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INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS IN VARIOUS RAILWAY FIELDS

Addendum 2

Transmitted by the Organization for the Co-operation of Railways (OSZhD)

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Work by OSZhD on environmental problems

A series of papers on environmental protection have emerged from the OSZhD Commission on transport policy, the environment and combined transport.

Recommendations on environmental protection in international carriage by rail with particular reference to border and transshipment stations, including combined transport of dangerous goods, have been agreed on and approved. They lay down a single set of rules on the design, modernization, construction and operation of border and transshipment stations to prevent any adverse impact on the environment. They are published by the OSZhD Committee as leaflet R-001.

Recommendations on unified standards for environmental emissions in the operation of rail transport, due regard being had to land classification, have also been agreed on and approved. These are intended to shape a single approach to the assessment and regulation of environmental pollution in rail transport operations. The principle underlying the regulation of emissions is that of bringing them as close as possible to natural environmental parameters.

The production of these recommendations may be regarded as the first step towards the establishment of environmental standards and requirements for the sustainable development of rail transport. The recommendations are published by the OSZhD Committee as leaflet R-002.

Once applied, these recommendations should prevent a rise in either absolute or relative contamination of the environment and lay the legal and regulatory groundwork for the greening of operations. The main aim of environmental protection efforts at present is thus to bring ventures' actual emissions gradually into line with the maximum permissible standards, to secure strict compliance with limits on emissions and waste disposal, to reduce the risk of accidents, to meet legislative requirements by improving on the technological processes in use and to move to environmentally safe, resource-saving technologies.

Recommendations for dealing with the environmental consequences of accidents during the transport of dangerous goods have been drawn up. They cover organizational arrangements common to all the OSZhD member countries for dealing with the effects of accidents, and opportunities for applying specific technologies and approaches to accomplish this. The recommendations are published by the OSZhD Committee as leaflet R-003.

Recommendations on the assessment of the impact of rail transport noise on the environment have also been drawn up. They define standards for noise caused by rail transport and ways of reducing it. They will be published by the OSZhD Committee as leaflet R-004.

Work is now in progress on:

- Environmentally safe chemical technologies for eliminating vegetation on railway tracks;
- Recommendations on the disposal of waste formed during rail transport operations;

- Basic guidelines on environmental protection on the railways of the OSZhD member countries.
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