

FLEETCARE

Industry Needs More Transport Capacity on Rails



Peter Guldbrand

Commercial Director at VR FleetCare

Emphasis on sustainability and climate goals is expected to increase the demand for rail transport in the future.

Rail transportation is an environmentally friendly mode of transport that helps reduce emissions from transportation. This prompts businesses to shift more of their freight transport to rail. According to a report by the European Commission, the need for freight wagons in Europe is projected to grow by 50% by 2030 and double by 2050. Given the rapid and massive nature of this demand, there is a need for increased manufacturing capacity for new wagons and campaigns to modify and modernise existing wagons.

Political tensions and economic consequences resulting from the conflict in Ukraine also have implications

for wagon manufacturing and maintenance. The deteriorating or sanction-imposed relations between countries affect the availability of Russian-made wagons in the market and make it challenging to obtain components and spare parts for old wagons. This creates demand and new opportunities for wagon and component manufacturers as Eastern Europe also transitions to using wagons compliant with European standards in the coming years.

"The green transition in industry is also driving a transformation in freight transport and the demand for freight wagons," says Peter Guldbrand, Commercial Director at VR FleetCare. "For example, the metallurgical and steel industry aims to shift to fossil-free steel production, which will create additional demands for

rail transport and innovative freight wagon solutions. We want to be a part of this solution," adds Guldbrand.

Changing Customer Needs

The requirements for freight wagons are constantly evolving in response to environmental, technological, and economic changes.

The most significant trend is the increasing demand for sustainable and eco-friendly transportation. Freight wagons are also expected to have lower emissions, reduced environmental impact, versatility and flexibility for transporting various goods. Environmental considerations must be factored into wagon design, calculating the carbon footprint of the manufacturing process and materials for the benefit of the customer.

Safety considerations have always been crucial in rail transport. In the future, even better safety standards and technologies for wagons are expected to ensure the safe delivery of goods over long distances and across borders. At the same time, speed and reliable transportation are important for global trade flows.

The use of digital technologies, such as IoT sensors, telematics and smart systems, is also expected to increase in freight wagons. This allows for real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance, transport optimisation and load management.

The demand for modular and customisable wagons is growing as they can be adapted to various types of transportation. Wagons should be interoperable between different modes of transport, allowing for seamless transfers from sea to rail and road. Innovative loading and unloading systems streamline and expedite cargo handling and transfer.

VR FleetCare's Wagon Production Focuses on Smaller Specialised Series

Reports of increased demand for new freight wagons are strong and have reached us as well. Currently, there is a bottleneck in wagon manufacturing in Europe because wagons cannot be produced as much as needed. Both large-scale mass production and smaller specialised series are required.

At FleetCare, we aim to promote more efficient and

sustainable freight logistics. Our wagon series always starts with our customers' transportation needs, and we can tailor a wagon solution to match them. We use our own undercarriage concept, allowing axle weights to be built up to 32 tonnes. Modular superstructures are selected based on the type of cargo, enabling customisation for different material transports.

"We have manufactured nearly 50,000 wagons for the Finnish industry, and we have an efficient production line for wagon series. Our strengths in wagon manufacturing lie in challenging technical solutions that support new service concepts. Compared to large wagon manufacturers, we can cost-effectively produce smaller wagon series tailored to customers' special needs," explains Guldbrand.

In the development of our wagon fleets, we have also considered the digitalisation of rail equipment and infrastructure. For instance, there is a need for more efficient and transparent logistics through automatic wagon coupling (DAC), which will require future wagons to accommodate both power and data transmission.

"Sustainable development principles and safety are the foundation of our manufacturing. This is supported by material choices and the use of certified and high-quality components. We also aim to make the most of existing, well-maintained materials in wagon modifications whenever possible," concludes Guldbrand.

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Built to serve in Nordic conditions.



Efficient small series production to meet today's requirements

VR FleetCare is a maintenance services provider and a partner in responsible lifecycle management. As a rail traffic expert with over 160 years of experience, we have the best expertise in freight wagon modifications and manufacturing. We manufacture freight wagons for demanding industrial needs.

100 different wagon types | Efficient production facilities | New service concepts | Circular economy utilised

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ModernCare

Comprehensive rolling stock modernisation services

SmartCare

Digital solutions for rail infrastructure and rolling stock

ComponentCare

Component maintenance and repair services

AssetCare

Lifecycle management, freight wagon manufacturing, and rolling stock leasing services