

Europacable Communication: B2ca,s1a,a1 reconfirmed as general minimum fire safety requirement for exposed cables in railway tunnels

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The revised ERA Application Guide reconfirms that fire safety requirements for exposed cables installed in railway tunnels longer than 0.1km shall fulfil CPR characteristics of “low flammability, low fire spread, low toxicity and low smoke density”.

In January, the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) published the revised [Guide for the application of the Technical Specification for Interoperability on Safety in Railway Tunnels \(TSI SRT\)](#) reconfirming that exposed cables:

- shall fulfil the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) characteristics of “low flammability, low fire spread, low toxicity and low smoke density”; and
- classified as at least B2ca,s1a,a1 are considered to fulfil these requirements.

These requirements are defined in the [European Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/776](#) which covers technical specifications for interoperability on safety in railway tunnels. Exposed cables are regulated in Provision 4.2.1.3 (a) (3). It applies to any new, renewed and/or upgraded railway tunnel which is 0.1 km or longer. The Implementing Regulation is binding and directly applicable in all EU Member States as of 16 June 2019.

The Implementing Regulation also stipulates that infrastructure managers can opt for a classification lower than B2ca, s1a, a1 only after carrying out a risk assessment. However, any alternative cable classification would always need to fulfil the characteristics of “low flammability, low fire spread, low toxicity and low smoke density”.

In the latest version of the Application Guide dated Dec 13th 2019, ERA further clarifies the CPR classes for cables eligible for installation as the result of a risk assessment conducted by a Notified Body. Section 2.3.6 stipulates that:

- exposed cables of classes Fca, Eca and Dca shall not be installed in railway tunnels as they do not fulfil one or both characteristics of low flammability and low fire spread; and
- exposed cables also need to comply with additional requirements for low smoke density (s1a, s1b, s1 or s2) and low toxicity (a1 or a2).

Whilst the ERA Application Guide is by its nature not binding, Europacable calls upon all relevant actors to abide by its recommendations so as to fully comply with the legal obligations resulting from the European Commission Implementing Regulation. Doing so will ensure higher fire safety protection for rail passengers and train personnel across Europe.

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