

Interview with Jean-Cyril Spinetta by Marie-Hélène Poingt of La Vie du Rail



Jean-Cyril Spinetta, Chairman of Air France,
« Our job is to ... »

“In 25 years time, the TGV high-speed train will be much the same as it is now. On the other hand, the context in which it will evolve will have radically changed with the arrival of European operators on our home markets. The bulk of the network already exists, so there will probably be few route extensions, as they are far less profitable than the initial network. Furthermore, the race will certainly peter out, as it costs too much in terms of energy. Among the new entrants, there will be airlines who can offer an integrated transport product. Like all operators they will be subject to common specifications based on free competition rules. As is the case for air transport, these operators will have to justify their practices to a governmental or European regulatory body.

In France, this opening up of the market will introduce new relations between the SNCF (French Railways) and the railways regulatory body RFF. Access to railway infrastructure, slots, public areas in stations and the terms and conditions governing fares will have to be reviewed and embodied in new contractual measures.

In the next 25 years, we can probably expect an increase in train fares due to the inevitable rise in security costs (not only on board the TGVs but also in depots and stations, on platforms and along the rails, etc.) and a drop in subsidies for infrastructure.”