



COMBINED TRANSPORT IN BRIEF

EDITORIAL

May we take the opportunity of this first 2006 issue to wish you a Happy New Year and convey our best wishes for good health and success. We, at the UIRR, are hoping that this year will bring about real progress in transport issues and, more particularly, in combined road-rail transport.

Indeed, last year was rich in events and changes: the inauguration of the European Railway Agency, the launching of the mid-term review of the White Paper on Transport, Parliament and Council's examination of important proposals such as the third railway package, the eurovignette and the Marco Polo II program aimed at improving the environmental performance of freight transport. Some of these projects, which are approached in this newsletter, will determine this year's developments, as well as being of primary concern to us.

The whole team at the UIRR hopes that this year sees considerable progress being made in the continuing development of combined transport, particularly in terms of a long awaited improvement in the quality of rail services, which would last well into the future. We also expect to see a revival in traffic volumes resulting from the numerous studies carried out and co-financed by the European Commission and to which our international Union by its very nature dedicates a considerable part of its activities.

Key to this future success will be maintaining our excellent working relationships with both the Community and national Authorities, as well as with other federations and our happily expanding customer base, which have been built up over many years.

We suggest the above is kept in mind whilst reading the following articles.

Rudy COLLE



UIRR Congress, 2006

With the support of the European Commission, the UIRR is organising on 22 June 2006 a congress based on the theme "opportunities and risks for CT in a widened Europe", as part of its Annual General Assembly in Vienna. This congress will be preceded by a gala dinner hosted by the Austrian Combined Transport Authorities on 21 June 2006.

The Association

Meeting between the UIRR and Commissioner Barrot



Left: Mr. Trestour, Vice-President Barrot, Mr. Sagredo
Right: Mr. Mélard, Chairman Muzio, Mr. Colle

On 27 November 2005, a delegation of the UIRR met Mr. J. Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission and Transport Commissioner, in order to discuss the topic of combined road-rail transport and what it involves. Also present at the meeting were Mr. Sagredo, member of

Mr. Barrot's Cabinet and Mr. J. Trestour, Head of Unit Motorways of the sea and Intermodality in the Commission's Directorate General for Transport and Energy .

During the meeting, Mr. E. Muzio, Chairman of the Board of the UIRR, Mr. R. Colle, Director General of the UIRR and Mr. J-L. Mélard, Director General of TRW, successively reported on the current market situation, and outlined the conditions needed for the favourable development in the transfer of goods from road to rail. In this context, emphasis was put on concentrating aid for the rolling motorway purely on the relevant axes. The handicap that combined transport faces against road transport caused by a lack of interoperability of the railway systems in Europe was also highlighted, as well as the role that the European Railway Agency needs to play in order to restore the balance between rail (combined) transport and road transport. The UIRR also pleaded the case for targeted grants towards combined transport, in particular by allocating part of the income resulting from the eurovignette on heavy goods vehicles. Lastly, in view of a recent decline observed in the quality of rail services, the UIRR supported the idea of a follow-up on quality within the Commission, in which it would take an active role.

In response to the above topics, Mr. Barrot confirmed that aid for rail will be subject to its contribution to interoperability. Following Parliament's rejection of the Freight Quality part of the 3rd railway package, the Commission is planning to allow itself time to evaluate the evolution of quality of rail services: it remains very interested in receiving information and, fully aware of the importance of this dossier, does not intend to let it go. Moreover, Mr. Barrot declared that he would look at the subject of grants given on the basis as those planned, for example, for the motorways of the sea.



Drawing up of timetables

On the occasion of a conference in Vienna held on 2 December 2005, RailNetEurope, an association comprising 29 European Infrastructure managers, raised the issue of the international drawing up of timetables. Although it has been underlined that this process is moving along more quickly than the 2001/14 Directive's requirements, it is still too slow as far as the market's requirements are concerned.

During the discussion between participants, Mr. Burkhardt, Director General of the UIRR, raised the point of same path requests being made by several railway undertakings. Indeed, combined transport (CT) operators or important customers request proposals from several railway undertakings (RU) which then pass them onto the infrastructure manager (IM). This is a result of growing competition between RU, as a subsequence of market liberalisation. He then reminded that it would be beneficial to all the actors if CT operators and important freight customers could be recognised as authorised applicants so that they could present their request for a train path directly to the IM and avoid repetition.

Where this would not prove possible, the UIRR again suggested, at the very least, setting up a list by the infrastructure managers. The proposed list would provide details specifying for which CT operator or transport company the RU requested the paths. This proposal raised interest.

GCU Wagons



The new international Agreement regarding rail transport COTIF will probably come into force at the beginning of 2006, once it has been ratified by the 27th member State. This agreement will signify the end of the RIV

“Agreement on exchange and utilisation of rail freight wagons between railway undertakings”. Rail freight wagons and private wagons will then be dealt with on an equal footing. In order to continue to guarantee freedom of movement of wagons and to prevent the multiplication of various contracts between the operators, the UIC, the ERFA and the UIP have worked out a uniform contract of use (GCU). It specifies the contractual obligations and responsibilities of the RU and wagon owners. When the new COTIF comes into force, it should attract the greatest possible number of RU and wagon owners to adhere to the GCU. This in turn will facilitate freedom of movement in the EU and beyond, as previously mentioned. Adherence is effected by making a declaration at the GCU Office, which is currently under formation. UIRR member companies have approximately 13,000 private wagons.

The member companies

German traffic development

In November 2005, **Kombiverkehr** extended its operational network following its investments in Optimodal (NL), Intercontainer Austria (A) as well as in Hungaria Intermodal (HU), a non-accompanied combined transport operator currently being set up. These partnerships will enable Benelux–South-East Europe corridors to run block trains to, for instance, Greece, Romania and, even further, Turkey.

Rolling Motorway to and from Austria

Since October 2005, the rolling motorway service between Wels (A) and Arad/Oradea (RO) has been operated by the Austrian company **Ökombi**. This company has also been running overnight rail services between Graz (A) and Regensburg (D) since 2 November 2005. Furthermore, the company has increased the frequency of its services via Brenner from 3 to 10 daily round trips.

Services to and from Central and Eastern Europe

With three departures per week, **ICA** and **Kombiverkehr** have been operating a block train service between Wels (A) and BILK terminal in Budapest (HU) since September 2005. Other Hungarian terminals can be reached via the BILK terminal.

Last October, **Bohemiakombi** and **Kombiverkehr** launched a service between Duisburg (D) and Lovosice (CZ). The

“Bohemia express” train will enable containers and swap bodies to be transported twice a week.

The new terminal of Busto Gallarate

Hupac inaugurated the new terminal of Busto Arsizio-Gallarate near Milan on 9 September 2005 in the presence of the Italian and Swiss Ministers for Transport. This terminal will act as a gateway for the Shuttle Net network of the Swiss operator, with an initial capacity of 23 pairs of trains per day.

CNC becomes Naviland

Last October, **CNC** directed its activities towards maritime combined transport by becoming **Naviland Cargo**. It now serves the ports of Antwerp, Le Havre, Marseille and Zeebrugge. **Naviland** is also developing a complementary “pure road” service called NaviTrucking.

Hungarokombi focuses on accompanied traffic

From the beginning of January 2006, **Hungarokombi** will concentrate its activities on the rolling motorway. The non-accompanied combined transport activities will be carried out by the new company, Hungaria Intermodal. The capital of this new company is held by **Kombiverkehr**, MAV Kombiterminal, Speditions Holding (ÖBB) and Raab-Odenburg-Ebenfurter Eisenbahn.



European Transport Policy

Mid-term review of the White Paper on Transport



In order to control the exponential increase in transport in Europe and to limit the harmful effects generated, the European Commission adopted a White Paper entitled: “European transport policy for 2010: time to decide” in 2001. This document contains a whole range of proposals for action aimed at a more balanced

distribution between various transport modes. The annexed action program envisaged different measures for reviving rail transport, which included market liberalisation (supported by a railway package specifically including “measures to safeguard the quality”), security development, interoperability and infrastructure. Since then, two railway packages have been adopted, in 2001 and 2004 respectively. They contain among other items, provisions for the liberalisation of rail freight transport, licenses for railway undertakings, infrastructure tariffs, interoperability or the creation of a European Railway Agency.

The UIRR participated in the consultation led by the Commission on the evaluation of the implementation of the 2001 White Paper by submitting a written document to them and by means of a speech during a conference about this subject held on 1 December 2005. The UIRR paid tribute to the EU's efforts in this respect, but also pointed out the slowness of their implementation by member States. The UIRR has requested a more appropriate follow-up of the liberalisation process within the member States and that sustained efforts are made to improve rail service quality. The UIRR considers that the level of quality is often not sufficient enough for rail to be able to increase its market share. Furthermore, our association reminded the Commission of the need to finalise the trans-European transport network projects and to introduce fair taxation for the various modes of transport utilising the infrastructure in order to redistribute their respective market shares. Another important point is the implementation of the charging framework depending on the offered service and providing compensation in case of disruption, which has to be established by the infrastructure managers according to the 2001/14 Directive.

3rd Railway Package – Quality

Last October, the European Parliament put the 3rd Railway Package to the vote, as presented by the Commission in March 2004. Pending some amendments, it endorsed the opening of the market to passenger transportation, the creation and harmonised certification for train drivers, as well as compensation for passengers in the event of important train delays. However, Parliament rejected the Regulation proposal aimed at compensating freight customers of railway undertakings experiencing delays, considering that this provision would contravene the interests of the rail industry.

As far as this vote is concerned, the UIRR has underlined the cost implication of not respecting punctuality in the transport chain and that the initial amounts of compensation established by the Commission were significantly lower than those for passengers (between 5% and 25% for freight, as opposed to 50 to 100% for passengers in the Commission's proposal, and between 25 and 75% for passengers as far as Parliament is concerned). The UIRR hopes that the Commission will continue to explore the issue of freight quality, and trusts that the market discussions, following the voluntary agreement on quality arrangements signed by the UIRR and the UIC freight forum members (see Newsletter no. 2) will assist in improving the punctuality of rail services and, consequently, combined transport's competitiveness.

European Railway Agency

The establishment of the European Railway Agency (ERA) via a Community Regulation in April 2004, is ongoing. Its task is to form common solutions for the development and also the follow up of safety and interoperability issues in Europe (in particular, setting out new technical specifications for interoperability - TSI - and revising existing TSI).

Dr. J. Berenyi, Vice-Chairman of the UIRR Board, represents freight customers on the ERA Board and as such participates in these meetings, assisted by Mr. Burkhardt. The ERA does not have direct decision-making powers but will put forward recommendations to the Commission which will draft Community legislation projects on the basis of these discussions.

The ERA is operationally organised into 5 units which are in charge of safety, interoperability, the ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System, a management tool for rail traffic and signalling), economic evaluation and administration, respectively. Its working programme for 2006 is currently being adopted, with the first meetings of the working groups taking place. (www.era.eu.int)



Projects

Safety and security in combined transport

The New York, Madrid and, more recently, London bombings have changed Western countries' perception of a terrorist threat. These acts have generated numerous debates and measures for security and safety in the transport industry. Combined transport is already subject to numerous measures, either put in place by legislation or by operators in the transport chain. The main international measures for the security of the logistics chain were discussed during a seminar of the International Container Bureau (BIC), held on 12 and 13 September 2005. These measures have resulted from agreements made between Customs and Governments (Container Security Initiative) or between Customs and the Industry (C-TPAT against terrorism). In a similar manner, the ISPS code defines regulations for ports (electronic identification of people and booking 24 hours in advance). The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) is involved in standardising containers (consolidating doors, mechanical and electronic seals or electronic identification).

Transport safety is also a major concern in Europe: with this in mind the European Conference of Ministers for Transport wrote a report on "the security of intermodal transport for containers", which identifies the risks and makes recommendations. The DG Transport of the European Commission called for a study on the risks regarding land transport, the conclusions of which appear problematic to us as they propose blanket coverage security measures without considering the potential probability of attacks. Lastly, the DG Taxation and Customs Union has written a preliminary draft outlining the implementation procedures of the Community Customs code, regarding security at the external borders of the EU.

Such measures, together with their harmonisation, are needed. However, it is essential that they remain in proportion to the real risks so that they do not lead to unnecessary additional costs. Indeed, a significant increase in costs for combined road-rail transport, linked with exaggerated security measures, will automatically lead to a transfer of traffic towards pure road transport. This will prove detrimental to the shared objective of developing an economical, environment-friendly and safer mode of freight transport. In addition, combined transport operators have already undertaken various initiatives

concerning security and safety for their consignments; so, Cemmat, Hupac, Novatrans and TRW have set up procedures to be implemented in terminals (recording, driver identity checks, as well as ADR permits for the carriage of dangerous goods, booking numbers, seals, controls of the loading unit condition, staff training, etc.). In parallel, most big combined transport terminals are fenced in, have entry points and are subjected to systematic control procedures for units and transport documentation. These measures were listed in the INSECTT project dealing with combined transport terminal security (EU Marco Polo programme), which was launched on 19 September 2005. The UIRR, which participates in this project along with several of its members, formulated "proposals aimed at increasing security in CT" in September 2004. Through this INSECTT project, the UIRR aims at establishing harmonised procedures and staff training.



The Bravo project, which concerns the development of combined transport on the Brenner corridor, is ongoing. The activities of research no. 2, which ended in November 2005, dealt with a detailed comparative analysis of the path allocation process in the countries concerned, as well as proposals aimed at improving them. The first part of the project highlights the satisfactory current capacities but which occasionally suffer from bottlenecks. A second part deals with customer expectations regarding path allocation, which requires additional means and tools, e.g. electronic allocation, as studied in the last part of the project.

(www.bravo-project.com)



Under the umbrella of the TREND project concerning new rail freight concepts and, in particular, the part which deals with innovation, the UIRR will be responsible for supervising studies regarding the transportation of temperature-controlled units by rail and the inherent energy supply. The UIRR will also oversee studies on automated freight traffic as a viable alternative to road transport, as well as conventional rail traffic.

(www.trend-project.com)

Agenda

Eurorail Conference 2006
EIM/ERFA/ERFCP/UIRR Conference "Network opening: best practices"
INTERUNIT technical commission
UIRR Annual General Assembly
→ UIRR Congress "CT in a widened Europe"

31.01-01.02.2006
29.03.2006

16-17.05.2006
20-22.06.2006
22.06.2006

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