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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Combined Transport

(Fortieth session, 29 September – 1 October 2003,
agenda item 11)

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004 TO 2008

Prepared by the “Friends” of the Chairman

A. BACKGROUND AND MANDATE

1. Following a review of its activities undertaken by the Working Party at its thirty-eighth session (TRANS/WP.24/97, paras. 72-74) based on documentation prepared by its Chairman (TRANS/WP.24/2002/12) and the secretariat (TRANS/WP.24/2002/11), the Inland Transport Committee, at its sixty-fifth session in February 2003, endorsed in principle the proposal of the Working Party to refocus its scope of work and the organization of its activities. The Committee stressed the necessity of pursuing the review process in close cooperation with the ECMT and requested the Working Party to present a revised programme of work for the period 2004-2008 for approval at its sixty-sixth session in February 2004 (TRANS/2003/13; ECE/TRANS/152, para. 95).

2. At its thirty-ninth session, the Working Party requested the secretariat and its Chair and Vice-chair to prepare, in cooperation with the Chairperson of the ECMT Group on Combined Transport, representatives of the European Commission and other interested delegations, a new programme of work for the Working Party as well as a new concept for the organization of its work (TRANS/WP.24/99, para. 12).

3. In accordance with this mandate, the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Working Party met on 20 June 2003 with representatives of the ECMT and the European Commission (DG TREN) as well with a few experts and the UNECE secretariat and prepared a first draft of the requested new programme of work for consideration by the Working Party. This draft is contained below and highlights clearly the proposed modifications to the existing programme of work.

4. In particular, it is proposed to modify the name of the Working Party on Combined Transport (WP.24) to Working Party on Intermodal Transport (WP.24). It is felt that this change of name would better reflect the scope of work to be carried out in this field and would focus attention on the smooth movement of intermodal transport units (ITUs) by and between different modes of transport without handling the goods themselves in changing modes (refer to the UNECE, EC and ECMT “Terminology on Combined Transport” (www.unece.org/trans/wp24/24term.html)¹). The activities and the name of the relevant services of the European Commission DG TREN have already taken on board this concept (“Intermodality and Logistics”) and the ECMT is also planning to follow this line.

5. It is also proposed to include the “analysis of modern transport chains and logistics” into its programme of work on the understanding that the Working Party will focus on technical and legal issues based on considerations and analyses to be made by ECMT.

6. The other proposed modifications consolidate and re-focus the present activities of the Working Party without modifying the substance of its programme of work.

¹ Multimodal transport: Carriage of goods by two or more modes of transport.

Intermodal transport: The movement of goods in one and the same loading unit or road vehicle, which uses successively two or more modes of transport without handling the goods themselves in changing modes.

Combined transport: Intermodal transport where the major part of the European journey is by rail, inland waterways or sea and any initial and/or final legs carried out by road are as short as possible.

B. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004 TO 2008^{2/}PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.9: [COMBINED TRANSPORT] **INTERMODAL TANSPORT**

Promotion of combined and [multimodal] **intermodal** transport **Priority: 1**

Description: Consideration of legal, administrative, documentary, technical, economic and environmental aspects of combined and [multimodal] **intermodal** transport with a view to the development of measures to promote combined and [multimodal] **intermodal** transport as well as the maximum utilization of equipment, infrastructure and terminals used for such transport.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on [Combined] **Intermodal** Transport will pursue the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

(a) **Consideration of measures to promote efficiency of intermodal transport as part of a sustainable ways to implement a harmonized set of best practices and partnership models for intermodal transport operations (road, rail, inland water transport and short-sea shipping). Priority: 1**

Output expected in 2004:

Preparation of models or best practices for international action plans or agreements among Governments and private and public actors involved that can provide a framework and benchmarks for collaborative action towards the development of competitive international intermodal transport services.

^{2/} Text in square brackets [...] refers to text proposed for deletion; text in bold characters indicates newly proposed text.

[(a)] **(b)** Review and updating of the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) with a view to:

- Extending the AGTC network to all UNECE member countries concerned taking account of the work already undertaken by ESCAP and OSZhD;
- Taking into account new developments in transport markets (demands and requirements), including new East-West traffic flows;
- Implementing and, whenever feasible, improving existing standards and operational parameters;
- Raising environmental, energy and safety standards. Priority: 1

Output expected in 2003|4

Adoption of an extended AGTC network covering all UNECE member countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Inclusion into the AGTC Agreement of new East-West combined transport lines.

[(b)] Review and analysis of possibilities to develop inter-regional combined transport services, including the use of the Trans-Siberian railway. Priority: 2

Output expected in 2003:

Report to be prepared as the basis of information provided by concerned UNECE member Governments and international organizations.]

[(c)] Monitoring of the efficiency of various modes of transport of relevance for combined transport operations. Analysis of ways to implement a harmonized set of best practices and partnership models for combined rail/road transport. Priority: 1

Output expected in 2003:

Review of the efficiency of various modes of transport of relevance for combined transport in the sessions of the Working Party and cooperation with other relevant subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee. Final report by an informal Ad hoc expert group on best practices and partnership models.]

[(d) Analysis of data requirements for transshipment and handling requirements, of marking, coding and identification systems for means of transport and loading units in combined transport, including the promotion of electronic data processing, with a view to improving the flow of information among the various operators and to allow for a better integration of production and distribution systems (logistics) using combined transport techniques.Priority: 2

Output expected in 2003:

Review and analysis of standardized data systems for combined transport operations with a view to possibly preparing international recommendations on this subject.]

[(e)] (c) Monitoring of weights and dimensions of loading units used in [combined]**intermodal** transport in accordance with resolution No. 241 adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on 5 February 1993. This includes consideration of possibilities for standardization of loading units and the compliance with safety regulations.Priority: 1

Output expected in 200[3] 4:

Review of the issues based on one annual report to be prepared by the UNECE secretariat on latest developments in this field.

(d) Analysis of modern transport chains and logistics that allow for an integration of production and distribution systems providing a rational basis for Governmental decisions on efficient intermodal transport regulations and infrastructures.Priority: 2

Output expected in 2004:

Review of technical and legal issues and development of regional implementation tools and measures based on considerations and analyses made by the ECMT.

[(f)] (e) [Monitoring] **Analysis** of technical and organizational measures to optimize terminal and transshipment procedures allowing for more cost-effective handling procedures of loading units. Analysis of possibilities to improve efficiency and quality of terminal operations in [combined] **intermodal** transport.

Priority: 2

Output expected in 200[3] 4:

Report to be prepared on the basis of information provided by UNECE member Governments and international organizations **allowing the preparation of benchmarks for**

the efficient operation of intermodal terminals. [Final report by an informal ad hoc expert group on efficiency and quality of terminal operations in combined transport.]

[(g) Analysis of economic and environmental aspects of combined transport, including administrative measures and activities of the transport industry, with a view to promoting sustainable transport development.Priority: 1

Output expected in 2003:

Follow-up to the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12 to 14 November 1998) on the basis of the Programme of Joint Action adopted at the Conference, to be determined in accordance with the decisions taken by the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment and inter-secretariat consultations.]

[(h)] **(f) Monitoring and reports** by the secretariat on behalf of the Working Party on the following subjects for consideration by the Working Party upon specific request only:

- Translation **and updating** of the [combined] **intermodal** transport terminology into Arabic, Chinese and Spanish in order to contribute to the dissemination of the joint ECMT, EC and UNECE glossary of terms used in this field;
- [Combined] **Intermodal** transport techniques and operations (including inland waterways and coastal shipping techniques) as a basis for a possible international compendium of measures for the safe handling and temporary storage of dangerous goods;
- National approval procedures for containers and swap-bodies in the framework of relevant conventions, such as the CSC Convention, with a view to better harmonizing such procedures;
- New services and technologies in combined and intermodal transport, including sea/inland waterways and sea/land interfaces, and the use of bimodal road/rail vehicles with a view to be able to analyse the potential of [combined] **intermodal** transport;
- **Data requirements for transshipment and handling operations, of marking, coding and identification systems for means of transport and loading units in intermodal transport, including electronic data processing;**
- **Analysis of economic and environmental aspects of intermodal transport, including administrative measures and activities of the transport industry, with a view to promoting sustainable transport development.**Priority: 2

Output expected in 200[3] 4:

Report(s) to be prepared by the secretariat as a basis for discussion by the Working Party, as appropriate.

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

[(i)] (g) Analysis of possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of liability regimes governing [combined] **intermodal** transport operations. Priority: 1

Output expected in 200[3] 4:

Review of relevant activities undertaken by international organizations and, if appropriate, preparation of a draft legal instrument for multimodal overland transport covering the UNECE region.

[(j)] (h) Analysis of the consequences on the organization of [combined] **intermodal** transport in Europe resulting from the development of [combined] **intermodal** transport services on interregional rail links between Europe and Asia, **including the Trans-Siberian railway, and vice versa**. This includes the organization of an inter-regional meeting harmonizing the legal and administrative work carried out by relevant international organizations in Europe and Asia (e.g. ESCAP, UNCTAD, EC, OSZhD). Priority: 2

Output expected in 200[3] 4:

Based on work carried out by ESCAP, study on the feasibility of an intergovernmental meeting, jointly organized with ESCAP, in Central Asia or the Caucasus to agree on common measures to facilitate [combined] **intermodal** transport services along the interregional links.
