REPORT TO THE UNECE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIORITIES OF THE UNECE REFORM
FOR STRENGTHENING SOME ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

Review of implementation of the monitoring mechanisms and
practices in place and recommended actions

Note by the secretariat

Monitoring - in international law this involves checking to see if a States Party is taking
whatever actions it needs to take in order to comply with its legal obligations under a convention.

1. The Work Plan on ECE Reform (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1, 12 December 2005) requested the
Inland Transport Committee to “submit proposals to the Executive Committee on ways and
means of monitoring and strengthening the implementation of key ECE legal instruments on
transport, including on road safety”. Subsequently, the ITC at its 69th session in February 2007
endorsed the secretariat’s proposal to monitor the implementation of three legal transport
instruments: the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968; the Convention on Road Signs and Signals,
1968; and the European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in
International Road Transport (AETR). In order to further take into account the priorities
identified in the Work Plan on ECE Reform, the ITC approved at its 69th session changes to its
programme of work for the period 2006-2010, including the issuance of a report on the
implementation of selected aspects of the Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road
Signs and Signals and of the European Agreements supplementing them in member countries -
Contracting Parties to these legal instruments. The Executive Committee approved these changes
at its 13th meeting in March 2007.2

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1 This note should be considered in conjunction with the Informal Document No.2 (please see para.53).
2 For details, see http://www.unece.org/commission/EXCOM/2007/March_07/Item3_ITC_PoW_2006-
2010_L6e.pdf.
2. Following the priorities of the Work Plan on ECE Reform, the review of the implementation monitoring mechanisms of the key legal instruments in transport has been undertaken by the secretariat. The findings of the in-house review are as follows.

3. Monitoring the implementation of the safety related agreements, the secretariat has elaborated questionnaires. With regard to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic and the 1971 European Agreement supplementing it, the questionnaire circulated to Contracting Parties had three parts. Its major aim was to monitor the degree to which the domestic legislation of Contracting Parties conforms in substance to selected chapters of the Convention and the European Agreement supplementing it. The deadline for replies was 31 October 2007. Despite several reminders, only 17% of the Contracting Parties have replied. Considering the quality and reliability of replies, only 8% of the Contracting Parties have replied with relevant information and in the correct way. Concerning the European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR), the questionnaire aimed to monitor the application of Article 12, paragraph 5, on checking of driving and rest times. The questionnaire was meant to be used exclusively by AETR Contracting Parties that were not EU members during the period from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2006. The deadline for replies was 30 September 2007. Despite reminders, including formally in the SC.1, as of today, only two non-EU countries have replied. None of the responses can be considered fully reliable as one of the respondents only became Contracting Party in the second part of 2006 and the other one specified in the reply that the specific checks and data collection are under competence of local authorities and therefore are of a “delicate nature”. The AETR however is implicitly well enforced and its implementation is strictly monitored by the Contracting Parties that are EU member States. Implicitly, because the countries concerned are observing in fact the “acquis communautaire” in the area of driving and rest times. The difference between the AETR and the “acquis communautaire” is that non-compliance with the latter is sanctioned, while the UN approach excludes, in general, sanctions for non-compliance. In principle, replies sent to the European Commission could be obtained by the ECE secretariat in the frame of bilateral cooperation; however, most of the countries concerned have been first Contracting Parties to the AETR and they should be committed to treating ECE at least equally as the European Commission. It is hoped that the joint work of the secretariat and the non-EU Contracting Parties to the AETR on introduction of the digital tachograph will enhance the spirit of cooperation and the result will be an improved responsiveness.

4. In the area of transport of dangerous goods, the UNECE is responsible for two legal instruments, the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), and the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN).

5. The ADR, done in 1957, entered into force in 1968, and now counts 44 Contracting Parties following accession by Tunisia in 2008. The Contacting Parties include nearly all European States of the UNECE, i.e.:
   - All EU countries (27)
   - Other Western or Central European countries: Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland
   - Other Eastern European countries: Belarus, Russian Federation, Ukraine
   - Other South Eastern European countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Central Asia or Caucasus countries: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and two non-
UNECE countries: Morocco and Tunisia

6. The developments in the past few years show a slow but continuous progression of
accession by countries which are neighbouring to the existing Contracting Parties, in particular
towards the East (Asia) and South (Africa). Nevertheless, some UNECE countries of particular
importance for the development of Euro-Asia road transport links (Turkey, Georgia, Armenia,
Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) have not yet acceded to ADR.

7. On the other hand, other non-UNECE countries such as the Islamic Republic of Iran and
China have indicated that they were considering the possibility of acceding. It seems however
that the word "European" in the title of the agreement remains an obstacle to a wider geographic
extension of ADR, when in practice a number of countries outside Europe, e.g. in South East
Asia and South America have used its provisions to develop national regulations.

8. With respect to implementation, ADR is an agreement intended to increase safety and at
the same time facilitate transport, since vehicles carrying dangerous goods in accordance with
the conditions laid down in the technical annexes are allowed to circulate, in international
transport, on the territory of all contracting parties. It is up to the competent authorities of each
country to make sure, through inspections, tests, controls, etc that the said conditions are
properly complied with by consignors, carriers, freight forwarders, and all other relevant entities
participating in a transport chain. Problems of interpretation or implementation are normally
discussed between competent authorities during meetings of the Working Party on the Transport
of Dangerous Goods (WP.15)

9. The same comments could be made as regards ADN, except that ADN was done in 2000
and entered into force in 2008, but its annexed Regulations will become applicable only on 28
February 2009. It now counts 10 Contracting Parties (Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany,
Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Republic of Moldova, Romania, and Russian Federation).
Since it is open only to UNECE countries which possess inland waterways, other than those
forming a coastal route, which form part of the network of inland waterways of international
importance as defined in the AGN, the prospective for a wider coverage is much more limited
than in the case of the ADR. Nevertheless, the secretariat would expect that quite a number of
other UNECE countries meeting the above criteria would accede to (or in the case of signatory
states such as Croatia, Czech Republic, Italy, Slovakia, would ratify) ADN very soon.

10. It is recalled also that directives 94/55/EC and 96/49/EC require Member States of the
European Union and of states of the European Economic Area to apply the technical
requirements of ADR (and of RID for rail transport) to domestic traffic of vehicles carrying
dangerous goods. These directives have of course in the past 10 years considerably extended the
scope and coverage of ADR and RID, since, although international transport is important in the
European Union, domestic traffic operations are much more frequent. The implementation of
these directives is directly monitored by the European Commission.

11. One important development in 2008 was the adoption of a new directive, directive
2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, on the inland transport of dangerous
goods, which repeals the two previously mentioned directives, plus two additional ones
(96/35/EC and 2000/18/EC concerning the dangerous goods safety adviser now addressed under
ADR and RID) from 30 June 2009. EU and EEA Member States are still required to apply ADR
and RID to domestic traffic, but those which are linked, by inland waterways, to waterways of other Member States will also have to apply the requirements of ADN for transport of dangerous goods on their waterways, whether or not they are party to ADN.

12. Questions related to the implementation of ADN are discussed by the Joint Meeting of Experts on the Regulations annexed to ADN (ADN Safety Committee)(WP.15/AC.2) and by the ADN Administrative Committee, whose sessions are organized jointly by the UNECE and the CCNR.

13. For RID, which is not an UNECE instruments, and which is under the responsibility of OTIF, it is recalled that all provisions which are common to RID, ADR and ADN are discussed by the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting (WP.15/AC.1) organized jointly by UNECE and OTIF.

14. In 2008, the secretariat participated in the 16th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (Prague 19-21 May 2008) and presented a report on the transport of dangerous goods. This report contained proposals seeking support from the OSCE for three possible extra-budgetary projects related to ADR, one concerning the monitoring of the implementation of ADR in countries which have recently acceded but which do not participate regularly in WP.15 meetings, the second one concerning the application of ADR to domestic traffic in non-EU countries, and the third one aiming at assisting countries which are not yet parties to ADR to become parties. So far, there has been no formal decision by OSCE regarding these proposals.

15. The secretariat has also assisted the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina this year to develop national law intended to apply the requirements of ADR, RID, ADN, and other international instruments related to carriage of dangerous goods by air and sea to domestic traffic, under a project funded by UNDP.

16. The three Agreements administered by the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) contain some provisions of monitoring mechanisms for the application of regulations on construction of vehicles and rules for periodical technical inspections of vehicles in use.\(^3\)

17. In the 1958 and the 1997 Agreement, the Regulations on construction of vehicles and Rules on periodical technical inspections of vehicles in use are annexed to the Agreement and are part of them. Contracting Parties to these two Agreements are obliged to accept vehicles type-approved in conformity with the Regulations and to accept the periodical technical inspections of vehicles in use in conformity with the Rules. This obligation does not require any action by the Contracting Parties. The secretariat, with the information received from OLA Treaty Section, elaborates three times per year a document for each Agreement indicating the status of the Agreements and of the Regulations/Rules annexed to each of them. These documents include information about the application of Regulations and Rules by each Contracting Party to both Agreements.

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\(^3\) Agreement concerning the adoption of uniform technical prescriptions for wheeled vehicles, equipment and parts which can be fitted and/or be used on wheeled vehicles and the conditions for reciprocal recognition of approvals granted on the basis of these prescriptions (1958 Agreement)
Agreement Concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspections (1997 Agreement)
Agreement Concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be Fitted and/or be Used on Wheeled Vehicles (1998 Agreement)
18. Concerning the Regulations on construction of vehicles, annexed to the 1958 Agreement, they enter automatically into force for the countries that do not raise objections with the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) during a six-month period, following the adoption of the Regulation by the Administrative Committee of the Agreement. If a country raises objections, OLA issues a Depositary Notification informing the secretariat and the Contracting Parties about the non-entry into force of the particular regulation (or amendment) in such a country. The secretariat publishes a document 3 times per year indicating the status of the agreement and of all the Regulations annexed to it. The same procedure applies to the Rules annexed to the 1997 Agreement on periodical technical inspections of vehicles in use.

19. In this context, this monitoring mechanism is good enough as it provides the information which the administrations, vehicle manufacturers and public in general needs to be aware of the requirements for each country concerning vehicle Regulations and Rules for periodical technical inspection of vehicles in use.

20. Certainly, the monitoring mechanism could be improved i.e. to obtain information on:

- Whether the Regulations/Rules have been published in each country in the language of that country.
- Whether there is an alternative legislation or the unique legislation applied by the country in the matter covered by the Regulation/Rule.

21. The 1998 Agreement stipulates that once regulations are established in the Global Registry of global technical regulations, the Contracting Parties that had voted for them shall initiate the administrative procedure for incorporating the global technical regulations into their own national/regional legislation. Every year the Contracting Parties shall report to the secretariat about the process. At the end of the process there are 3 possibilities:

- Contracting Parties transpose the global technical regulations into their national law without amendments;
- Contracting Parties transpose the global technical regulations into their national law with some amendments;
- Contracting Parties decided not to transpose the global technical regulations into their national law.

22. In addition to the annual report, the Contracting Parties shall provide to the secretariat the final solution they adopted concerning the transposition of the global technical regulations into their national/regional law.

22. The Agreement also stipulates that the information provided by the Contracting Parties shall be publicly available. The secretariat fulfils this mandate by posting the reports on the website of the World Forum and by elaborating, three times per year, a document containing the status of the Agreement and of the global technical regulations established in the Global Registry.

23. In the area of the infrastructure agreements. Since the entry into force of the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) in 1993 and the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC) in 1989, the secretariat, in line with decisions of the ITC and its Working Party on
Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24), has undertaken inventories of existing AGTC and AGC minimum standards and parameters. In the 1990 and early 2000s, data were collected via questionnaires for the years 1992 and 1997 and published in the so-called “Yellow Book” series.

24. In October 2006 the secretariat launched a web tool, developed and maintained by the Transport Division, that replaced the previous paper based monitoring systems and now provides on-line access to information in accordance with user requirements for all rail and combined transport lines as well as for minimum infrastructure standards and parameters as stipulated in the AGTC and AGC Agreements (http://unece.unog.ch/wp24/agtc.aspx).

25. The objective of this electronic AGTC and AGC monitoring system is to provide consistent, objective and internationally comparable information on the performance of the pan-European rail and combined transport networks and to allow comparisons between the actual infrastructure parameters and the target values defined in the AGTC and AGC Agreements.

26. At present, the on-line system covers 31 countries and 24 infrastructure parameters, such as number of railway tracks, loading gauge, maximum authorized axle load, train length and weight, operating speed, minimum platform and siding length in stations, capacity bottlenecks, etc. Information is available in the form of data files and charts allowing easy interpretation and comparisons between countries and sections of lines.

27. In reviewing the new on-line system in 2006, the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics felt that this web-based system was an important first step in effectively monitoring the implementation of the AGC and AGTC Agreements at national levels and could serve as an example for other conventions and agreements in this field, such as AGR (E-roads) and AGN (inland water transport). This would then allow comparisons along important transport corridors covering all inland transport modes at a pan-European level.

28. It was noted however that, at present, important data gaps on a number of important lines in some countries existed and the secretariat was requested to fill-in these gaps on a priority basis. Concerned Contracting Parties were invited to cooperate with the secretariat in this respect. In a second phase, data coverage could be extended to all 41 minimum standards stipulated in the AGTC Agreement, to cover all Euro-Asian land transport links and to provide, to the extent possible, time series data allowing for identification of developments over time along such links. The Working Party also felt that the implementation of transport recommendations and resolutions could be monitored in a similar manner (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/113, paras. 28-31).

29. Such monitoring systems could become an important tool in determining the application of the technical and performance provisions enshrined in UNECE transport agreements at the national level and in measuring progress in achieving the projected target values. However, such a publicly available on-line tool also provides easy access to a wealth of information that might be useful for policy makers, researchers and the private sector to determine the performance and capabilities of international transport lines at the pan-European level.

30. It must however be stressed that the provision of such monitoring services come at a cost. Its development, but more importantly its maintenance requires considerable resources on the side of the secretariat and, in particular, at the country level in providing timely the required data and information. In view of past experiences, caution must be expressed as to the ability and
capabilities of countries (Contracting Parties) to furnish the required amount of data and information on a regular basis.

31. In the **border crossing facilitation** area, the TIR and Harmonization Conventions are the most relevant. TIR is a rare example of a Convention having a permanent built-in monitoring mechanism, the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB), established in 1999. In the Harmonization Convention, UNECE is mandated to monitor the implementation of the new Annex 8 on road transport. With regard to one element of Annex 8, i.e. weighing practices and international weight certificate WP.30 agreed at its February 2009 meeting to launch a questionnaire based review of the implementation. This will be done in cooperation with SC.1. At the same time, monitoring should be extended to cover the rest of the Convention. In this regard WP.30 will benefit from the joint OSCE-UNECE project on border crossing best practices and particularly its chapter that will offer a simplified methodology to measure the performance of border crossing services. The proposed methodology will be reviewed and discussed by WP.30 and if approved this could be a new powerful way to monitor the implementation of the Harmonisation agreement by the contracting parties. In addition, border crossing waiting times are being monitored at selected road border crossing points by the International Road Transport Union (IRU), and at selected rail border crossing points by the International Union of Railways UIC.

**Conclusions**

32. Out of the 57 legal instruments in transport under the responsibility of UNECE some have not entered into force and some have a limited relevance. It is mostly due to the fact that a lot of agreements are dated back to 1950's and 1960's. At the same time, some of them have become global or have embarked on a global coverage. In their case implementation monitoring, as well as related technical assistance requires additional resources and a new type of cooperation with the other Regional Commissions.

33. It would be quite desirable and necessary that UNECE has the capacity and the mandate to monitor the implementation of its legal instruments. However, scarcity of resources and tools to carry it is quite often the reason for a lack of full and effective monitoring system. Another factor, which should be taken in to account when considering more comprehensive monitoring of the implementation of the legal instruments, is the actual character of many legal instruments. In many cases, the UNECE transport legal instruments do not have the relevant provisions which would mandate the secretariat to undertake the monitoring exercise in regular and comprehensive fashion.

34. Contributions from the private sector (clients, NGO's) which could strengthen the capacity and resources of the secretariat to enhance the monitoring of the implementation of legal instruments are therefore welcome. Usual practice of conducting surveys should be complemented with performance measurement through indicators/benchmarks which need to be developed. To this end, more intensive use of consultants could be envisaged, subject to the availability of funds.

35. Regional advisers could play an indispensable role in the promotion of the legal instruments through organisation of the relevant training, capacity-building and advisory activities. Facts-finding missions can also be useful. Given a large number of UNECE transport legal instruments introduction of a second regional advisor would, no doubt, significantly
strengthen the capacity of the secretariat to provide support and carry out monitoring of the implementation of the legal instruments.

36. Given the different character of transport legal instruments and variety of ways in which they are administered, it would seem appropriate that the Inland Transport Committee requests all his subsidiary organs, particularly those acting as administrative bodies of international legal instruments, to consider the most appropriate mechanisms which would ensure the adequate monitoring of the implementation of their respective legal instruments. In this way, each administrative committee would be able to develop the most appropriate methodology and monitoring instrument to not only ensure systematic monitoring of the implementation of a legal instrument, but also to strengthen the responsibility and role of Governments in implementation of these instruments through national legislation.

37. In light of the above the Inland Transport Committee is recommended to make the following decision:

   a/ all the subsidiary bodies should review and further improve their implementation monitoring mechanisms during the year of 2009;

   b/ the secretariat will prepare a detailed status report for the ITC in 2010.
UNECE legal instruments in transport

Number of ratifications, accessions and definite signatures
(in brackets – situation as of 11 February 2009)

Transport Infrastructures

1. Declaration on the Construction of Main International Traffic Arteries, 1950 (27)
2. European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR), 1975 (37)
3. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC), 1985 (27)
6. European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN), 1996 (15)

Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals

7. Convention on Road Traffic, 1949 (93)
8. Convention on Road Traffic, 1968 (68)
10. Protocol on Road Signs and Signals, 1949 (38)
11. Convention on Road Signs and Signals, 1968 (58)
12. European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968), 1971 (30)
15. European Agreement on Road Markings, 1957 (18)
16. Protocol on Road Markings, Additional to the European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Signs and Signals, 1973 (25)
17. Agreement on Minimum Requirements for the Issue and Validity of Driving Permits (APC), 1975 (7)
**Road Vehicles**

18. Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or be used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions, 1958 (48)

19. Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspections, 1997 (11)

20. Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or be used on Wheeled Vehicles, 1998 (31)

**Other Legal Instruments related to Road Transport**

(a) *Working Conditions*

21. European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR), 1970 (49)

**Article 12 – Measures of enforcement of the Agreement** –

*The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe shall issue a report very two years on the application by Contracting Parties of paragraph 1 of the present article. (para. 1. Each Contracting Party shall adopt all appropriate measures to ensure observance of the provisions of this Agreement, in particular by an adequate level of roadside checks and checks performed on the premises of undertakings annually covering a large and representative proportion of drivers, undertakings and vehicles of all transport categories coming within the scope of this Agreement.)*

(b) *Taxation*


23. Convention on the Taxation of Road Vehicles engaged in International Passenger Transport, 1956 (20)


(c) *Private Law*


27. Additional Protocol to the CMR concerning the electronic consignment note (e-CMR), 2008 (1)


29. Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Passengers and Luggage by Road (CVR), 1978 (1)

(d) Economic Regulations


Inland Water Transport


34. Convention relating to the Limitation of the Liability of Owners of Inland Navigation Vessels (CLN), 1973 (1)

35. Protocol to the Convention relating to the Limitation of the Liability of Owners of Inland Navigation Vessels (CLN), 1978 (0)


37. Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Passengers and Luggage by Inland Waterways (CVN), 1978 (0)

Border Crossing Facilitation

38. Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring, 1954 (78)

39. Additional Protocol to the Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring, relating to the importation of tourist publicity documents and material, 1954 (73)

40. Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, 1954 (80)


42. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention), 1975 (68)

43. Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation for Private Use of Aircraft and Pleasure Boats, 1956 (26)
44. Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles, 1956 (41)

45. International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Passengers and Baggage carried by Rail, 1952 (10)

46. International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Goods Carried by Rail, 1952 (12)

47. Customs Convention concerning Spare Parts Used for Repairing Europ Wagons, 1958 (9)

48. Customs Convention on Containers, 1956 (44)

49. Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 (37)

50. European Convention on Customs Treatment of Pallets Used in International Transport, 1960 (30)


52. Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport, 1994 (14)

**Transport of Dangerous Goods**

53. European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), 1957 (44)

54. Protocol amending article 1 (a), article 14 (1) and article 14 (3) (b) of the European Agreement of 30 September 1957 concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), 1993 (32)

55. Convention on Civil Liability for Damage caused during Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, Rail and Inland Navigation Vessels (CRTD), 1989 (1)

56. European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterway (ADN), 2000 (10)

**Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs**

57. Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be Used for such Carriage (ATP), 1970 (45)