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Working Party on Inland Water Transport

Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation

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Item 2(a) of the provisional agenda

Promotion of River Information Services (RIS) as well as other Information
and Communication Technologies (ICT) in inland navigation:

Workshop on River Information Services and other information
communication technologies

Workshop “River Information Services and other information communication technologies in the pan- European and global format”

Note by the secretariat

I. Mandate

1. This document is submitted in line with Cluster 5: Inland Waterway Transport, paragraph 5.1 of the programme of work 2016–2017 (ECE/TRANS/2016/28/Add.1) adopted by the Inland Transport Committee at its seventy-eighth session on 26 February 2016.
2. The Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (hereafter SC.3/WP.3) at its forty-eighth session decided to hold a workshop on River Information Services (RIS) at its next session and asked the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/WP.3/96, para. 47).
3. This document gives a brief overview of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) activities on River Information Services (RIS) and other information communication technologies (ICT) relevant to inland water transport and topics for discussion at the workshop.

II. UNECE activities towards the promotion of River Information Services and other information communication technologies

4. RIS and other ICT constitute one of the seven development priorities of efficient and sustainable inland water transport established by the UNECE White Paper on Efficient and Sustainable Inland Water Transport in Europe (White Paper). At present the UNECE performs activities aimed at the promotion of the use of RIS and other information communication technologies (ICT) through Policy Recommendation No. 3 of the White Paper. Recognizing the crucial role of RIS and other ICT in ensuring safety and reliability of inland navigation, standards and guidelines maintained by International Expert Groups, innovative technologies in this area, UNECE has identified a number of tasks, including:

- To support a pan-European dialogue on RIS implementation and further development of RIS;
- To participate in the work of relevant international expert groups and to reflect the results of their discussions in the RIS related resolutions of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (hereafter SC.3), as well as other relevant instruments, such as the European Code for Inland Waterways;
- To encourage other uses of ICT for facilitating IWT operations and inspections of inland vessels and elaborate and promote the harmonized rules and criteria in this area.

5. UNECE maintains and regularly updates a set of resolutions on RIS and related issues in collaboration with RIS International Expert Groups:

- Resolution No. 48, Recommendation on Electronic Chart Display and Information System for Inland Navigation (Inland ECDIS);
- Resolution No. 57, Guidelines and Recommendations for River Information Services;
- Resolution No. 58, Guidelines and Criteria for Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways;
- Resolution No. 63, International Standard for Tracking and Tracing on Inland Waterways (VTT);
- Resolution No. 79, International Standard for Electronic Ship Reporting in Inland Navigation;
- Resolution No. 80, International Standard for Notices to Skippers in Inland Navigation.

6. Addressing navigation safety, the development of international transport by inland waterways by overcoming possible language barriers by introducing and maintaining standardized terminology for ship-to-ship, shipping information and ship-to-port authority radio-connections, SC.3 adopted a Standardized UNECE Vocabulary for Radio-Connections available in Dutch, English, French, German and Russian languages through its Resolution No. 35.

7. Furthermore, fostering the development and implementation of RIS and other ICT meets the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set up by United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1 of 25 September 2015, in particular, SDG 9 “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”. Effective use of ICTs is essential for building

resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation, in particular, in inland water transport.

III. Proposals for the workshop

8. Topics proposed for discussion:

- Development and unification of information service standards at a pan-European and a global level;
- Further steps towards the common digital navigation environment: e-navigation as applied to inland waterways;
- Sharing best practices in promoting innovations and technical solutions;
- RIS and waterway management.

9. In order to respond to modern challenges and following the need to further develop the strategy of UNECE in this field, the following possible directions could be discussed:

- Coordination of work and cooperation between relevant international organizations towards the harmonization of technical standards, such as Inland ECDIS, notices to skippers, electronic ship reporting in inland navigation, guidelines and criteria for vessel traffic services on inland waterways and standard for tracking and tracing on inland waterways using AIS;
 - Better coordination of work among different players;
 - Fostering other ICT initiatives to facilitate IWT operations and increase their safety, promoting innovative technologies;
 - Encouraging UNECE member States to participate more actively in relevant European Agreements;
 - Reflection of the above in UNECE documents.
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