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Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings

Eighth session

Geneva, 1-2 June 2016

Report of the Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossing on its eighth session

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I. Attendance

1. The Group of Experts on Safety at Level Crossing (GE.1) held its eighth session in Geneva from 1-2 June 2016, chaired by Mr. Kevin Boyd (United Kingdom). Representatives of the following UNECE member States participated: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

II. Adoption of the Agenda (agenda item 1)

2. Due to the absence of the Chair and temporary unavailability of the Vice-Chair, the Group of Experts (GE.1) elected Mr. K. Boyd (United Kingdom) to chair the meeting. The experts thanked Mr. Boyd for taking up this function and for his efficient and effective presiding.

3. GE.1 adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/GE.1/18) with the understanding that the session would only focus on discussing Part I of the final report.

III. Programme of Work – Development of a road/rail interface strategy with Recommendations (agenda item 2)

4. GE.1 considered the draft version of Part I of the final report (Informal document No. 1, June 2016) as prepared by the Chair with the support of the secretariat. The draft contains sections on:

(a) Safety performance at level crossings in UNECE member countries and other selected countries;

(b) Data on safety at level crossings in UNECE member countries and other selected countries;

(c) Assessment of costs of level crossings accidents in UNECE member countries and other selected countries;

(d) Use of enforcement by UNECE member countries and other selected countries to prevent unsafe conditions at level crossings;

(e) Analysis of human factors in UNECE member countries and other selected countries to prevent unsafe conditions at level crossings; and

(f) Level crossing infrastructure and technology in UNECE member countries and other selected countries to prevent unsafe conditions at level crossings.

5. GE.1 provided detailed comments suggesting changes to specific sections or comments on how to improve specific figures in the draft report. These have been incorporated into the draft version of the report. The experts also suggested removing some of the figures. For some sections, e.g. the section on level crossing infrastructure and technology, GE.1 suggested introducing pictures or drawings of certain level crossing layouts or technology. Experts were requested to provide the secretariat with pictures and drawings for the report. GE.1 also agreed to include boxes in the report that would inform about good practice or specific cases contributing to unsafe conditions at level crossings. Experts agreed to send the text for the boxes to the secretariat.

6. GE.1 agreed that part I of the final report should be supplemented with section on prevailing legislation for safety at level crossings and with sections on the use of

management including risk management and on education for preventing unsafe conditions at level crossings. The section on education should contain information for children general awareness-raising campaigns and also specific training initiatives for drivers. The section on human factors should be modified to focus on human factors research and investigation as a basis for formulating effective accidents mitigation measures whether through technology or education.

7. GE.1 also agreed that its proposal for the amendment of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals related to level crossings, as it was discussed at the sixth session, should be finalized and submitted to its subsequent session as a formal document. GE.1 invited the experts, initiators of the amendment proposal, to work together with the secretariat and issue the proposal as a formal document at the subsequent session.

IV. Other Business (agenda item 3)

8. The secretariat briefed GE.1 that it passed over a request to the Group of Experts on Sign and Signals, in particular: to propose a new design for a symbol representing a modern train, to consider removing the sign with the symbol of gates (A, 25) as well as to propose a sign for breaking gates in case of being trapped at a level crossing.

9. There was no consensus between the experts on signs and signals whether the sign for breaking gates can be considered as part of the road sign code. Nonetheless, the Group of Experts on Road Sign and Signals would discuss this request further at its next session (1 and 2 September 2016).

10. The expert from Finland reiterated the invitation to all GE.1 participants to attend: (i) ILCAD Conference that will be jointly hosted by Latvian railways on 10 June 2016 in Riga and by Operation Lifesaver (Estonia) on 11 June 2016 in Tallinn (www.ilcad.org/ILCAD-2016.html), and (ii) the Global Level Crossing and Trespass Prevention Symposium (GLXS) that will be held in Helsinki on 12-16 June 2016, hosted by TRAFI (www.trafi.fi/en/GLXS2016).

V. Date and Place of Next Meeting (agenda item 4)

11. GE.1 decided to establish a drafting group for the final report to support the Chair and the secretariat in preparing it. Experts from Austria, Finland and Sweden volunteered to join the group. The expert from United Kingdom would confirm his availability to the secretariat at a later stage. The draft final report should be shared among experts in the beginning of September to collect comments for consideration by the drafting group. The drafting group will meet on 15 (afternoon) and 16 September 2016 in Geneva, at a meeting slot scheduled for GE.1, to work on part I and part II of the report and to consolidate its final version.

12. GE.1 agreed that the subsequent, ninth, session would be moved from 21 and 22 November 2016, as initially planned, to the week of 12 December 2016. The secretariat was requested to confirm the specific dates for the ninth session as soon as possible.

VI. Adoption of the Report (agenda item 5)

13. GE.1 adopted the report of its eighth session.
