



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

TRANS/SC.2/1999/6
15 July 1999

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Rail Transport

(Fifty-third session, 6-8 October 1999,
agenda item (c))

FACILITATION OF BORDER CROSSING IN INTERNATIONAL RAIL TRANSPORT

Transmitted by the Governments of Armenia, the Czech Republic,
Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, The former Yugoslav
Republic of Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia,
Spain and the United Kingdom

Please note that the distribution of documentation for the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) is no longer "restricted". Accordingly, the secretariat has adopted a new numbering system whereby all working documents other than Reports and Agendas will be numbered as follows: TRANS/SC.2/year/serial number. Reports, Agendas, resolutions and major publications will retain their previous numbering system (i.e. TRANS/SC.2/189).

Note: Since 1994, the Working Party has been annually monitoring the progress made in the facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport through the items reproduced below (TRANS/SC.2/180, para. 38 and TRANS/SC.2/182, para. 29). Accordingly, a number of Governments have submitted information concerning:

- (a) Average delay of passenger and goods trains at main border crossings;
- (b) The progress made (in minutes) subsequent to the implementation of measures taken by Governments (e.g., for customs, police, sanitary and phytosanitary controls) and railways (e.g., for technical controls) for passenger and freight trains to reduce the delays during border crossing;
- (c) Other measures that are envisaged in future to eliminate delays during the crossing of borders;
- (d) Succinct reports on bilateral and multilateral contacts which have taken place between Governments and railways of neighbouring countries in order to improve the crossing of borders in international rail traffic (TRANS/SC.2/188, paras. 22-27).

The information received by the secretariat is reproduced below for consideration by the Working Party.

ARMENIA

- (a) passenger and goods trains passing through border crossing at Sadakhlo and Airum stations are delayed by the Custom. The average time of custom control, an hour and 45 minutes, is regularly infringed, passenger and goods trains are delayed about 3 - 4 hours, and freight trains even several days;
- (b) to implement strict measures on simultaneous control should be taken by Governments (Georgian Government has been notified);
- (c) to eliminate train delays twenty - four - hour train technical control operators at Sadakhlo station are required; due to the low quality of the rail train speed at Sadakhlo section is low, 13 km. pass takes 50 minutes;
- (d) both Governments (Armenian and Georgian) had contacts in October, December 1998, January, March 1999 to improve the rail traffic, provide information in proper time, draw up documents properly. It gave good results.
Border crossing disagreements have decreased.

CZECH REPUBLIC

a) Approximate time that passenger and freight trains spend at border crossings:**Breslau - in the direction of Austria**

All Trains	10 Trains	14.1 minutes
of which EC/IC	8	10.4

Breslau - in the direction of Slovakia

All Trains	22 Trains	6.9 minutes
of which EC/IC	8	7.1

Horní Lideč

All Trains	12 Trains	24.2 minutes
------------	-----------	--------------

Čadca (combined with PPS of neighbouring lands)

All Trains	24	11.3 minutes
of which EC/IC	4	5.0

Petrovice u Karviné

All Trains	12	18.2 minutes
of which EC/IC	6	13.2

Děčín

All Trains	18	6.7 minutes
of which EC/IC	12	4.0

Cheb

All Trains	6	17.3 minutes
of which EC/IC	2	15.0

Furt im Wald (combined with PPS of neighbouring lands)

All Trains	4	11.0 minutes
of which EC/IC	4	11.0

Horní Dvořiště

All Trains	6	8.2 minutes
------------	---	-------------

Listed in the table below are the approximate waiting times, in 1998, of individual interstate freight trains. In the column under total time that trains waited at border crossings, appear shortened time periods for trains, which was achieved in 1996 when the Czech Republic entered into an Associate Agreements.

PPS	Integrated	Transit	Combined	Empty	Containers	RO-LA
Bohumín/Chalupki	235 -95	200 -250	603 -97	93 -92		
Petrovice u Karviné/ Zebrzydowice	190 -50	160	255 -35	160 -15	100	
Český Těšín/Zebrzydowic	190	160	255 15	150	110	
Mosty u J./Čadca	163 -89	155	340 -20	30 -108		
Horní Lideč/Lúky pod Makytou	88 -70		253 5	43 -52		
Lanžhot-Kúty	90 -60	115 -20	295 90	30 -120	115	
Breslau/Hohenau Znojmo/Relz	113	129	143 120	113	100	
Horní Dvořiště/ Summerau		70	144	96	53	20
Domažlice/Furt im Wald	100		200	100		
Cheb/Schirnding			160	100		
Vojtanov/Bad Brambach	90		100			
Děčín Main Station/Bad Schandau	110	90	205	90	175	5
Děčín East/Bad Schandau					175	

Frýdlant in Cz.Rep./Zawidow			91		90
					-30
Meziměstí/Mioszow	95	80	125	90	
	95	110	120	90	
Miedzylesie			-20		

b) The progress achieved through measures taken by individual governments (i.e. customs, police, sanitation and phytosanitary control) and railways to decrease delays for passengers and freight trains arriving at border crossings:

Since 1995, as a result of international cooperation, significant changes in border crossings have only resulted with Germany, where waiting time was avoided at the pre-border stations of Česká Kubice and Schirding due to mutual passport and customs control being conducted during the train journey, even when on the territory of the other country. Although travel time was actually shortened by about two minutes at the immediate border sections, totally----in travel time between station departure and arrival at the final destination----it made very little difference.

The waiting period for PPS trains in Germany, Austria and Poland, generally correspond to those of the EU countries. In stations where trains do not undergo engine changes the waiting times, for the upper category of EC/IC trains, is 3-5 minutes; and anywhere from 3 to 15 minutes for all others. In the event engines must be changed, the technical operation itself necessitates a longer waiting period of 15 minutes.

Regarding Slovakia, times are the same only for the Breslau-Kúty border, whereas in the PPS Čadca and Horní Lideč, where administrative officials are required on some night trains due to problems with third world travellers, the waiting time can last anywhere from 15 minutes to one hour.

The creation of border crossing stations, which combined mutual activities of both sides, have significantly shortened the waiting time of trains in these stations. By combining customs and passport control during the train's journey, border delays of passenger transport were shortened to an essential technical minimum.

c) Further measures that will take place in the future in order to decrease time delays for trains at border crossings:

The railway administration can influence the waiting periods at border crossings only through organisational and technical matters related to their activities. Basically it is only able to limit the time at border crossings for the necessary replacement of engineers on international railways, providing engines need not be changed, which amounts to about two minutes, under optimum conditions. But should engines have to be changed, the time required for this necessary operation will last 10 to 12 minutes. Another step in limiting delays would be to select some border crossings, where it is not really necessary to have long technical inspections, and take them on trust.

In the future, the waiting time for freight trains at border crossings should be shortened by the following measures:

- achieving a mutual data exchange between the Czech Railway and the Slovak Railway. At present the extremely good level of mutual exchange must also be attained in standardising reports of carriages and consignment lists. Together with Slovakia, we selected three pairs of international freight trains as a test measure to obtain the correct, total number of consignments; and after a carefully tested trial run, the gathered data will be evaluated. After we have assessed the information and then installed this system in the Mosty u Jablunkova/Čadca, Horní Lideč/Luky pod Makytou and Lanžhot/Kúty border crossings, we expect to save about 30 minutes.
- Agreements were signed with the German, Austrian, Slovak, Polish and Hungarian Railways about "Simplifying of Vignette Sticking of Trains" which has resolved the problems of additional vignette sticking for international transport at border crossings.
- Another Agreement was signed about "Conditions for Clearing Customs Using One Freight List, CIM" (to be permanently valid), and conditions were simplified so that one CIM freight list would be accepted at foreign border crossings.

The most significant prerequisite for maximum simplicity and speeding up clearance of trains at border crossings will be the Czech Republic's entry, along with its neighbouring states, into the European Union.

d) Brief reports about bilateral and multi-lateral contacts which were completed between the government and railway of your country and neighbouring countries to improve international transport during border crossings.

The bi-lateral agreements between the Railways:

- border crossings between the Czech and Polish Railway became effective with the new 1996 Agreement about Railway Border Transport between the Czech and Polish Railways.
- border crossings between the Czech Railway and Slovak Railway became effective in 1997 with the new Agreement about Railway Border Transport between the Czech and Slovak Railways.
- border crossings between the Czech and Austrian Railway became effective in 1999 with the new Agreement about Railway Border Transport between the Czech and Austrian Railway.
- In 1999 there is being prepared an amendment to the Agreement about Railway Border Transport between the Czech Railway and Germany Rail Cargo.

DENMARK

- (a) and (b) Average time spent by passenger trains at main border crossings is 10 min., and by goods trains 0 min.
- (c) and (d) For more than a year now, DSB has been co-operating with DB and SJ in a steering group and nine working groups with a view to ensure that the opening of the fixed link between Denmark and Sweden will not present traffic, staff, technical or administrative obstacles hindering border crossings.

GERMANY

- a) Average time spent by passenger and goods trains at main border crossings
- b) The progress made (in minutes) subsequent to the implementation of measures taken by Governments (e.g. for customs, police, sanitary and phytosanitary controls) and railways (e.g. for technical controls) for passenger and freight trains to reduce the delays during border crossing

The average time spent by long-distance passenger trains at border crossings is indicated in Annex 2. This table does not contain the stations Salzburg and Kufstein, since these stations are shared with ÖBB (Austrian railways), where recordings cover only the time of arrival (during transfer) or the time of departure (during acceptance).

An analogous presentation for goods transport at border crossings is not possible, since the majority of freight trains run from DB AG routes into the neighbouring country and vice versa without stopping at the border.

- c) Other measures that are envisaged in future to eliminate delays during the crossing of borders

The preconditions for contacts and talks required between the responsible ministries and other institutions to eliminate unnecessary delays during border crossing are created within the steering committees for Pan-European Corridors II, III and IV.

- d) Succinct reports on bilateral and multilateral contacts which have taken place between your Government and the railways of your country with the Governments and railways of neighbouring countries in order to improve the crossing of borders in international rail traffic

The transport ministries of Finland, Lithuania, Poland and Germany as well as the Finnish railway administration, the Lithuanian railway, the Polish state railway and Deutsche Bahn AG have concluded a Memorandum of Understanding on testing automatic change-of-gauge techniques for goods wagons under operational conditions. Goods wagons with techniques developed in Poland and Germany are to be used on regular trains running between Lithuania and Poland. Tests are to be launched still in the summer of 1999. This will create essential preconditions for uninterrupted transport by freight trains between networks with 1435 mm and 1520 mm gauges.

HUNGARY

B. /a/

7 border stations of Hungary's total of 24 are along AGC lines.

AGC line	Border station	average time spent by pass. entering/leaving pass. trains, min., 1998/1999		technological time for entering/leaving mixed freight trains, min.	
E50	Záhony	37	45	80	80
E51	Komárom	-	-	110	150
E56	Lökösháza	23	19	210 ^{1/}	240 ^{1/}
E61	Hegyeshalom	10 ^{2/}	10 ^{2/}	100	130
E69	Murakeresztúr ^{3/}	20	32	145	205
E71	Gyékényes ^{3/}	24	26	205	230
E85	Kelebia	31	30	175	215

Remarks: 1/at Curtici as common border station in Romania
2/3 minutes only for EuroCity trains
3/common border station with Croatia

B. /b/

The course of the reduction of times spent at border stations by the freight trains stopped from 1997 and turned to the opposite having increased by 20 to even 125 minutes by 1999 mostly on account of coming into force of

- the Schengen Agreement in Austria in 1997 which required a more circumspectious control of the immigrants from her neighbouring countries as well and
- the Hungarian national law of 1995 on customs requires a control at the border anyway and the Government Decree to implement this came out in 1996.

Further, phytosanitary and veterinary controls are used as practices for protectionism sometimes and in certain relations causing impediments to freight traffic, too.

These negative effects might have been counterbalanced only in part through

- the introduction of new national wide electronic database /VAMREG/ for the customs authority and its unification with the national railway company's freight information system at 14 border stations of 18 open for freight traffic, in 1998;
- cooperation with neighbouring railways to form freight trains which pass the border stations without shunting;
- implementation of the technical inspection of wagons commonly where the physical establishment permits that.

B. /c/

Short term measures are

- the revision of the technology at every border station in first half 1999 on the basis of recent developments in techniques, communication and information;

- the introduction of electronic data exchange on international freight trains approaching the border with Austrian and Slovakian railways in 1999-2000;
- attaching to the western-European international electronic control over freight trains running, in Hungarian/Austrian relation.

A long term goal is to harmonize provisions for customs and commerce with those of the Member States of the European Union in order to shorten technological times at border stations essentially.

B. /d/

Recent bilateral contact on governmental level:

- In March 1999 Transport Minister of Hungary proposed officially to his Croatian partner to insist to implement passengers' control aboard the trains in moving without delays at the border stations on both sides for this.

Contacts on the level of railway companies:

- The principle of confidence, instead of actual technical inspections from the transferor/transferee railways, is applied for certain kinds of block trains in Austrian, Croatian and Slovakian relations. The extension to transit traffic, however, is problematic because of addressing the irregularities in loading and the damages on the route.

LATVIA

(a) At the border crossings passenger trains are staying 20-45 minutes. The stop time depends on amount of passenger wagons on the trains. The transit trains do not have stops at the border crossing in the direction "Kurcums-Kārsava". In Rēzekne and Daugavpils the passengers have being inspected during their getting on or getting off a train.

For the freight trains what arrive to Latvia the procedure of border inspection and preliminary customs examination is lasting about 30 minutes at all border crossings. The freight trains what move abroad are crossing border without a stop.

(b) The full customs control for the freight trains is being realized at the station of destination on the territory of our state where the trains have being split up and reformed according to the requirements. At the stations of destination the trains spend from 3 to 4.5 hours.

(c) The preliminary freight declaration is being introduced at the freight loading places. This procedure reduces the customs control time at the stations of destination.

(d) In 1997 the inter-states agreements and inter-railways contracts with Russian Federation have been worked out. The documents in general are co-ordinated by the Ministries of Transport and Railways Administrations and have been prepared for the signing. Similar work is being carried out with other railways that have common border with Latvia.

LITHUANIA

(a)

Average time spent by passenger trains at the border crossings is 25 min.

Freight trains stop for 30 min. for the customs and border procedures at Mazeikiai, Joniskis, Obeliai, and Stasylos border stations. Departing freight trains are not being stopped and approaching trains are being stopped for 30 min. at Kena border station; after the introduction of the new train schedule, freight trains will be stopped for checks for 15 min. In addition to the customs and border control procedures, train delivery procedures are being carried out at Kybartai and Mockava border stations. The train time schedule provides for 140 min. and 3 hrs respectively for these procedures.

(b)

Passenger trains' delay time at the borders has been reduced by 15 min. and it is being reduced annually. 140 - 240 min. is required for customs, sanitary, technical and other controls, depending on the train category and the direction of traffic. Because of the inadequate infrastructure of Mazeikiai, Joniskis, Obeliai, Stasylos and Kena stations, and following to the Agreement among the railways, Customs Department and other State institutions, most of the border operations is being carried out not at the border stations, but at Bugeniai, Radviliskis and Vaidotai shunting stations (33 - 150 km from the State border).

In order to reduce freight trains' delay time at the border stations and according to the agreement with the railway administrations of the Polish Republic and the Russian Federation, train delivery operations are being carried out by the common Lithuanian Railways (LG) and Polish Railways (PKP) brigades, at Kybartai and Sovetsk stations - by common LG and RZD brigades.

(c)

In order to reduce passenger trains' delay time, negotiations are under way with Customs Department of LR and the Police Department of LR concerning train control procedures during the travel time.

In order to reduce freight trains' delays at the border stations, the broader use of computer programs and systems in future is envisaged.

(d)

Lithuania, Belarus, Latvia, Poland and the Russian Federation have signed an interdepartmental agreement "On the Crossings of State Border by the Passenger Trains". The objective of this agreement is to simplify the work of customs, police and railway services at the border stations.

In order to facilitate the crossings of border by the freight trains, the drafts of the bilateral international agreements on border crossings between

Lithuanian Railways and neighbouring countries have been prepared. It is envisaged to sign these agreements in the nearest future.

The OSZhD Committee regularly organizes the international meetings on the facilitation of border crossings with the interested countries and organizations.

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

(a)

AVERAGE TIME SPENT BY GOODS TRAINS
AT MAIN BORDER CROSSINGS

Stations	Transit(min.)			Import(min.)			Export (min.)			Total (min.) (average)			
	railways	custom	vele- rinary	fito-sa- nitary	railways	custom	vele- rinary	fito-sa- nitary	railways		custom	vele- rinary	fito-sa- nitary
Tabanovci/Trubarevo	135			50	90	60			60	170	130		130
Gevgelija	124			40	85	60			160	120		40	120

remark: all activities are parallels

AVERAGE TIME SPENT BY PASSENGER TRAINS
AT MAIN BORDER CROSSINGS

Stations	Transit(min.)			International-exit(min.)			International-enter (min.)			Total (min.) (average)
	railways	custom	poli- ce	railways	custom	poli- ce	railways	custom	poli- ce	
Tabanovci/Trubarevo	30		20	30	10	20	30	10	20	30
Gevgelija	30		20	30	10	20	30	10	20	30

(b)

No progress has been made

(c)

No progress has been made

(d)

There is a bilateral agreement signed with Switzerland as neighbouring administrations for connection by electrification and CC and TK devices of the border part of the line Gevgelija-Idomeni (1.5) in the year 1999 which will provide free transport Skopje-Thesalloniki on the electrified line which will contribute to shortening the travel time in the border crossing zone.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

(a)

The average time spent by passenger trains at main border crossings (with China, Finland, Poland, Ukraine, Estonia and Latvia) is 50 minutes, and that for goods trains five hours (figures from timetables).

However, the average actual waiting time spent by goods trains for various reasons of an organizational nature is up to 12 hours.

(b)

No substantial progress has been made in reducing delays suffered by passenger and goods trains at border crossings, despite the measures taken, including those taken at the governmental level.

(c)

The Russian Ministry of Railways and the Russian State Customs Committee have drawn up a set of additional measures to accelerate the passage of goods involved in external trade through border crossings, reduce the waiting time experienced by trains and simplify customs processing and checking, through the development of a standard procedure for the operation of border stations, being devised with the help of the border services, and the introduction of automated information systems.

With the aim of reducing delays for trains at border crossings and upgrading working procedures, Buslovskaya station on the Russian-Finnish border has been expanded, and work is being carried out on reconstruction of the

stations of Sebezh and Ivangorod on the Russian-Latvian and Russian-Estonian borders respectively.

(d)

The twenty-second meeting of the Rail Transport Council of CIS member States, held in November 1998 in Tashkent, approved and put into operation a standard procedure for cooperation between customs bodies and railway administrations in CIS member States in the course of customs processing and checking of goods being transported by rail.

SLOVAKIA

(a)

Passenger trains stay in the border area from 5 to 15 minutes.

Good trains stay in the border area as follows, in minutes:

Railway station / type of train	Direction	
Cadca	ZSR - ĚD	ĚD - ZSR
mixed	340	340
completed - 1 goods bills	163	163
40 goods bills		
	173	233
empty	138	138
simplified- load	80	75
- empty		
	30	30
Kúty	ZSR - ĚD	ĚD - ZSR
mixed	205	215
completed	160	150
NEX	105	115
empty	130	135
Komárno (MÁV)	ZSR - MÁV	MÁV - ZSR
mixed	200	185
empty	125	125
Nex	-	95
Štúrovo	ZSR - MÁV	MÁV - ZSR
mixed	190	165
empty	135	125
Nex	100	80
Cierna nad Tisou	ZSR - UZ	UZ - ZSR
ending mixed - NR	-	66
ŠR		
	-	77
starting mixed - SR	80	-

The progress (in minutes) subsequent to the implementation of measures taken by Governments (e.g. for customs, police, sanitary and phytosanitary controls) and railways (e.g. for technical controls) for passenger and freight trains to reduce the delays during border crossing.

In the exchange border crossing station Cadca between ZSR - ED the Railways introduced the "simplified transfer of freight trains" which in the schedule of train transportation 1999/2000 represents in case of freight trains the time saving of 103 minutes (i.e. from 138 minutes to 30 minutes).

State administration (customs office) introduced the "Agreement on joint transit regime" which is being implemented at the border crossings with the Czech Republic. This regime has not been implemented on remaining crossings as these countries have not joined the above agreement.

Amended technological time limits (time savings):

Railway station Kúty:

- empty train sets - non-simplified transfer from 135 to 135 minutes
- Nex trains from 125 to 115 minutes

Railway station Cadca:

- mixed trains from 360 to 340 minutes
- completed trains from 203 to 163 minutes

(b)

Within the implementation of the "Agreement on joint transit regime" the Slovak Railways try to shift the customs clearance of exporting shipments to dispatching stations, the objective is that there is not a sufficient number of inland customs offices in Slovakia and the existing ones have limited working hours, despite the border crossings offices working permanently.

(c)

In establishing international contacts the main tasks were concentrated on the field of international law, technical compatibility and interoperability, development of trade and tariff policy as well as the tasks to improve the border crossing for international railway transportation. Realization of these goals is arranged through the international organizations such as UIC, OSZHD, ERRI, UN/ECE, TER, OCTI, AICCF, CIT, GEB as well as on the bilateral level with other railway administrations.

Regarding the bilateral level the Slovak Railways have a permanent work group with neighbouring railway administration (except OBB) which once a year discusses the main questions in connection with border crossing in railway transportation. Also twice a year the border railroad conferences of respective railroad bodies take place where the operation and transport situation at particular border stations are solved.

In the co-operation with PKP the permeability of the track Cadca - Skalite Zwardon - Zywiec are increasing.

In 1999 the "Local connection agreements" will be amended for all border crossings between ZSR and MAV as well as between ZSR and CD.

SLOVENIA

(a)

Crossing borders		Passenger train/min		Freight train/min	
		entry	exit	entry	exit
S - OeBB ¹	1992/1993	13.20	15.47	86.30	131.70
	1997/1998	9.26	8.93	70.80	65.00
	1998/1999	9.53	9.60	56.70	52.90
S - FS ²	1992/1993	18.00	26.60	200.00	120.00
	1997/1998	19.00	20.00	129.00	84.00
	1998/1999	19.00	20.20	94.00	66.00
S - H ³	1992/1993	6.36	6.18	93.34	83.33
	1997/1998	7.41	7.53	70.22	64.25
	1998/1999	10.08	11.37	69.07	66.37

(b)

The Austrian customs and police control is done in the station Jesenice and Maribor. The Slovenian customs and police officers get in to the train on the Austrian side.

In freight transport, progress was made when the border crossing controls were transmitted from Maribor station to Tezno station.

(c)

¹ S□ - Slovenian Railways - OeBB - Austrian Railways; border crossings for passenger transport: Maribor, Prevalje, Jesenice; for freight transport: Maribor, Jesenice

² S□ - FS Italian Railways; border crossings for passenger transport: Se□ana, for freight transport: Se□ana, Nova Gorica

³ S□ - H□ Croatian Railways; border crossings for passenger transport in 1992/93 and 1997/98: Lendava, Središće, Rogatec, Imeno, Dobova, Ilirska Bistrica, Hrpelje-Kozina; in 1998/99: Središće, Dobova, Ilirska Bistrica, Hrpelje-Kozina; for freight transport in 1992/93: Središće, Dobova, Ilirska Bistrica; in 1997/98 and 1998/1999: Središće, Dobova, Ilirska Bistrica, Hrpelje-Kozina

- block trains from station Koper (Port of Koper)
- implementation of upgraded information system
- purchase of multi-system electric locomotives
- delivery on trust

(d)

Slovenia - Croatia

- Agreement on Railway Transport Operation has been signed.
- Agreement on Railway Transport Border Control has been paraphed.

Slovenia - Austria

- Agreement on Railway Transport Operation is under preparation; the Agreement currently in force is still the old Agreement between Yugoslavia and Austria.
- Agreement on Railway Transport Border Control has been paraphed.

Slovenia - Italy

- Agreement on Railway Transport Operation has been paraphed.
- Agreement on Railway Transport Border Control is under preparation.

SPAIN

(a)

Border crossing stopping times for long-distance international passenger trains are imposed for the time needed to adapt trains to the different gauges in France and Spain. There is no stopping time due to other reasons, except for sporadic actions from the police. In this sense, it would be useful to request action from the competent national authorities to give indications to the local services at the border crossing points so that inspections at the border could be definitely eliminated or, if still considered necessary, to be done within the running trains.

(b)

Passenger trains

Time savings are difficult to assess, but statistics suggest that a progress of 7 minutes has been achieved in the last year for direct international trains.

One of the main measures recently taken is the implementation of the Schengen Agreement, to speed up police and custom procedures. As a consequence,

passengers in trains to France and Italy are no longer requested to fill the "Green" (customs) and "Yellow" (police) Forms. Only passengers in trains to Switzerland are still subject to this formality, and their forms are collected by the railway staff, which prepares a list of passengers for the Swiss police. Passengers to Italy are still requested to give their identification documents to the railway staff, as sporadic controls are still made by the police.

Goods transport

The following measures have been taken:

- Joint SNCF/RENFE Goods Management Centers at the border crossing points of Irún/Hendaye (GOTI) and Port Bou/Cerbère (MUM), to facilitate the transit of freight.
- The Container Terminal at Irun has been expanded.
- New overhead cranes have been installed at Irún and Port Bou.
- The management and reliability of the locomotives assigned to both terminals have been improved.
- Periodic meetings are held between SNCF and RENFE at the regional level to supervise the operation of the terminals and to further improve the transit at the borders.
- Annual meetings are held among representatives of the railways, the police and the customs services to co-ordinate and improve border crossing for international trains.

(c)

Concerning goods transport, two measures can be mentioned:

- The new High Speed Line Barcelona-Perpignan, under study, which is being designed for mixed, passenger and freight traffic. It will eliminate the need of the current gauge-change operations in Port Bou.
- The implementation of the TALGO automatic gauge-change system in freight trains.

(d)

In the framework of the pilot links defined within the EU's PACT programme, contacts among RENFE, the Spanish Government and other European Governments and railway undertakings are being developed with the purpose to promote combined transport:

- Port Bou/Cerbère border: The "Mediterranean Axle" Germany-France-Spain-Portugal.
- Irún/Hendaye border: The "Atlantic Axle": Benelux, France-Spain-Portugal.
- Traffic between Spain and Portugal: direct contacts are taking place between Spain and CP for the development of freight traffic, mainly concerning the border crossing points of Valencia de Alcántara/Malvao, Fuentes de Oñoro/Vilar Formoso and Badajoz/Elvas.

UNITED KINGDOM

a) Average delay of passenger and goods trains at main border crossings

The UK Government has agreed with the passenger train operators for trains through the Channel Tunnel that border control formalities will be carried out on the trains or at destinations, so these trains will not be required to stop at the UK/France border.

In the case of international freight trains, a requirement of the Channel Tunnel Intergovernmental Commission is that safety and security checks must be carried out by the railway operators before the trains enter the Tunnel. Any locomotive and/or crew changes are combined with these checks to minimise the time trains are delayed.

b) Progress made (in minutes) subsequent to the implementation of measures taken by Governments and railways etc.

Not applicable.

c) Other measures envisaged in future to eliminate delays during the crossing of borders

The UK Government considers that the measures which have been taken for through trains using the Channel Tunnel are proving to be both expedient and successful. No new measures are currently envisaged. However, should any problems be identified from operational experience, remedies will be sought.

d) Bilateral and multilateral contacts with Governments and railways of neighbouring countries to improve the crossing of borders in international rail traffic

The UK and French Governments have agreed binational Regulations transposing the EC Open Access Directive (91/440) and the supplementary Directive on train path allocation (95/19) to the Channel Tunnel. Implementation procedures for these Regulations are now in hand.
