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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Inland Water Transport

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Item 7 (d) of the provisional agenda

**WORK OF THE WORKING PARTY ON THE STANDARDIZATION
OF TECHNICAL AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN INLAND NAVIGATION:
ELABORATION OF HARMONIZED PROCEDURE FOR CONSIDERATION
OF APPLICATIONS FOR RECOGNITION OF SHIP'S CERTIFICATES
AND BOATMASTERS' LICENCES**

**Transmitted by the Governments of Belgium, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania,
Serbia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom**

Note: Working Party SC.3 decided, at its forty-ninth session, to include in its programme of work the question of recognition of ship's certificates and boatmasters' licences in Europe (TRANS/SC.3/168, para. 15). The question was included in the agenda of the thirty-first session of the Working Party on Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3), at which SC.3/WP.3 considered the procedures and conditions for the recognition of ship's certificates and boatmasters' licences elaborated by the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) (TRANS/SC.3/2005/5/Add.1). Working Party SC.3/WP.3 recommended that SC.3 should set up a group of volunteers to work on a possible ECE instrument in this area (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/WP.3/62, para. 21). SC.3/WP.3 also requested Governments and River Commissions to submit information on the procedures and conditions for the recognition of ship's certificates and boatmasters' licences in their countries or regions.

The Working Party may wish to follow the recommendation received by setting up a group of volunteers on this question and to give it preliminary instructions based on the comments from countries cited in the present document and taking into account the final version of the regulations adopted by CCNR, which is reproduced in document ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2007/8/Add.1.

I. BELGIUM

1. Belgium has incorporated in its domestic legislation Council Directive 96/50/EC on conditions for obtaining national boatmasters' certificates for inland navigation. Community boatmasters' certificates are recognized in European Community member countries. For inland navigation in Belgium, Rhine certificates are also recognized. The Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) has adopted regulations allowing for the recognition of documents other than Rhine certificates. The Joint CCNR/European Commission Working Group is studying the possibility of harmonization in this area. The results of this work could affect the Belgian regulations. Reciprocity of recognition will play an important role. In these circumstances, Belgium would prefer not to expend unnecessary effort, and it considers that there is no need to set up a group of volunteers. In its view, it would be better to await the outcome of the work undertaken by the Joint CCNR/European Commission Working Group.

II. LITHUANIA

2. Lithuania issues specialist diplomas in inland navigation (Group B), diploma renewals and certificates of competence in inland navigation (Group B). These documents are valid on all inland waterways within the European Community, with the exception of the Rhine, the Lek and the Waal and waterways of a maritime character indicated in Council Directive 91/672/EEC. Lithuania recognizes specialist diplomas, diploma renewals and certificates of competence in inland navigation issued by European Union member countries. Specialist qualifications in inland navigation issued by countries non-members of the European Union are recognized on the basis of bilateral agreements.

III. MOLDOVA

3. The procedure for recognition of ship's certificates and boatmasters' licences in Moldova is governed by agreements on inland navigation concluded by the Government of Moldova with the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (art. 11) and the Government of Romania (art. 7).

IV. ROMANIA

4. Currently, the procedure for mutual recognition of ship's certificates and boatmasters' licences is in line with Council Directive 91/672/EEC.

V. SERBIA

5. This issue is currently under consideration as part of the negotiations with the European Union. Serbia will nominate an expert in this field at the October 2007 session.

VI. SWITZERLAND

6. With regard to large shipping, Switzerland applies the recognition procedures established by Additional Protocol No. 7 to the Revised Convention on the Navigation of the Rhine, reproduced in document TRANS/SC.3/2005/5/Add.1. This work was initiated within the framework of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR). Switzerland therefore considers that, rather than begin efforts within ECE, the Working Party should await the outcome of the work undertaken by CCNR. Switzerland will not be able to nominate an expert to participate in the ECE group of volunteers, owing to a lack of personnel.

VII. UNITED KINGDOM

7. On 1 January 2007, the United Kingdom implemented Council Directive 96/50/EC on harmonizing requirements for boatmasters' certificates. This provides a mechanism whereby the United Kingdom may accept boatmasters from other European Community member countries, provided that they hold a licence issued in accordance with the Directive. It also allows boatmasters from the United Kingdom to command vessels in other European Community countries.

8. United Kingdom legislation in this area consists of the Merchant Shipping (Inland Waterway and Limited Coastal Operations) (Boatmasters' Qualifications and Hours of Work) Regulations 2006. The new licence regime is set out in Merchant Shipping Notice 1808, available on the Maritime and Coastguard Agency website (www.mcga.gov.uk).
