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Working Party on Rail Transport

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Item 9 of the provisional agenda

BIENNIAL EVALUATIONS AND PROGRAMME OF WORK (2010-2014)

Note by the secretariat

I. MANDATE

1. As mandated by the Commission in 2004 and strengthened by the 2005 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) reform, Sectoral Committees are requested to conduct biennial evaluations of their respective subprogrammes (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1). Also the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) has decided to review its programme of work every two years as should be the case for its subsidiary bodies, the next time being in February 2010 (ECE/TRANS/200, paragraph 119). This document serves as a basis for discussion and for proposals to be made by the Working Party for transmission to the ITC at its seventy-second session (23-25 February 2010).

II. BIENNIAL EVALUATIONS

A. Objective

2. Evaluation is an integral part of effective results-based management, together with planning, budgeting and monitoring. It provides a source of crucial information to support the right management choices.

3. UNECE member countries, being committed to the transparency and effectiveness of programme management, agreed at their annual session in 2004 to place more emphasis on evaluation as a tool in managing the Commission's work. The Sectoral Committees, such as the Committee on Inland Transport, were therefore requested by the Commission to conduct biennial evaluations of their respective subprogrammes and to take into account the results of these evaluations in determining their work programmes. The 2005 UNECE reform further strengthened this approach (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1).

4. The biennial evaluations by the Sectoral Committees will give the opportunity for UNECE member countries to join forces with the secretariat in reviewing and reaffirming, on a continuous basis, the relevance of the activities and their clusters in view of subprogramme objectives. The results of these evaluations should contribute to an effective programme management at all levels by showing the evidence of achieving expected accomplishments, defining future priority areas for action, and providing opportunities for making incremental and timely adjustments. They are also intended to assist in measuring more precisely the impact of activities.

5. Furthermore, these evaluations will bring more information on the effectiveness of different activities or their clusters in obtaining results contributing to the objectives and expected accomplishments of a given subprogramme. It is expected that these evaluations may also lead to conclusions concerning the efficiency of outputs, activities and their clusters and subsequently to recommendations for maximizing benefits by improving the use of existing resources.

6. Finally, the results of the evaluations are expected to constitute, in the future, the necessary arguments in the subsequent phases of programme management, such as defining subprogramme priorities and the related redistribution of resources.

B. Procedure

7. The mandated biennial evaluations have been carried out for the first time in the 2008-2009 biennium. In February 2008, the Committee on Inland Transport reviewed and endorsed so-called accomplishment accounts, i.e. for each cluster of activities, an "expected accomplishment" together with related "indicators of achievement" and "performance measures" and noted that in 2010 it would review these accounts and discuss lessons learned and take programmatic measures, if appropriate (ECE/TRANS/200, paragraphs 117-119).

8. In accordance with this decision, the Working Party should review its accomplishment accounts for the biennium 2008-2009 and discuss the lessons learned and take programmatic measures, if appropriate. It should also decide whether these accounts are still appropriate for the period 2010-2011 or would need to be modified due to new priorities or modifications of its programme of work. The proposals of the Working Party would be considered by the forthcoming session of the ITC Bureau (30 November-1 December 2009) and will be transmitted for approval by the ITC at its seventy-second session (23-25 February 2010).

C. Review of the 2008-2009 accomplishment account and proposals for 2010-2011

9. The expected accomplishment endorsed by the ITC for the Working Party during the period 2008-2009 (ITC Informal document No. 11 dated 14 January 2007) is given below. For consideration by the Working Party, the secretariat has inserted therein also the actual indicators of achievement for 2008-2009 (on the basis of the meeting held prior to the present session of the Working Party) as well as newly proposed targets for 2010-2011.

Cluster of activity: Rail transport

Expected accomplishment

10. Better understanding of rail transport operations and policies in the region, including infrastructure, border crossing, interoperability issues, and monitoring and updating of relevant legal instruments as well as enhanced cooperation of UNECE countries in addressing them.

Indicators of achievement

- (a) Number of countries, intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and non-governmental organizations (NGO) participating in the annual meeting of the Working Party on Rail Transport and level of satisfaction as expressed in surveys

Performance measures: Actual performance 2008-2009

Target: 2008-2009: 42 27¹
Proposed target: 2010-2011: 30

- (b) Number of amendments to the AGC Agreement as well as updated and amended lines in its Annex I which the Working Party has put in effect

Performance measures: Actual performance 2008-2009

Target: 2008-2009: 2 0
Proposed target: 2010-2011: 2

- (c) Number of thematic workshops/seminars organized and number of participants

Performance measures: Actual performance 2008-2009

Target: 2008-2009: 2 2²
Proposed target: 2010-2011: 2

11. The Working Party may wish to approve its expected accomplishment, the indicators of achievements and its performance measures for 2010-2011 or may wish to modify them, as appropriate.

¹ Participants at the sixty-second session of the Working Party in November 2008 included 20 UNECE member countries, European Commission, 3 IGOs and 3 NGOs. All respondents to the questionnaire distributed during the session agreed that it was well organized, met their expectations, and provided enough time for presentations and discussions. For additional information pertaining to the level of satisfaction of participants, see the report ECE/TRANS/SC.2/210, paragraph 43.

² The 2008 Workshop on rail security was attended by 52 participants. The Workshop on passenger accessibility of heavy rail systems is scheduled to take place on 19 November 2009.

III. PROGRAMME OF WORK

12. At its sixty-first session, the Working Party adopted its programme of work for 2008 to 2012 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/208, paragraph 23 annex). At the same session, the Working Party expressed interest in a closer cooperation with the Joint Research Centre of the OECD and the International Transport Forum, especially regarding the rail transport related research.

13. At its sixty-second session, the Working Party asked the secretariat to evaluate recent ITF work on border-crossing obstacles before elaborating a specific proposal on the incorporation of the interoperability and border-crossing issues in the revised programme of work for the period 2010-2014 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/210, paragraph 21). The background report on the recent ITF survey on border-crossing obstacles³ shows that in the case of international rail transport lengthy border delays continue to persist at borders within and outside the European Union (EU) as well as between the EU member states and non-EU countries. The underlying factors include incompatible infrastructure, shortage of suitable locomotives for cross-border operations, cumbersome customs and security procedures, and lack of performance incentives. The ITF report concludes that additional harmonization and convergence of border-crossing and transit regulations, agreements and documentation as well as additional staff training are needed to reduce train delays at borders. Some of these concerns could be addressed by the Working Party in its future activities.

14. The Working Party may wish to review and adopt the following draft programme of work (2010-2014) prepared by the secretariat on the basis of the decisions mentioned above.

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2010-2014

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.5: RAIL TRANSPORT

02.5.1 Rail transport infrastructure

Priority: 1

I. Review of the situation concerning the implementation and possible amendments to the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC)

Description: Study of possibilities for the improvement of international railway lines and their reflection in AGC.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Rail Transport will carry out the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Consideration of the AGC Agreement with a view to possibly: implementing and, whenever feasible, improving existing standards and operational parameters; also taking into account new east-west traffic flows; raising environmental, energy and safety standards; taking into account the UNECE Conventions on the Environment.

³ P. Ranger (2009), Survey on border crossing obstacles: seminar background report, ITF, Paris <<http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/Proceedings/Border2009/09Ranger.pdf>>.

Output expected: ~~R Occasional~~ reports on amendments of the AGC network; ~~Report on the development of a European conventional and high speed railway network. (2008)~~

Priority: 1

- (b) **Review the coherence between the AGC parameters and infrastructure standards established by competent authorities of the European Union and consider the feasibility of harmonizing them over the longer term.**

Output expected: **A report on the coherence of the AGC and EU rail infrastructure standards (2010)**

Priority: 2

II. Studies in Railway Infrastructure

- (a) Description: Study of the ~~possibility of the improvement of international railway lines and investment projects and~~ their management.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party will carry out the following activities:

Consideration of **railway infrastructure investment and financing** ~~the influence of intermodal transport techniques, especially PPP models those concerning investment, as well as the harmonization of rolling stock and speed on railways to facilitate the integration of these techniques into the railway system and to create general interoperability.~~

Output expected: Report on investment in rail infrastructure and railway rolling stock in member countries. ~~(2008-2011)~~

Priority: 2

- (b) Periodic review of ~~the list of marshalling yards of international importance with a view to cutting down their numbers~~ **railway reforms in the UNECE region, aiming to optimize the provision and use of rail infrastructure.**

Output expected: ~~Updated~~ **Reports on the progress of railway reforms in the UNECE region** ~~the location of important marshalling yards within the European railway network. (2009-2011, 2014)~~

Priority: 2

- (c) Consideration of questions concerning ~~safety~~ **security** in **international** railway transport ~~tunnels.~~

Output expected: Review of the current situation and prospects for the development of new recommendations. ~~(2008-2010)~~

Priority: 2

- (d) Consideration of developments regarding new railway initiatives on Euro-Asian transport links.

Output expected: Report on the current and new initiatives. ~~(2011-2008)~~

Priority: 2

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

- (e) Periodically survey passenger and goods traffic on ~~the various sections of lines of the~~ AGC network in order to provide support for transport planning; the ~~third~~ **next** survey is **to be** based on data for ~~2005~~ **2010**.

Output expected: ~~Report on total train traffic on the AGC network in 2000.~~

(2008) Rail census ~~in 2005~~ **2010 (2013)**

Priority: 2

- (f) Consideration of other subjects as need arises.

Output expected: Report on each subject.

III. Special project: Trans-European Railway (TER)

Description: Within the framework of the UNECE, the TER countries have established an appropriate administrative and financial framework, with the aim of developing a rail network as part of an integrated European international rail system.

Work to be undertaken

- (a) Report on specific project developments to promote international rail traffic.
(Continuing)

Output expected: Annual progress report on activities carried out within the TER project.
Priority: 1

- (b) Consideration of possible utilization of the results achieved under the project in other UNECE activities in the field of rail infrastructure, including the implementation of AGC and AGTC in order to benefit from mutual experiences. (Continuing) Priority: 2

Output expected: Annual progress report.

IV. Interregional Cooperation

Description: Cooperation with other regional commissions and international bodies involved in the development of interregional links.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party will be kept informed of exchanges of information between the secretariats of the regional commissions and other international bodies in order to benefit from experiences gained in other regions of the world. (Continuing) Priority: 3

02.5.2 Harmonization of requirements concerning international railway transport including rail safety, security and facilitation of its operations Priority: 1

Description:

- (a) Simplification and harmonization of administrative formalities, particularly for documents and procedures at border crossing.
- (b) Harmonization of ~~and search for~~ standardized requirements concerning the utilization of railway infrastructure ~~including computerization aspects~~.
- (c) Elaboration of proposals and preparation of studies aimed at strengthening, consolidating and extending the position of rail transport on international transport markets.
- (d) Analysis of problems relating to the harmonization and improvement of rail safety **and security**.
- (e) Consideration of prospects for the adoption of legal regulations applicable to the contract for the transport of goods and passengers by rail so as to establish a standard legal system (harmonization of the SMGS/SMPS and CIM/CIV systems).

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Rail Transport will carry out the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Consideration of specific difficulties encountered at border crossings in the transport of passengers and goods by rail with a view to accelerating border crossing operations and establishing a programme to deal with problems common to several routes.

Output expected: ~~R~~**Annual report on bi- and multilateral contacts of Governments and railways the progress of the CIM/SMGS project of the CIT and OSJD, aiming to improve the crossing of borders in international rail traffic.** ~~(2007)~~ Priority: 1

- (b) Consideration of follow-up of the implementation of recommendations and preparation of new texts or amendments to existing texts, if necessary, especially concerning the facilitation of border crossing with the aim to improve international rail traffic. Priority: 1

- (c) Review of requirements concerning railway operations and regulations, reduction of transport time and improvement in the precision of movements in the international carriage of goods, new operative developments in rail transport, the integration of services of different railways. Priority: 2

- (d) ~~The study of the possibilities for harmonizing the application and periods of summer time with a view to upgrading transport quality in rail transport.~~
Output expected: ~~Report on the application of summer time. (Report on change in application of summer time when it takes place)~~ Priority: 3

- (d) Analysis of government policies concerning rail safety **and security** to contribute to an improvement of safety **and security** in international transport.

Output expected: Report on safety **and security** and implementation of risk assessment techniques in rail transport in the UNECE region. (2008 **2011**) Priority: 1

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

- (f) Analysis of the various elements of **railway productivity growth**, ~~in rail transport and the possibilities to increase rail productivity~~, in particular **in** ~~for international freight~~ transport.

Output expected: Bi-annual report on the development of **railway productivity**~~in rail transport~~ in member countries. (2009-**2010**) Priority: 2

- ~~(g) Consideration on the basis of reports by the international organizations concerned of the progress accomplished in the harmonization of legal regulations applicable to the contract for the transport of goods and passengers by rail to examine whether the compatibility of the regulation concerned can be ensured.~~

~~Output expected: Report by international organizations concerned on the progress made in the elimination of difficulties arising from different legal systems in international rail transport. (2008)~~
