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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Rail Transport

Revisions Committee to the Model Rules on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock

Second session

Geneva, 2–4 September 2024

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Workshop on integrating the URVIS number into digital solutions

Background information to the Workshop on integrating the URVIS number into digital solutions

Note by the secretariat

Background

1. The Luxembourg Rail Protocol to the Cape Town Convention on Mobile Equipment (henceforth the Protocol) and the Model Rules for the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock (henceforth the Model Rules) have been created to facilitate investment in railway rolling stock. The key instrument by which the Protocol and the Model Rules are implemented is through the assignment of the Unique Rail Vehicle Identification System (URVIS) number to rolling stock that is different from the running number that is usually placed by national railways on rolling stock.
2. The Model Rules have defined how this URVIS number is to be affixed to the rolling stock through detailed provisions in article 5 and in appendix 1 (<https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/ECE-TRANS-337-Rev.1.pdf>). This identification is to be done in physical form with a plate as described in the abovementioned provisions.
3. During the preparation of the Model Rules, within the work carried out by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Group of Experts on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock, the possibility of having other electronic and/or digital solutions for the permanent identification of the rolling stock were discussed at the first and second sessions of the Group (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/PIRRS/2020/2 and ECE/TRANS/SC.2/PIRRS/2020/8). Experts noted the importance of having these types of solutions but also noted that a physical solution was the priority and as such other solutions would be left for future work.
4. Now that the Protocol is in force (see ECE/TRANS/SC.2/RC.1/2024/3) and manufacturers, operators, financiers and other industry stakeholders are considering how best to implement the provisions it is important to come back to this discussion and start to review

how best to introduce digital solutions into the permanent identification of railway rolling stock.

5. This workshop will bring together experts from across the sector and beyond to what possible digital solutions exist for the permanent identification of railway rolling stock, how these technologies can co-exist with other railway technology, how they would interact with other complementary regulatory requirements and the safety critical nature of all technological solutions on the railways. Experts will present current experience in this field, possible options going forward as well as potential best practice solutions to draw on from other sectors. Participants will also be asked to consider possible next steps for the activities of the Revisions Committee in this area and how to consider updating the Model Rules if necessary.

6. A detailed programme for the workshop will be provided closer to the date.
