

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INF.33 (E)

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

(Eightieth session, agenda item 6,

Geneva, 8-12 May 2006)

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE
WORKING PARTY ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS**

Note by the secretariat

In relation to the discussion of document ECE/TRANS/WP.15/2006/10, the secretariat reproduces hereafter the report of the Meeting of the Executive Committee held on 6 April 2006 and the draft Guidelines for the Establishment and Functioning of Working Parties and of Teams of Specialists within the ECE.

**Meeting of the Executive Committee
(6 April 2006)**

Chairman's conclusions

11 April 2006

Formal Segment

Item 2 – Election of officers

- At its meeting held on 6 April 2006, the Executive Committee (EXCOM) elected its Vice chairpersons, Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanian (Armenia) and Mr. Michele Coduri (Switzerland).

Informal Segment

Item 4 – Briefing by the Director of the Transport Division on recent developments related to transport

- The Director of the Transport Division reported on recent developments in the field of transport, particularly with regard to cooperation with OSCE. He presented possible areas of cooperation with this organization, including the strengthening of the implementation of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Control of Goods (1982) through capacity building activities. He proposed to launch a pilot survey on the implementation of the [facilitation measures foreseen in the Convention](#). Countries would be invited to reply on a voluntary basis. Based on the findings of this survey, training workshops/seminars could be organized in the countries that request assistance in addressing the technical problems encountered in the implementation of the Convention.
- It was agreed that the Secretariat would send a questionnaire on the above-mentioned Convention to Member States together with a cover note explaining the context of UNECE cooperation with OSCE in the field of transport. Countries would be invited to reply to this questionnaire **on a voluntary basis**.
- It was also noted that the OSCE could provide necessary organizational and financial support to these capacity-building activities.

Item 5 – The new subprogramme on Economic Cooperation and Integration and related issues

a) *First meeting, TOR, constituency*

- The dates of the first meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration will be 27 and 28 September 2006.
- The secretariat will send a letter confirming the convening of the meeting
- The Terms of Reference of the new Committee will be adopted by the Sectoral Committee itself but the EXCOM will discuss a draft at its meeting in May or June.
- With regard to the constituency of this Committee, as many Ministries and other entities will be involved, Member States were invited to identify a focal point for each country to facilitate communication and coordination.

b) *Elements for a programme of work for the subprogramme*

- The deadline for submission of national inputs to the work elements of the subprogramme was extended to 20 April 2006.
- The secretariat will prepare: i) a compilation of the contributions by Member States; ii) a draft conceptual framework for the Programme of work distilled from the national inputs. Both documents will be circulated by 1 May 2006 so that they can be discussed at the next EXCOM meeting on 16 May 2006.
- The EXCOM took note of the request of Member States that the conceptual framework should be concise and user-friendly.

c) *Programme for the first meeting of the ECI Committee*

- Member States were requested to submit to the Chairman, copied to the Secretariat, suggestions concerning the programme of the first meeting.
- Taking into account these suggestions, the Chair will circulate a draft programme by 5 May to Member States for discussion at the next EXCOM meeting in May.

Item 6 - Accreditation procedure of the Sectoral Committees

- The EXCOM agreed on the principle of tacit agreement that, for each meeting, a list of participants will be sent to Member States 2 working days in advance of the meeting so that missions can verify their countries' representation and that the participants on the list are considered as accredited to the meeting unless a Member State makes an objection.

Item 7 - Organization of the review of subsidiary bodies of Sectoral Committees and of their possible streamlining, including revision of guidelines on informal teams of specialists/ task forces (E/ECE/1407/Add.1) and new guidelines for Working Parties

- Member States were invited to send their written comments by 30 April on the Guidelines for Teams of Specialists and Guidelines for Working Parties. The two documents will be translated and formally approved at a future EXCOM meeting.

Item 8 - Tentative schedule of EXCOM meetings

- The EXCOM took note of the following remarks:
 - a) At EXCOM meetings, priority no.1 will be given to items on which a formal decision is needed. Priority no. 2 will be given to items on which a discussion is needed in order to implement the reform. Priority no. 3 will go to essential information items. The idea is to avoid too lengthy meetings and too many meetings.
 - b) Concerning the back-to-back meetings with Sectoral Committees: on the day after the meeting of a particular Sectoral Committee, no formal decision concerning that particular Sectoral Committee will be taken by the EXCOM. Capitals will have time to reflect on the basis of the discussion at the back-to-

back meeting with the Bureau of the Sectoral Committee. If a formal decision is needed, it will be taken at a next session of the EXCOM under a formal segment.

- The next EXCOM will take place on 16 May.
- The meeting with the Conference of European Statisticians will not take place in June.
- The definition of criteria for approving the work programmes of Sectoral Committees will be put on the agenda of the EXCOM.
- A revised tentative schedule will be subsequently circulated.

Item 9 – Other business

- Member States were asked to make suggestions on the topics to be taken up at the next Commission session which will be the 60th anniversary of ECE. Dates and topics for the session will be discussed at the May/June meeting of EXCOM.
 - EXCOM took note that the P-5 vacancy in the Transport Division will be filled before summer.
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UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF
WORKING PARTIES WITHIN THE UNECE

28 March 2006

DRAFT

1. Status and Characteristics

A Working Party is an intergovernmental body which is subsidiary to a Sectoral Committee. It has the following characteristics:

- (a) It is established by the Executive Committee upon the recommendation of a Sectoral Committee;
- (b) It is authorized by the Sectoral Committee to address a major cluster of recurrent activities within a given subprogramme under the responsibility of the Sectoral Committee;
- (c) It is a standing body whose mandate and extension should be reviewed every 5 years;
- (d) ~~In line with the provision of the 1997 Plan of Action concerning these entities, its meetings~~ require are held with full interpretation and translation, unless the members of the Working Party decide otherwise.

2. Membership and Officers

Working Parties are open for participation by all ECE Member States. Non-ECE Member States can ~~also~~ participate as observers or, if agreed by the parent Sectoral Committee, as full members. In addition, relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can also be invited as observers, in compliance with the UN rules and practices in this respect.

A Working Party elects its officers: a Chairperson and an agreed upon number of Vice-Chairpersons; and establishes the term of its officers.

3. Methods of Work

- (a) Each Working Party prepares its terms of reference which must be adopted by its parent Sectoral Committee.
- (b) At its annual or biennial session, each Working Party develops activities in accordance with its programme of work, to review the achievements and problems met since its last meeting, of the past year, to plan future activities and to review the work and status of the teams of specialists under it, in accordance with the Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of such teams (E/ECE/...). With regard to the planning of future activities, all new activities, unless they are resourced by extrabudgetary funds, must be carried out within the currently allocated regular budget resources and, therefore, should be matched by a reduction or discontinuation of one or more activities;
- (c) Each Working Party reports to the annual/biennial session of its parent body;

- (d) The first five-year cycle referred to under 1(c) above will begin as of 2007. On the basis of a comprehensive review prepared by the Working Party, the parent Sectoral Committee should assess and decide on any necessary adjustments to the mandate and status of the Working Party. The conclusions of the assessment should be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee.

4. The Secretariat

The ECE secretariat services the meetings of the Working Party, providing logistical support and preparing documentation, [including draft reports](#).

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF
TEAMS OF SPECIALISTS WITHIN THE ECE

28 March 2006

These Guidelines have been adopted by the Commission at its meeting of 26 June 2003 and have been subsequently issued as Document E/ECE/1407/Add.1. In order to align the text to the Work Plan on the ECE Reform, amendments (in track change) are proposed below.

2. Status and Characteristics

A team of specialists¹ is an expert body which is established through a procedure set by an ECE ~~Principal-Subsidiary Body~~ Sectoral Committee (SCPSB) and supervised either directly by the PSB-SC or by one of its Working Parties. Its main characteristics are as follows:

- (a) It addresses a specific area of activities under the broader theme covered by the parent body;
- (b) Its central function may be of an advisory or operational nature, or a combination of the two, depending on the tasks assigned by the parent body;
- (c) It normally has a two-year duration but can be extended after careful evaluation, by the parent body, of the work achieved and the need to perform additional tasks; and
- (d) ~~In line with the provision of the 1997 Plan of Action concerning these entities, its meetings do not require full interpretation and translation, unlike the meetings of the formal ECE intergovernmental bodies.~~

5. Membership and Officers

Teams of specialists are comprised of governmental experts and they can also include eminent specialists or representatives of international organisations, NGOs and the private sector, in compliance with the UN rules and practices in this respect. The procedure of nomination is established by the parent body. To the extent possible, consideration should be given to ensuring an appropriate geographical balance in the representation of these teams.

A team of specialists appoints its officers: a Chairperson and, if deemed necessary, one or two Vice-Chairpersons.

6. Methods of Work

- (a) The ~~Principal-Subsidiary Body~~ Sectoral Committee and, where relevant, the Working Party under it, have to determine the scope of issues and the achievements expected of the team of specialists, as well as to decide on the membership of the team; the parent body must then submit the proposed establishment of a team of specialist to the Executive Committee for approval;

¹ These teams of specialists can also be named “advisory groups”, “ad hoc groups”, “task forces” etc.

- (b) At its first meeting, the team of specialists adopts its work plan ~~for a two-year period, for the period for which it was established,~~ clearly defining its objectives and activities and making a time schedule for their implementation; the activities can include: undertaking studies and advisory missions; organising seminars and training workshops; drafting policy models and guidelines; collecting data; and providing information and training kits etc.;
- (c) The resources required for implementing the work plan have also to be identified; depending on the amount of regular budget resources that can be devoted to servicing the team of specialists and the magnitude of the work to be done, the team of specialists may raise funds and/or solicit in-kind contributions in support of its activities, in compliance with the relevant UN rules and regulations;
- (d) The team of specialists reports to the annual session of its parent body;
- (e) At the end of the ~~two-year~~ period ~~for which it has been established,~~ the team submits a full report on its accomplishments to the parent body in order to share the achievements and conclusions of its work to the wider ECE membership.
- (f) On the basis of this report, the parent body makes an evaluation and, if there is a request for extension, determines whether the team ~~needs to~~ should be ~~re-conducted~~ recommended for such an extension in order to continue its work and/or undertake supplementary activities. The recommendation for discontinuation or extension should then be submitted to the Commission Executive Committee for final approval. should also be notified of any such extensions.
- (g) In the case where the duration of the team is extended, the membership should be reviewed by the parent body and, at the end of the new period of extension, a report on its achievements should also be submitted by the team of specialists to the parent body.
- (h) Should the parent body feel that a particular team of specialists has a standing character by nature of its continuing activity, it can on an exceptional basis propose to the ~~Commission-Executive Committee~~ to exempt that team of specialists from the sunset clause, giving appropriate justification. In this case, the mandate and standing nature of the concerned team of specialists should be reviewed every five years.

7. The Secretariat

The ECE secretariat, with the support of the members of the team of specialists, has the responsibility for:

- (a) Handling official contacts, including correspondence, with governmental and nongovernmental experts as well as experts from international agencies involved;
- (b) Assisting in the scheduling of meetings and other activities for adoption by the group;

- (c) Cooperating with the members of the team in organising missions, workshops, seminars and training in member countries;
- (d) In cooperation with the Chairperson of the team, preparing the report on the team's accomplishments at the end of the two-year period and of any new period of extension.

5. Role of the members of the Team of Specialists

Members of the team of specialists, with the support of the secretariat as resources permit, undertake the substantive work, in particular the preparation of substantive documentation for the meetings and the reports to be submitted to the annual biennial session | of the parent body.
