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**Economic Commission for Europe****Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport****127th session**

Geneva, 1 – 4 February 2011

Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda

**International Convention on the Harmonization of****Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 (“Harmonization Convention”) –****Annex 8 on road transport****Final results of the survey concerning the implementation of  
Annex 8****Note by the secretariat\*****I. Background**

1. The Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30), at its 122nd session, considered and approved, subject to minor modifications, a draft questionnaire concerning the application of Annex 8 of the Harmonization Convention at the national level (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2009/8 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/244, para. 15).
2. At the 123rd session of WP.30, the secretariat informed the Working Party of activities on the survey of the implementation of Annex 8 at the national level. The questionnaire (in English, French and Russian) was distributed to the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of the Contracting Parties to the Harmonization Convention and a deadline for reply was set at 31 December 2009. In view of extensive and time-consuming national coordination that might be required in order to fill in the questionnaire, the secretariat pointed out that it would be willing to process replies received after the deadline (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/246, para. 14).
3. At its 125th session, WP.30 took note of the preliminary results of the survey concerning the implementation of Annex 8 at the national level (Informal document No. 3 (2010)) and noted that the secretariat would pursue its efforts to obtain missing replies (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/250, para. 8). At its 126th session, the Working Party invited

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\* This document has been submitted late for technical reasons.

Contracting Parties, who had not yet replied to the secretariat, to do so as soon as possible (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/252, para. 10).

## II. Replies

4. The following 22 countries have replied to the questionnaire: Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan. Most replies were prepared by the national Customs administrations and transmitted through the Permanent Missions of those countries in Geneva. Some replies were prepared by the respective Ministries of Transport. For one country, two replies (one from Customs, one from the Ministry of Transport) were received.

## III. Preliminary results of the survey

5. Statistics of the answers to specific questions is given below.

**Question 1.** Please provide information regarding the official publication of Annex 8 in your country.

	It has been published on _____ (date of publication)
	It is scheduled to be published on _____ (expected date of publication)
	It has neither been published nor scheduled to be published
	Other (please specify) _____

Except for 6 countries, other respondents indicated that they had already published or scheduled the publication of Annex 8. One country indicated that it was awaiting Parliamentary approval of the Annex.

In this context, it should be pointed out that, regardless of domestic approval/publication procedures, Annex 8 became legally binding for all Contracting Parties as of 20 May 2008.

**Question 2.** Has your country taken measures to facilitate the granting of visas for professional drivers in accordance with national best practice for all visa applicants, national immigration rules and/or international commitments?

	Yes. Please briefly describe these measures: _____
	No. Please briefly explain the reason: _____

Countries which are members of the Schengen agreement pointed out that they can facilitate the granting of visas only if such facilitation is in line with the Schengen treaty. Some European Union (EU) countries made reference to special agreements with third countries. In general, non-EU respondents have introduced visa facilitation measures for professional drivers. In addition, some non-EU countries assist their own operators in obtaining visas to foreign countries.

**Question 3.** *Does your country regularly exchange information with other Contracting Parties on best practices with regard to the facilitation of visa procedures for professional drivers?*

	<i>Yes</i>
	<i>No</i>

Any additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Half of respondents replied 'Yes' to this question. Some others (mainly from Customs) indicated that they are not in a position to reply as this issue falls within the competence of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

**Question 4.** *How does your country regularly inform all parties involved in international transport operations:*

(a) *on border control requirements for international road transport operations in force?*

(b) *on border control requirements for international road transport operations planned?*

(c) *on the actual situation at borders?*

The respondents inform all parties involved in international transport operations by various means such as:

- through the European Commission
- via websites
- at bilateral and multilateral meetings between authorities as well as between authorities, trade associations and private companies
- through mass media
- by publishing official instructions in legal journals
- by publishing announcements at border crossings
- by exchange of correspondence

At borders, more advanced tools are also used in the actual situation, including real-time web and Short Message Service (SMS) information on border delays.

**Question 5.** *Which control procedures have been transferred to the places of departure and destination of the goods transported by road so as to alleviate congestion at the border crossing points?*

	<i>None;</i>
	<i>Medico-sanitary inspection;</i>
	<i>Veterinary inspection;</i>
	<i>Phytosanitary inspection;</i>
	<i>Controls of compliance with technical standards;</i>

	<i>Quality controls;</i>
	<i>Vehicle inspections;</i>
	<i>Weighing of vehicles;</i>
	<i>Other (please specify) _____</i>

*Any additional comments:* \_\_\_\_\_

The numbers of respondents that have transferred the relevant controls to inland offices are given in the table below.

Medico-sanitary inspection	7
Veterinary inspection	11
Phytosanitary inspection	12
Controls of compliance with technical standards	7
Quality controls	7
Vehicle inspections	9
Weighing of vehicles	6
None	3

One country shifts cargo from one border crossing point to another (including in consultation with the competent authorities of neighbouring countries) to avoid queues at border crossing points. One respondent also indicated that its country had shifted inspections of Customs seals affixed to the road vehicles to inland offices.

**Question 6.** *Which measures have been undertaken at the border crossing points in your country in order to give priority to urgent consignments, e.g. live animals and perishable goods?*

	<i>Waiting times for vehicles transporting such goods have been minimized;</i>
	<i>Required controls are carried out as quickly as possible;</i>
	<i>Refrigerating units of vehicles carrying perishable foodstuffs are allowed to operate during the time of crossing the border;</i>
	<i>Cooperation with other Contracting Parties regarding sanitary inspections of such goods.</i>

The replies are summarized in the table below.

Waiting times for vehicles transporting such goods have been minimized	12 respondents
Required controls are carried out as quickly as possible	17
Refrigerating units of vehicles carrying perishable foodstuffs are allowed to operate during the time of crossing the border	13

Cooperation with other Contracting Parties regarding sanitary inspections of such goods

10

**Question 7.** *Is your country a Contracting Party to the Agreement Concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of such Inspections (1997)?*

- Yes (go to question 9)
- No (go to question 8)

Eleven respondents indicated that their country is a Contracting Party to the above Agreement.

**Question 8.** *Does your country accept the International Technical Inspection Certificate as provided for in the above Agreement (also reproduced in Appendix 1 to Annex 8)?*

- Yes
- No

One country, which is not a Contracting Party to the underlying Agreement, indicated that it nevertheless accepts the above Certificate. On the other hand, two countries, which are Contracting Parties to the 1997 Agreement, responded that they do not accept the Certificate, although this is an obligation according to the Agreement.

**Question 9.** *Is your country a Contracting Party to the Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and the Special Equipment to be used for such Carriage (1970)?*

- Yes
- No

Sixteen respondents indicated that their country is a Contracting Party to the 1970 Agreement.

**Question 10.** *Does your country accept the International Vehicle Weight Certificates (please refer to Appendix 2 to Annex 8) issued in other Contracting Parties?*

- Yes (go to questions 11, 12 and 13)
- No (go to question 14)

Any additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Five countries accept the International Vehicle Weight Certificate. One respondent indicated that the competent authorities of its country had not received from UNECE a list of available weighing stations authorized to issue the certificates other Contracting Parties.

**Question 11.** *Has your country approved weighing stations which are authorized to issue the International Vehicle Weight Certificates?*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Any additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Three countries have approved weighing stations to issue the Certificates. Two countries indicated that activities were under way to have such stations approved.

**Question 12.** *Has your country published a list of all weighing stations authorized to issue the International Vehicle Weight Certificates?*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Any additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

The three countries which have approved weighing stations have also published their list.

**Question 13.** *Has your country transmitted this list to UNECE?*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Any additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Two countries have forwarded their listings to UNECE.

**Question 14.** *Which of the following infrastructure requirements for border crossing points open for international goods traffic does your country meet?*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Facilities for joint controls with neighbour States (one-stop technology), 24 hours a day;</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Separation of traffic for different types of traffic on both sides of the border allowing to give preference to vehicles under cover of valid international Customs transit documents or carrying live animals or perishable foodstuffs;</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Off-lane control areas for random cargo and vehicle checks;</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Appropriate parking and terminal facilities;</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Proper hygiene, social and telecommunications facilities for drivers;</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Adequate facilities for forwarding agents, so that they can offer services to transport operators on a competitive basis.</i>

Any additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

The replies are summarized in the table below:

Facilities for joint controls with neighbour States (one-stop technology), 24 hours a day	12
Separation of traffic for different types of traffic on both sides of the border	14
Off-lane control areas for random cargo and vehicle checks	16
Appropriate parking and terminal facilities	17
Proper hygiene, social and telecommunications facilities for drivers	10
Adequate facilities for forwarding agents, so that they can offer services to transport operators on a competitive basis	9

As additional comments, some respondents highlighted the ongoing activities with a view to improving the border crossing infrastructure, for example, the purchase and installation of non-intrusive scanning equipment.

#### **IV. Further considerations**

6. In general, the outcome of the survey demonstrates that the responding Contracting Parties are well aware of their obligations under Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention and had started its implementation. Faster progress is observed in meeting the requirements concerning the transfer of controls from the borders to inland offices, treatment of urgent consignments and infrastructure requirements for border crossing points. On the other hand, slow progress has been revealed in the areas of visa procedures and the International Vehicle Weight Certificate.

7. The Working Party may wish to discuss the results of the survey with a view to determining major obstacles for the full implementation of Annex 8 at the national level and giving recommendations on how to overcome them. In addition, WP.30 is invited to provide guidance as to when the next survey of Contracting Parties should take place.