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Working Party on Inland Water Transport

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Exchange of information on measures aimed at promoting transport by inland waterway

Measures aimed at promoting river transport by inland waterway taken by the river commissions

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with the decision of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC. 3) at its fifty-fourth session (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/187, para. 10), the secretariat submits below its report on the work undertaken by the river commissions in 2010 and 2011. This report was prepared in close cooperation with the secretariats of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), the Danube Commission (CD), the Moselle Commission (CM) and the International Sava River Basin Commission (CS).
2. The Working Party may wish to take note of this information as it considers its current or future cooperation with the river commissions.

II. Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine

3. CCNR, under the chairmanship of the Belgian delegation, held plenary sessions on 8 and 9 December 2010 and on 27 May 2011.
4. The first part of the autumn 2010 session was devoted to international cooperation. As the Rhine is a very busy waterway and is fully integrated into the European network, CCNR wishes to open its activities to non-member States. It has thus admitted Poland as a new observer State, adopted a resolution with a view to recognizing Polish boatmasters' licences, and held a discussion with observer States and international observer organizations on closer cooperation.

5. At its spring 2011 session, CCNR recognized Austrian boatmasters' licences, and Slovakian Class I boatmaster's licences with some additional requirements. It also recognized the professional qualifications for radar navigation from these two States. These decisions will take effect on 1 October 2011.
6. The reciprocal recognition of service records is an important element of international cooperation. CCNR and the competent ministers from seven States (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) signed a multilateral administrative arrangement on 8 December 2010 that allowed for reciprocal recognition of service records issued by their competent authorities. This arrangement entered into effect on 1 July 2011 for the Rhine and the territories of the seven States involved. It is open for accession by other interested States.
7. At its autumn 2010 session, CCNR reported on progress towards the entry into force on 1 January 2011 of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) for transport on the Rhine. To that effect, it produced a German version of ADN 2011 which has been published on its website. The delegation of the Netherlands is currently producing a Dutch version which will also be published on the CCNR website.
8. With regard to technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, CCNR adopted amendments to the Rhine Vessels Inspections Regulations (RVBR), which will enter into force on 1 December 2011. European Parliament Directive 2006/87/EC, which lays down technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, will be amended accordingly, ensuring harmonization between CCNR and European Community requirements.
9. In the legal field, CCNR continued its work on the revision of the 1988 Strasbourg Convention on the Limitation of Liability of Owners of Inland Navigation Vessels (CLNI). A diplomatic conference is being held at the end of 2011 with the goal of adopting amendments that would allow Central and Eastern European States to accede to the Convention.
10. Where environmental protection is concerned, the April 2011 workshop organized by CCNR on carbon dioxide emissions from inland navigation was a resounding success. More than 70 experts from European States and Japan discussed ways to measure and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The presentations and conclusions from the different workshops, as well as other relevant information, are available on the CCNR website.
11. Liquefied natural gas (LNG) has now been introduced to inland waterway navigation after its successful integration into sea and road transport. In 2011, four inland vessels using LNG will be put into service on the Rhine. CCNR has begun the decision-making procedures to authorize LNG use for inland navigation while taking into account the specific dangers associated with this fuel. It expects to present its safety and environmental protection recommendations at some point during 2011.
12. CCNR has organized a workshop on river information services (RIS) to be held on 18 October 2011 in Brussels. The objective is an exchange of views with RIS users about the accomplishments of the past 10 years. CCNR will present its first strategic plan for the development of RIS at the workshop. Experts from the Rhine and the Danube will be present to exchange information and share what was learned when RIS were launched.
13. Economically, 2010 saw an increase in the demand for transport along all segments of the waterway. This fits with the economic recovery from the 2008–2009 crisis. Many navigation companies are still facing financial difficulties, however, because of constantly increasing operating costs.

III. Danube Commission

14. The Danube Commission held two plenary sessions in the past year, on 14 December 2010 (seventy-fifth session) and from 2 to 3 June 2011 (seventy-sixth session).

15. At these two sessions, the Commission approved various amendments to documents addressing nautical issues. It adopted the updated version of the Basic Rules of Navigation on the Danube (DFND) that is in line with the fourth revised edition of the European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI) and recommended that member States put it into force as of 1 January 2012. DFND is available on the Commission website. The Commission secretariat continues to participate in the ECE working group on the harmonization of navigation rules on European waterways and regularly briefs its working group on technical issues on the progress made.

16. The Commission adopted recommendations on the organization of vocational training for boatmasters and asked member States to put them into effect on 1 June 2011. It also adopted recommendations on the use of inland automatic identification systems (AIS) and recommended that member States put them into effect as of 1 January 2012.

17. The Commission's working group on technical issues has asked member States to submit to the Commission secretariat any amendments that they judge necessary for updating the local regulations on navigation on the Danube published in 2006. The secretariat will prepare a draft update to the Regulations and submit it to the working group for consideration in November 2011.

18. The "small" group of experts on the standardization of boatmasters' licences continued its work during the November 2010 and February 2011 sessions. They submitted a report on their results for consideration by the working group on technical issues.

19. With respect to technical issues, the Commission adopted the updated version of the text of the Recommendations on Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels, including provisions for the European vessel number, an appendix on the requirements to signal lights on vessels and the general technical specifications applicable to radar equipment, as well as on service records. These amendments are based on resolution No. 68, "Additions and amendments to resolution No. 61 on harmonized Europe-wide technical requirements for inland navigation vessels", adopted by SC. 3 on 15 October 2010.

20. The working group on technical issues asked the member States' competent authorities to submit any communication relating to the Danube section of the guide concerning radio-telephone service on inland waterways so that the Commission may post the information on its website.

21. With regard to hydrotechnical and hydrometeorological issues, several documents are currently being updated. An updated draft of the general plan for major works on the Danube was distributed to member States. It was last published in 2003 and is to be updated based on proposals made by member States. Member States are participating in the updating process of the Master Plan on infrastructure, aimed at the achievement of recommended fairway parameters, hydrotechnical and other facilities on the Danube, and the album of critical sectors and bottlenecks on the Danube.

22. The Commission is continuing its work on matters related to the use and ecology of the Danube, particularly the updating of the catalogue of questions and models for the experts' examination in ECE, and the project on waste generated by inland navigation. The recommendations on collection of waste from vessels on the Danube have been updated to mirror the new provisions in DFND 2010 and ADN 2011.

23. Several documents relating to economic and statistical matters were finalized over the course of 2010–2011 and distributed to member States. These documents were: the 2008 and 2009 versions of the report on the economic situation of navigation on the Danube, an updated version of “Terminology and definitions used by the Danube Commission in data collection and processing”, the “Statistical Yearbook of the Danube Commission for 2007”, and an updated edition of the “Information manual on dues and fees, tariffs and taxes in force in the Danube navigation”.

24. As regards international cooperation, the Commission has approved the participation, without voting rights, of several non-governmental organizations in Commission sessions, working groups on technical issues, and groups of experts. It has also strengthened its collaboration with CCNR and CS, in part by having members attend the sessions of these two commissions.

IV. Moselle Commission

25. The Commission held a plenary session on 3 December 2010 under the chairmanship of the Luxembourg delegation, and another on 21 June 2010 under the chairmanship of the German delegation.

26. At the two sessions, the Commission made a number of decisions affecting Moselle users. Parts of the Police Regulations for Navigation on the Moselle (RPNM) have been amended to match the regulations in force on the Rhine, which will make life easier for navigators operating on both waterways and will encourage compliance with the Moselle regulations. The new provisions will enter into force as of either 1 September 2011 or 1 January 2012. RPNM has also been amended to take account of the new European standards on signal light colours for inland navigation.

27. The Commission approved its Police Committee’s proposal to limit lock priority hours to between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. Priority of passage through locks applies mainly to tourist vessels, but can markedly hamper the punctuality of commercial navigation. Restricting priority hours allows commercial vessels to circulate freely at night.

28. The Commission has approved the use of two signs prescribed in CEVNI. One is the symbol prohibiting access on board a vessel and the other is the panel indicating that it is prohibited to smoke, use a light or have an open flame. RPNM has been amended to take account of these changes, which will take effect on 1 September 2011.

29. The Commission sets aside periods when all traffic on the river is banned so that national administrations can inspect, maintain and repair infrastructure. The Commission’s website gives information on the dates set aside for this purpose until 2019.

30. In international cooperation, the Commission continued comparing RPNM to the regulations in effect on the Rhine, thus contributing to the work on CEVNI being done by ECE to harmonize the regulations governing navigation on European waterways. The Commission, a member of the PLATINA Steering Committee as part of the Programme of Action for the Promotion of Inland Waterway Transport in Europe (NAIADES), announced its intention to participate in the PLATINA working group on infrastructure.

31. The Commission also lent its support to two other European projects. One was the MORO Moselle landscaping network programme created by the German Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development to bring about fresh approaches to land development and regional planning. The other was the Saône-Moselle project to link the Rhône and Rhine basins by means of a canal between the Saône and the Moselle.

32. The Commission's working groups and committees met more frequently in 2010 than in 2009. The "Modern Information Exchange Services and Systems/MIB-MOVES" working group held extra sessions as part of its work on comparing data transmission standards. Working group members were able to have an all-encompassing view of the subject, which extends well beyond the Moselle, thanks to the participation of a representative from the ERI (Electronic Reporting International) group of experts, a PLATINA platform initiative designed to ensure the harmonized development and implementation of information service standards in Europe. The working group will continue its work in 2011.

33. A mixed Technical and Legal Affairs Committee made up of members from the Legal Affairs Committee and representatives from the International Moselle Society (SIM), was established to study how article 19 of the Moselle Convention could be amended. Article 19 of the Moselle Convention governs the tolls paid to SIM and the money withdrawn to cover costs. Other meetings on this issue will be held in 2011.

34. The Commission secretariat has a new website. The *Actualités* section allows visitors to quickly access information about events and activities on the Moselle and shipping, and a new interactive tool allows visitors to download notices to skippers and be shown on a map where there are delays or disruptions. The website has had an English version since the beginning of 2011.

V. International Sava River Basin Commission

35. The Commission's accomplishments are described in the progress report for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011, and relate to three main areas of work, as set out in the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (FASRB). These three main areas were:

- Establishment of an international regime of navigation on the Sava river and its navigable tributaries
- Establishment of sustainable water management
- Prevention and limitation of the adverse consequences of floods, droughts, ice and accidents

36. As the establishment of an international regime of navigation is an area of particular interest to SC.3, detailed information on this aspect of the Sava Commission's work is provided in the following paragraphs.

37. Sava Commission efforts in the field on navigation have focused mainly on the rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava. At the same time, the Commission has continued to enforce and update its regulations with the goal of improving safety in navigation and increasing protection for the environment.

38. In the field of navigation safety, Commission decision No. 19/10 amended decision No. 30/07 on the Navigation Rules on the Sava River Basin, thus allowing the fourth revised edition of CEVNI to be put into effect. The secretariat has begun, using data supplied by the parties, to draft a new chapter of the Navigation Rules laying down the ground rules for vessel inspections. The Commission has begun drafting amendments to decision No. 32/07 on the Rules on Minimum Requirements for the Issuance of Boatmaster's Licenses on the Sava River Basin.

39. The Commission has during this period also prepared and published two texts meant for the navigable waterway users, the album of bridges over the Sava river and the distance indicator on the Sava river.

40. As regards technical standards, the Commission adopted by decision No. 12/10, the Rules for the Transport of Dangerous Goods in the Sava River Basin, thus allowing the annexes to ADN to apply directly. The rules are important because of the very high average age of the Sava fleet and the increasing transport of dangerous goods. They will contribute markedly to better safety of navigation and greater environmental protection.

41. The Commission has continued its work on the prevention of water pollution through its involvement in the “Waste Management for Inland Navigation on the Danube” (WANDA) project.

42. In the field of waterway infrastructure, the Commission developed a marking plan for the Sava and its navigable tributaries which it adopted by decision No. 21/10. In the period from April 2010 to March 2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia performed maintenance work on the markings on the Sava and Kupa rivers.

43. The Commission and its parties have worked towards the rehabilitation and further development of navigation on the Sava by continuing to develop detailed plans and documentation and by implementing action plans and decisions on the classification of future waterways. These include:

- The decision by Croatia and Slovenia to make preparations for establishing navigation upriver from Sisak and to develop a plan for extending the Sava from Sisak to Brežice
- The completion of a study on the possible environmental impact of rehabilitating the navigable waterway between Račinovci and Sisak by Croatia, and the issuance of the permits necessary for continuing work on the waterway
- Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia’s success in raising the funds to finance the rehabilitation work

44. With regard to RIS, the Commission has completed the project on the detailed technical requirements and prototype installation of RIS on the Sava river. Based on the results of the project, the Commission and its parties continued to seek financing for the implementation of RIS on the Sava river.

45. In addition to its own projects, the Commission continued to participate in external projects such as NAIADES and the Network of Danube Waterway Administrations (NEWADA).

46. All those activities have helped sustain the increasing development of traffic on the Sava, as can be seen from the increase in the transport of petroleum products over the Brod/Bosanski Brod section, the completion of the feasibility studies for developing the infrastructure at the port of Šabac, and the preparations for the creation of a liquid cargo terminal at the port of Slavonski Brod.
