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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics

Fifty-sixth session

Geneva, 21–22 October 2013

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the fifty-sixth session^{1, 2}

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
starting at 2.30 p.m. on Monday, 21 October 2013

I. Provisional agenda

Note: The session of the Working Party (WP.24) will be held back-to-back with the sixty-seventh session of the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) (23–25 October 2013). Details and documentation for the session of SC.2 are available at www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html.

¹ For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of all relevant documents to the session. There will be no documentation available in the conference room. Before the session, documents may be downloaded from the UNECE Transport Division's website www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html. On an exceptional basis, documents may also be obtained by e-mail (wp.24@unece.org) or by fax (+41 22 917 0039). During the session, official documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.337, third floor, Palais des Nations).

² Delegates are requested to complete the registration form available for download at the UNECE Transport Division's website www.unece.org/trans/registfr.html. It should be transmitted to the UNECE secretariat no later than one week prior to the session by e-mail (wp.24@unece.org) or by fax (+41 22 917 0039). Upon arrival at the Palais des Nations, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate (14, Avenue de la Paix). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone (ext. 740 30). For a map of the Palais des Nations and other useful information, see website www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm.

1. Adoption of the Agenda.
2. New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics:
 - (a) Trends and performance in the intermodal transport and logistics industry;
 - (b) Activities of the European Commission in intermodal transport and logistics;
 - (c) Pan-European developments in intermodal transport and transport policies;
 - (d) Sustainable development and intermodal transport.
3. National policy measures to promote intermodal transport.
4. Follow-up to the 2012 Theme: Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS): Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport.
5. 2013 Theme: Weights and Dimensions of intermodal transport units in a pan-European context.
6. Selection of a theme for substantive discussions in 2014.
7. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC):
 - (a) Status of the AGTC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals;
 - (b) Amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGTC network);
 - (c) Amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards).
8. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement:
 - (a) Status of the Protocol;
 - (b) Amendment proposals.
9. Revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for packing of intermodal transport units (cargo transport units).
10. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies.
11. Election of officers.
12. Draft programme of work, biennial evaluation and work plan:
 - (a) Draft programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2014–2015;
 - (b) Draft work plan for 2014–2018.
13. Date and venue of next session.
14. Summary of decisions.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/132

2. New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics

(a) Trends and performance in the intermodal transport and logistics industry

The Working Party may wish to exchange views on past and future trends and developments in intermodal transport and logistics in UNECE member countries on the basis of information provided by the International Union of Combined Road/Rail Transport Companies (UIRR), the International Union of Railways (UIC) and other international organizations and industries.

Documentation: Informal documents available at the session

(b) Activities of the European Commission in intermodal transport and logistics

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for future work of the European Commission (DG MOVE) on intermodal transport and logistics.

(c) Pan-European developments in intermodal transport and transport policies

A national peer review on intermodal transport in Turkey had been prepared under the auspices of the International Transport Forum (OECD/ITF 2009) (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, paras. 12–13). The Working Party may wish to be informed of the results of a project undertaken in 2012 by the Turkish Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications in cooperation with its counterpart in Spain entitled “Strengthening intermodal transport in Turkey”.

Other participants are expected to report briefly on recent developments in their countries, including new Government policies and business measures affecting intermodal transport.

Audio-visual aids and short written documentation would be welcomed and could be distributed by the secretariat, if received in time before the session. Delegations wishing to make presentations should inform the secretariat, at least, a few days before the session.

Documentation: Informal documents available at the session

(d) Sustainable development and intermodal transport

The Working Party may wish to take note of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio de Janeiro, 20–22 June 2012) which assigns a central role to transport and mobility in sustainable development and supports the development of energy efficient multi-modal transport systems (A/CONF.216/L.1, paras. 132–133).

The Working Party will be informed of the results of the United Nations project For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS) developing, on a global level, a monitoring and assessment tool for carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in inland transport, including a policy converter to facilitate climate change mitigation.

The Working Party may also wish to consider and comment on a secretariat document on diesel engines exhausts and its impact on air pollution (Informal document WP.24 No. 1 (2013)).

Documentation: Informal document WP.24 No. 1 (2013) and other informal documents.

3. National policy measures to promote intermodal transport

As decided by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC), the Working Party continues the work carried out by the former European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in (a) monitoring and analysis of national measures to promote intermodal transport and (b) monitoring enforcement and review of the ECMT Consolidated Resolution on Combined Transport (ECE/TRANS/192, para. 90).

In 2012, the secretariat established a new website providing online information on 11 national policy measures to promote intermodal transport. Comparable information for 16 UNECE member countries is currently available on-line at: <http://apps.unece.org/NatPolWP24/> (English, French and Russian).

New and updated information will be issued (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/4) and inserted onto the website by the secretariat.

The Working Party may wish to review this online application and provide guidance for further improvements and updating of the underlying database.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/4

4. Follow-up to the 2012 Theme: Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS): Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport

The Working Party will be informed about the conclusions of a follow-up workshop hosted by the Government of Belgium at Brussels on 15 and 16 May 2013 (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/3). The Workshop concluded the discussions on the 2012 theme: Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) by the Working Party as reflected in its report ECE/TRANS/WP.24/131, paras. 26–34 and document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/1.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/3, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/131, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/1

5. 2013 Theme: Weights and dimensions of intermodal transport units in a pan-European context

As decided by the Working Party at its last session and in line with its road map on future work and operation (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/131, paras. 35–36; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, paras. 18–22 and 40–41), the theme for substantive discussion at the present session is “Weights and dimensions of intermodal transport units in a pan-European context”. The discussions have been prepared by an informal group of experts and will be introduced by presentations, followed by a moderated discussion.

Since October 2006, the Working Party has regularly reviewed permissible weights and dimensions of intermodal transport units (containers, swap bodies and semi-trailers) suitable for intermodal transport and able to be carried without restrictions on the pan-European road, rail and inland water networks (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/130, para. 61 and Corr.1).

Based on various secretariat reports, the Working Party also considered from 2008 the impact of “mega-trucks” with a maximum length of 25.5 m and weights of up to 60 tonnes on the European road network and on intermodal transport. It noted that such road vehicles have been permitted for many years already in several, mainly Scandinavian countries and that trials with such long and heavy vehicles are currently under way in some other UNECE member countries. Representatives of some UNECE member countries repeatedly voiced their concerns that such “mega-trucks” would be detrimental to the development of intermodal transport and could lead to a massive shift from rail to road for long-distance transport, incompatible with sustainable transport policies (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/130, para. 60 and Corr.1).

Furthermore, the Working Party, at its last session, noted that within the European Union (EU), Council Directives 96/53/EC (maximum weight and dimensions of road vehicles) and 97/27/EC (masses and dimensions of motor vehicles and their trailers – type approval) were under review and could possibly lead to greater permissible width and lengths of road motor vehicles and vehicle combinations (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/130, para. 62 and Corr.1).

Since modifications in the permissible weights and dimensions of intermodal transport units would have considerable consequences for investments in infrastructure and rolling stock as well as for the operation of intermodal transport services by rail and inland waterways, the Working Party may wish to be informed about and consider the following issues:

- Latest developments on permissible weights and dimensions in road and rail transport in the EU and in other UNECE member States applicable, nationally, internationally and for terminal hauls (intermodal transport);
- Latest developments in container transport by sea and inland waterways;
- Role of UNECE Governments to safeguard transparent and stable framework conditions concerning weights and dimensions of intermodal transport units.

A background document on this topic has been prepared by an informal group of experts in cooperation with the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/1). The Working Party may wish to draw conclusions and may, in particular, reflect on concrete follow-up activities by international organizations, including the Working Party.

The programme of the 2013 theme discussions with more detailed information on topics and speakers will be available in September 2013.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/1

6. Selection of a theme for substantive discussions in 2014

The Working Party may wish to decide on a theme for its session in 2014. At its last session, the Working Party felt that possible themes for future sessions could be “city logistics and intermodal transport” and “the role of freight forwarders in intermodal transport chains” (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/131, para. 35).

7. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)

(a) Status of the AGTC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals

The AGTC Agreement has currently 32 Contracting Parties.³ Detailed information on the AGTC Agreement, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the Agreement (ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.6), a map on the AGTC network, an inventory of compliance with AGTC standards as well as relevant Depositary Notifications are available at www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

In 2011, the Working Party adopted amendment proposals to Annex I of the AGTC Agreement modifying names of cities and border crossing points in Kazakhstan (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, paras. 34–35 and annex). These proposals have not yet been transmitted to the depositary of the AGTC Agreement due to other pending amendment proposals that, once adopted, could then be consolidated into a comprehensive package of amendment proposals.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.6

(b) Amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGTC network)

The Working Party will be informed about the status of amendment proposals considered at its fifty-second session. For reference, see ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1 for Armenia, Georgia, Hungary and Turkmenistan and ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4 for Denmark, Germany and Sweden (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, paras. 29–31).

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1

(c) Amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards)

The Working Party may wish to recall that in 2009 Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement that had responded to a secretariat survey on the relevance of the minimum infrastructure and performance standards and parameters in annexes III and IV to the AGTC Agreement, had felt that some of them might need to be reviewed and updated (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/123, para. 59). As a follow-up, the secretariat in cooperation with an ad hoc expert group prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2 (AGC/AGTC technical parameters) and document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3 (AGTC operational standards).

In 2011, at its joint session with the Working Party on Rail Transport, the Working Party reviewed the minimum infrastructure standards contained in annex II of the AGC Agreement and annex III of the AGTC Agreement (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2). Both Working Parties agreed that the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) applicable in the European Union were generally in line with the present minimum AGC and AGTC technical characteristics, but contained at least 20 more parameters that were considered essential for trans-European rail systems and had been prepared by the European Railway Agency (ERA) under the so-called Interoperability Directive 2008/57/EC. The scope of these TSIs went, however, well beyond the objective and the minimum requirements enshrined in the pan-European AGC and AGTC Agreements.

³ Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

Thus, all TSI parameters may not necessarily need to be considered for inclusion into the AGC and AGTC Agreements (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, paras. 37–41).

In 2012, based on secretariat note ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/5 containing also information provided by the European Commission, the Working Party noted that the technical AGC and AGTC standards were partly based on outdated references and definitions contained in the mandatory European TSIs and European (EN) standards applicable in the European Union. It invited experts to prepare, in cooperation with the secretariat, appropriate amendment proposals to the AGTC Agreement, in close cooperation with the Working Party on Rail Transport (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/131, paras. 41–44).

No expert advice on these issues has yet come forward. The Working Party may, therefore, wish to revert once more to this issue and decide on the need and the procedure to revise the technical infrastructure parameters contained in annexes III and II of the AGTC and AGC Agreements respectively (see ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/5, paras. 7–15). In addition, the Working Party may wish to review the status of the AGTC operational standards (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3) and decide on their possible update.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/5, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3

8. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement

The objective of the Protocol is to make container and ro-ro transport on inland waterways and coastal routes in Europe more efficient and attractive to customers. The Protocol establishes a legal framework that lays down a coordinated plan for developing intermodal transport services on pan-European inland waterways and coastal routes, in line with those in the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN Agreement), based on specific internationally agreed parameters and standards.

The Protocol identifies 14,700 km of E waterways and transshipment terminals that are important for regular and international intermodal transport in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland and Ukraine. It also stipulates technical and operational minimum requirements of inland waterways and terminals in ports that are required for competitive container and ro-ro transport services.

In 2012, the secretariat published the second revised edition of the so-called “Blue Book” containing an inventory of the European E waterway and ports network (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/144/Rev.2). The revised “Blue Book” as well as the latest UNECE map of European inland waterways will be available at the session.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.3/144/Rev.2

(a) Status of the Protocol

The Working Party may wish to recall that the Protocol to the AGTC Agreement had come into force on 29 October 2009 and had been signed by 15 countries. So far, 9 countries have

ratified the Protocol.⁴ See ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1 and 2 for the text of the Protocol.⁵ Detailed information, including the text of the Protocol and relevant Depository Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.⁶

The Working Party may recall that ITC had encouraged concerned Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement to accede to the Protocol as soon as possible. It may, therefore, wish to provide guidance on how to facilitate accession of further countries.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1 and 2

(b) Amendment proposals

The Working Party may recall that the ITC had requested the Working Party to consider and decide on amendment proposals to the Protocol that had already been submitted (ECE/TRANS/200, para. 93, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paras. 46–50).

Accordingly, in 2010 the secretariat had prepared ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6 containing a consolidated list of amendment proposals submitted by Austria, Bulgaria, France, Hungary and Romania (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117, para. 58 and TRANS/WP.24/97, para. 23). These proposals also take account of the results of a survey undertaken by the secretariat on the existing infrastructure standards contained in the Protocol (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/111, paras. 31–33) as well as of changes in the geo-political situation in Europe since adoption of the Protocol in January 1997. Apart from adoption of an amendment proposal by Austria (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, para. 50) in 2010, decisions on the other amendment proposals have not yet been taken due to lack of information on the current status of these proposals (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, para. 47; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 48–51).

Based on information still to be provided by Bulgaria, France, Hungary and Romania, the Working Party may wish to consider the remaining amendment proposals, including those related to geo-political changes and a change of name of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6, paras. 11–12) with a view to their formal adoption in accordance with articles 13, 14 and 15 of the Protocol.

In June 2012, the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3) had invited WP.24 to revise annexes I and II of the Protocol to bring them in line with the revised AGN Agreement (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/82, para. 10). In October 2012, the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) adopted a large number of amendment proposals to the AGN Agreement pertaining to inland waterways and inland navigation ports (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/193/Add.1). These amendments entered into force on 8 July 2013.

Following consideration of secretariat note ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/4 at its last session, the Working Party will be informed by the secretariat on how to possibly align annexes I and II of the Protocol with the revised AGN Agreement.

Documentation: Informal document available at the session, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6

⁴ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland.

⁵ It should be noted that only the text kept in custody by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as depositary of the AGTC Agreement, constitutes the authoritative text of the Agreement.

⁶ www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

9. Revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for packing of intermodal transport units (cargo transport units)

In 1996, the Working Party finalized, with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Office (ILO), a set of international guidelines for the safe packing of cargo in freight containers and vehicles covering also the requirements of land transport modes (TRANS/WP.24/R.83 and Add.1). The guidelines were to be updated and supplemented by additional elements, such as provisions on fumigation (TRANS/WP.24/71, paras. 32–36). In 1997, ITC had approved these guidelines (ECE/TRANS/119, paras. 124–126).

In March 2009, the Working Party agreed to contribute to a review and update of the guidelines initiated by IMO (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/123, paras. 45–47). In November 2011, the Working Party adopted the terms of reference of a Group of Experts on this subject (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/5) and endorsed the proposal to elevate the guidelines to a non-mandatory code of practice.

In 2012 the Group of Experts held two sessions (19–20 April 2012 and 15–17 October 2012). A first draft of the code of practice was completed and has been transmitted to IMO for review. A final session of the Group of Expert is scheduled for 4–5 November 2013. A secretariat note containing a summary of progress made by the Group of Experts is available for consideration by the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/2).

The Working Party may review the draft code of practice and propose modifications and/or amendments for transmission to the Group of Experts. The draft code of practice as transmitted to IMO is available for review by the Working Party at: www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/doc/2013/wp24/DSC-18-8-Draft-CTU-Code.pdf.

Further information on the activities of the Group of Experts is available at: www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/intro.html

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/2

10. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities undertaken by the ITC and its subsidiary bodies (ECE/TRANS/224), in particular, the:

- Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) and its activities on Euro-Asian transport links (EATL) and the impact of climate change on transport networks (ECE/TRANS/WP.5/54) – Website: www.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5.html;
- Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) on the revision of the AGC Agreement (see also agenda items 7(b) and 7 (c)) and on progress made towards unified railway law (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/219) – Website: www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html;
- Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) on progress made in developing the European inland waterway network and on harmonization of professional requirements in inland navigation (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/194) – Website: www.unece.org/trans/main/sc3/sc3.html.

11. Election of officers

The Working Party may wish to elect a Chair and possibly (a) Vice-Chair(s) for its session in 2014.

12. Draft programme of work, biennial evaluation and work plan

(a) Draft programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2014–2015

In accordance with the decision of the ITC to review its programme of work every two years, the next review being 2014 (ECE/TRANS/200, para. 120), the Working Party is invited to review and adopt its programme of work for 2014–2015 as well as the relevant parameters allowing for its biennial evaluation. The draft programme of work for 2014–2015 and the expected accomplishment are contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/5.

The terms of reference of the Working Party adopted at its session on 3 November 2011 and approved by the ITC on 1 March 2012 are contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/9.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/5

(b) Draft work plan for 2014–2018

As requested by the ITC Bureau on 20 June 2011, the Working Party should review and approve its traditional 4-year work plan for 2014–2018, in addition to the mandatory programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2014–2015 (see above).

In document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/6 the secretariat has reproduced the work plan adopted by the Working Party on 3 November 2011 (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, para. 69) and approved the ITC on 1 March 2012 (ECE/TRANS/224, para. 94), indicating also proposed deletions, modifications and additions, as appropriate.

The Working Party may wish to review its work plan for 2014–2018 for adoption and transmission to the ITC.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2013/6

13. Date and venue of next session

The Working Party may wish to decide on the date for its session in 2014.

The secretariat has tentatively scheduled the fifty-seventh session for 10–11 November 2014 at the Palais des Nations (Geneva). This session could be held back-to-back with SC.3 or another subsidiary body of the ITC.

14. Summary of decisions

In line with established practice (TRANS/WP.24/63, para. 54) and in accordance with the decision of the ITC (ECE/TRANS/156, para. 6), at the end of the session the Chair will make a brief summary of the decisions taken. Following the session, the secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair, will establish a report on the outcome of the session for transmission to the ITC at its next session (25–27 February 2014).

III. Tentative timetable

Monday, 21 October	WP.24	2.30 – 5.30 p.m.	Items 1–5
Tuesday, 22 October	WP.24	9.30 – 12.30 a.m.	Items 5–8
	WP.24	2.30 – 5.30 p.m.	Items 9–14
