



INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS



International
Railway
Research
Board

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The inaugural UIC Innovation and Research Awards take place in Paris alongside the world railway organisation's 90th anniversary celebrations

(Paris, 11 December 2012). The inaugural UIC Innovation and Railway Research Awards were held in Paris on 11 December, during celebrations to mark the 90th anniversary of the International Union of Railways (UIC). The awards ceremony took place at the Automobile Club de France and was hosted by **Jean-Pierre Loubinoux**, the UIC Director-General, and **Boris Lapidus**, the Director-General of the Russian Railway Research Institute (VNIIZhT), Chairman of the Scientific Committee at Russian Railways (RZD), and Chairman of the UIC International Railway Research Board (IRRB). The ceremony was attended by the outgoing UIC Chairman, **Satoshi Seino** of East Japan Railway Company (EJRC), and the Chairman-elect, **Vladimir Yakunin** of Russian Railways (RZD).

This anniversary year sees the first edition of the UIC Innovation and Research Awards. Their purpose is to illustrate UIC's unrelenting efforts to boost the interoperability, efficiency, and competitiveness of rail transport throughout its 90 years of commitment to its members. UIC continues to play a vital role in readying railways to meet tomorrow's challenges, with particular priority given to innovation and research.

The awards in each category went to the following individuals:

- *Safety & Security*: **Kimiaki Sasaki** (Railway Technical Research Institute, RTRI, Japan)
- *Freight*: **Semih Kalay** (Transportation Technology Center Inc., TTCI / Association of American Railroads AAR, USA)
- *Cost reduction*: **Professor Lev Muginshtein** (VNIIZhT, Russian Railways)
- *Rail system*: **Masayuki Matsumoto** (JR East, Japan)
- *Passenger Services*: **Jukka Näräkkä** (Soudim Oy, Finland)
- *Sustainable development*: **Per Leander** (TransRail, Sweden)

The UIC Director-General, **Jean-Pierre Loubinoux**, was especially pleased to award the prizes on behalf of UIC. *“First and foremost, this is a new initiative allowing us to celebrate UIC’s 90th anniversary whilst emphasising all the creativity and flair for innovation possessed by our members across the world and by railway engineers. It is also an opportunity to highlight the very many high-quality entries we received, something quite remarkable for a first-time event such as this”.*

According to **Boris Lapidus**, International Railway Research Board (IRRB) Chairman at UIC, *“the first edition of the UIC Innovation Awards is a very important stimulus for the world’s scientific community to further develop efficient solutions for the increase of the competitiveness of the rail sector. The world’s scientific community has an enormous ability for finding breakthrough solutions to significantly raise the level of dependability, quality, safety and customer-friendliness of railways. Our aim is to establish conditions to discover the best solutions and growth of prestige of rail research organisations and individual researchers.”*

Innovation and research are core to international cooperation in particular, and to UIC members’ strategies more generally, since they ready rail transport for the years and decades to come. Rail is blessed with many advantages: it is an efficient, safe, high-capacity, reliable and energy-efficient mode of transport. At the same time, it needs to meet an increasing number of challenges, in particular responding to economic, financial, societal and environmental/sustainable development concerns.

As the world association representing the rail sector, UIC coordinates or leads many railway research projects (particularly those running under the EU framework programmes for research and development). Chaired by Boris Lapidus, the International Railway Research Board (IRRB) facilitates contact between the world’s major players in railway research. UIC is also one of the founder members and organisers of the World Congress on Railway Research (WCRR), the next edition of which is to be held in November 2013 in Sydney.

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