

Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Adopted by the Working Party on 4 November 2016

Approved by the Inland Transport Committee (ITC)

on 24 February 2017

(ECE/TRANS/SC.3/203, para. 32; ECE/TRANS/270, para. 84)

1. The Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) and its subsidiary body, i.e. the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3), act within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and the Economic Commission for Europe (hereafter UNECE) under the general supervision of ITC and in conformity with the Terms of Reference (ToR) of UNECE (E/ECE/778/Rev.5).

2. SC.3 will operate in accordance with the UNECE Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Working Parties within UNECE as approved by the UNECE Executive Committee at its fourth meeting on 14 July 2006 (ECE/EX/1). These guidelines refer to its status and characteristics, including the review of its mandate and extension every five years, its membership and officers, its methods of work and its secretariat provided by the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division.

3. In line with the objective of the UNECE transport subprogramme to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve safety, environmental protection, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector to levels that contribute effectively to sustainable transport, SC.3, assisted, where appropriate by SC.3/WP.3, will carry out the following activities:

1. Organize a pan-European policy dialogue on the inland water transport issues

(a) Provide an inclusive and representative forum for exchange of experiences and best practices and providing guidance on how to address challenges in Inland Water Transport (IWT) development;

(b) Prepare studies on the situation and trends in inland navigation in order to provide Governments with up-to-date basic information and data concerning the inland water transport mode;

(c) Regularly publish updates of its strategy and policy papers (white papers, inventories of obstacles, etc.) on IWT ensure sustainability of IWT and its development, enhance the visibility and availability of UNECE documents relevant to IWT.

2. Promote a coordinated development of inland waterway infrastructure

(a) Monitor the implementation of the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance

(AGN), adopt amendments to the lists of inland waterways and ports and their parameters, as contained in the annexes to AGN, and elaborate proposals on further development of the agreement;

(b) Maintain the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (“the Blue Book”), the database of E Waterway Network (the Blue Book database) and other relevant SC.3 resolutions and maps which provides regularly updated information on standards and parameters of E waterways and ports in Europe, based upon relevant existing work;

(c) Prepare the list of bottlenecks and missing links on particular E waterways crossing the territory of more than one State Party to AGN, based upon relevant existing work;

(d) Provide a forum for ad hoc committees, expert groups or round tables to further coordinate and monitor the development of the E waterway network.

3. Address safety and operational requirements in inland navigation

(a) Organize exchanges of views on selected aspects of new and improved techniques in IWT with a view to their harmonization with the aim of facilitating and promoting international water transport in Europe;

(b) Harmonize and maintain the rules for inland navigation in Europe with a view to ensuring homogeneous and internationally acceptable standards of navigation safety throughout the European network of inland waterways taking into account standards of other international organizations;

(c) Harmonize technical requirements for inland navigation vessels with a view to ensuring the high-level of navigation safety and bring the added value throughout the European network of inland waterways;

(d) Coordinate and support measures to modernize the inland water fleet at the pan-European level;

(e) Keep member States informed about developments in mutual recognition of boatmasters’ certificates and other issues related to the professional qualifications in the area of inland navigation;

(f) Promote the use of intelligent communication and transport systems in inland navigation including River Information Services (RIS) and providing a forum for information exchange on developments and best practice; as well as facilitate and promote harmonization and cooperation in this area at a pan-European level;

(g) Promote the development and safety of recreational navigation, water tourism and related issues, maintain the database of models of the International Certificate for Operator of Pleasure Craft.

4. Promote integration of IWT in multimodal transport chains

(a) Prepare proposals on the development of river-sea routes in the context of AGN;

(b) Continue work on aligning the AGTC Protocol with AGN and contribute to the development of Eurasian transport links;

(c) Provide a representative forum for exchanges of experience and best practices, and for providing guidance on how to promote integration of IWT in multimodal transport chains.

5. Prevention of pollution from vessels and resilience to climate changes

(a) Harmonize technical rules on the prevention of pollution by inland vessels taking into account the standards of other international organizations;

(b) Assist member States with environmental challenges and the IWT carbon footprint by revising the technical regulations of the sector. Provide IWT-related statistics necessary for the development of ForFITS tool;

(c) Provide a representative forum for exchange of information and best practices on the implication of climate changes on IWT, and assist member States in their activities aimed at enhancing the resilience of IWT to climate changes.

6. Contribute to the harmonization of the legal framework for international IWT

(a) Promote the implementation of existing United Nations Conventions pertaining to inland navigation and discuss measures on how to make them more efficient;

(b) Undertake other activities aimed at further harmonizing and simplifying the international legal framework for IWT operations.

7. Undertake other activities related to regional and international cooperation or requested by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee

(a) Cooperate with the European Commission, River Commissions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other United Nations regional commissions and organizations or bodies of the United Nations system;

(b) Carry out other measures aimed at facilitating the use of IWT, as recommended by the UNECE White Paper on Efficient and Sustainable Inland Water Transport in Europe (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/189);

(c) Develop working contacts with River Commissions and basin administrations and, upon their request, facilitate the understanding of international conventions serviced by UNECE;

(d) Collaborate closely with other subsidiary bodies of ITC and other UNECE bodies on matters of common interest;

(e) Support ITC in addressing cross-sectorial issues, such as inland transport and security and inland transport and environment.