



Media relations
P.O. Box, 9023 St. Gallen

St. Gallen, 21 August 2026

Media Release

regarding judgments A-8992/2025, A-7816/2025, A-7842/2025 and A-8986/2025, A-7839/2025 of 18 August 2026

Safety measures on rail freight transport need to be reviewed

The Federal Administrative Court overturns measures on freight wagons issued by the Federal Office of Transport in 2025. It refers the matter back to the Federal Office for further review of appropriate action.

On 10 August 2023, a freight train derailed in the Gotthard Base Tunnel. In decisions dated 11 September 2025 and 23 October 2025, the Federal Office of Transport (FOT) issued measures relating to the safety of freight wagons. Among other things, it mandated a larger minimum diameter for certain wheels, as well as shorter intervals and guidelines for wagon inspections. In response, several vehicle keepers and entities in charge of maintenance lodged appeals with the Federal Administrative Court (FAC).

Breach of railway legislation

The measures issued by the FOT deviate from the EU's harmonised regulations on the cross-border use of freight wagons, which are binding based on Swiss railways law. They therefore fundamentally contravene the current railways regulations governing freight wagons. The Land Transport Agreement between Switzerland and the EU and the Swiss Railways Act provide for the possibility, in certain cases and in accordance with a defined procedure, of enacting national safety requirements. However, the imposition of measures in the manner at hand does not correspond to the procedure laid down in international treaties and national legislation.

The FAC upholds the appeals and overturns the measures. It refers the matter back to the FOT for further consideration. In this context, the EU's recommendations published on 7 August 2026 must also be considered.

These judgments may be appealed to the Federal Supreme Court.

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About the Federal Administrative Court

Located in St. Gallen, the Federal Administrative Court (FAC) was established in 2007. With its staff of 395 employees (334 FTE) and its 79 judges (70 FTE) it is the largest federal court in Switzerland. The Federal Administrative Court has jurisdiction to hear appeals against decisions rendered by Swiss federal administrative authorities. In specific matters, the FAC may grant review on decisions rendered by cantonal authorities. Recourse actions are also reviewed by the Court. The FAC is composed of six divisions. It renders an average of 7,000 judgments every year.