

Commission proposes new rules for CT

The College of Commissioners adopted its proposal to improve Directive 92/106 concerning Combined Transport at its meeting yesterday, 8 November 2017¹. This concludes an almost 7-year process during which UIRR was pleading for the upgrade of the Directive that will soon turn quarter-century-old.

The proposed revision will

- extend the scope to all Combined Transport operations, domestic and border-crossing, performed involving rail, inland waterways and/or maritime shipping;
- clarify the definition of Combined Transport and assist enforcement through clear requirements;
- aid the introduction of productivity enhancing digital technologies by mandating the standardized identification of loading units using the BIC-and ILU-Codes;
- prescribe a regime to facilitate the construction of missing transshipment terminals and the upgrading of existing ones;
- enable state aid measures to compensate the competitiveness gap caused by regulatory imbalances among the different modes of transport;
- establish a reliable scheme for data collection, reporting and the cooperation of competent Member State authorities.

UIRR has closely collaborated with the Commission services during the regulatory fitness test procedure (REFIT) and the stakeholder consultations that preceded the formulation of the proposal, which largely fulfils the expectations of the sector.

The revision of Directive 92/106 should enable the harvesting of low hanging fruits offered by the collaboration of the sustainable modes of transport that would otherwise be unattainable: considerable improvement of energy efficiency of longer distance freight transport, a significant reduction of its carbon footprint and other pollutant emissions, as well as curtailing of road congestion and accident occurrences.

The high productivity yet attractive jobs of the intermodal transport chain should contribute to easing the labour pressures affecting freight logistics, and ultimately lead to economic competitiveness and the wellbeing of all Europeans.

The legislative process – expected to be concluded within the remaining 18 months of the European Parliament’s current mandate – will be supported by UIRR to refine the proposal to achieve optimal results. The revised Combined Transport Directive should enter into force over the course of 2020, the year when UIRR celebrates the 50th Anniversary of its founding.

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Ralf-Charley Schultze

"The legislative proposal revealed today has the capability to tap into the reserves that the efficient combination of the different modes of transport have to offer. Arriving at a plateau of technological capabilities in unimodal transport, it is high time to unchain rail, inland waterways and maritime shipping for freight transport to perform better for the benefit of the European economy and the people of the Continent." - stated UIRR President Ralf-Charley Schultze.

Who is UIRR?

Founded in 1970, the **International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport (UIRR)** represents the interests of European road-rail Combined Transport Operators and Transshipment Terminal Managers.

Road-Rail Combined Transport (CT) is a system of freight forwarding which is based on efficiently and economically inserting electric rail into long-distance (road) transport-chains through the use of intermodal loading units (ILU).

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¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/2017-11-08-mobility-package-two/com20170648-combined-transport-proposal.pdf>