

## WATCH: Irish Rail trials 'longest ever' 440-metre trains

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The train is the longest that Irish Rail have trialed. Photo: Neil Dinnen

IRISH Rail is planning to run freight trains almost half a kilometre in length to reduce transport emissions and grow its business.

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The company has trialed a 440-metre, 27-wagon train from North Wall to Claremorris, and plans to roll-out the service later this year.

The train is the longest which has ever operated on the rail network, a spokesman said.

He added that the trials will see the maximum freight train size increase from 18 wagons (36 twenty-foot equivalent units – TEUs) to 27 wagons (54 TEUs).

“As well as increasing the capacity and competitiveness of rail freight services, the environmental benefits of rail freight would also be enhanced,” he said.

“Currently moving freight by rail instead of road reduces emissions up to 75pc per unit, and longer trains could see emissions reduced to as little as one-tenth of the road equivalent.”



The train is the longest that Irish Rail have trialed. Photo: Neil Dinnen

In recent weeks a container train of 27 wagons, stretching 440 metres and carrying 1,110 tonnes has been operated. A pulpwood train of 390 metres has also travelled the network, while another train was found to be capable of carrying 1,310 tonnes.

The rail operator said it was working with existing customers as well as freight forwarders, ports and the Irish Exporters Association to identify opportunities and trends for rail freight development within the Irish and European market.

Major rail freight traffics currently include container traffic from Ballina to Waterford and Dublin Ports, pulpwood from Ballina and Westport to Waterford Port and zinc ore from Tara Mines in Navan to Dublin Port.

Subject to the successful conclusion of trials, the company hopes to commence the operation of longer freight trains for customers from the last quarter of the year.

