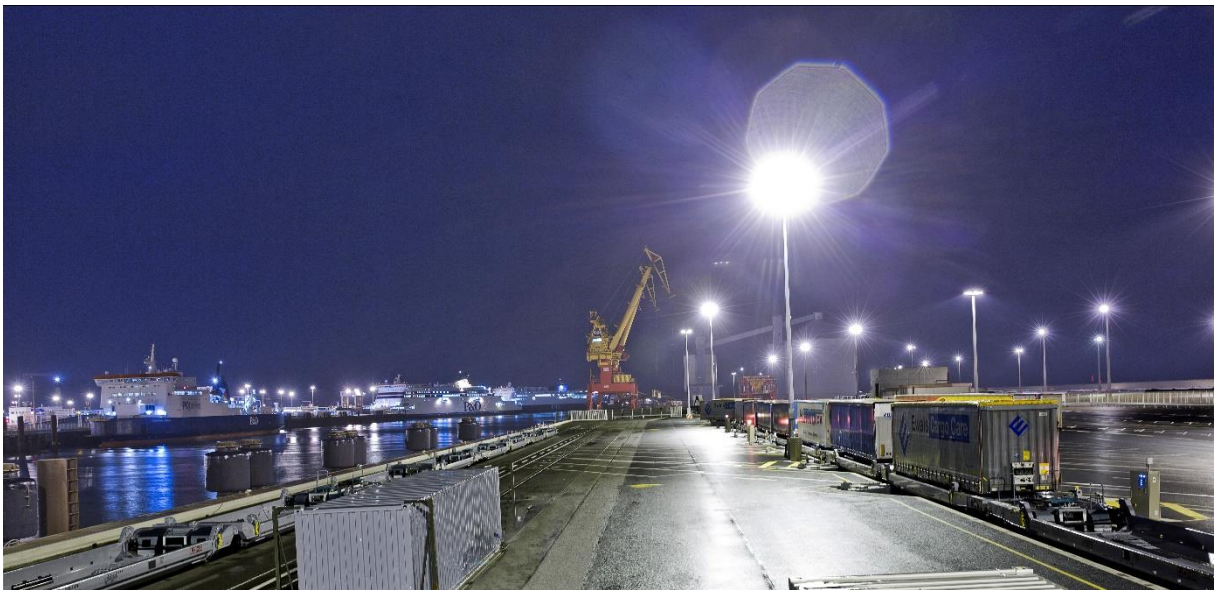


Photo credit: VIIA / M. Guilbert



Photo credit: Port Boulogne-Calais / G. Martin

About the VIIA Britanica service

Linking Spain to Northern Europe by connecting rail and maritime transport

VIIA Britanica is the longest rail motorway in Europe (avoiding 1,200 km of roads), allowing road transporters to cross France in approx. 22 hours. This saves an entire day compared to road shipping.

The rail motorway terminal in Calais is the first to be built in a port. It is a tri-modal hub, uniting rail, maritime, and road transport and linking rail motorways with the motorways of the sea.

This strategic position means that VIIA can offer its clients an integrated rail-sea service connecting Le Boulou and Dover. The semi-trailers arriving by train in the Port of Calais are loaded onto ferries for the Channel crossing, still unaccompanied. VIIA has signed an agreement with P&O Ferries, a maritime operator that makes up to 58 daily return trips between Calais and Dover. This will give road transporters access to a comprehensive service between the French-Spanish border and England.

This rail connection offers a real economic advantage to transporters with traffic flows between Spain and Great Britain, but that's not all. It is also advantageous for transporters with destinations in Northern France, Belgium, and Scandinavia, which is served by various maritime lines originating in the port zone around the Calais terminal. The Calais terminal's location makes it easy to reach Zeebrugge by road and to connect to maritime traffic between Zeebrugge, England, and Scandinavia.

This service will allow 40,000 semi-trailers per year over five years to be transported by rail instead of by road. This will prevent the emission of 50,000 tonnes of CO² per year and eliminate the need for 50 million vehicle kilometres per year.

About VIIA

VIIA is the operator charged with promoting the rail motorways from within SNCF Logistics' Rail and "Multimodal Freight Transport" (Transport ferroviaire et multimodal de marchandises (TFMM)) Department. With VIIA, rail is adapting to the road to create a comprehensive, efficient transport method on a European scale. VIIA already operates two rail motorway lines: the first, from Aiton (Chambéry) to Orbassano (Turin), opened in 2003, and the second, between Bettembourg (Luxembourg) and Le Boulou (Pyrénées Orientales), opened in 2007. Each day, up to 10 trains run on each of these lines.

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