



COMBINED TRANSPORT IN BRIEF

UIRR and INTERUNIT 2007 General Assemblies



From left to right: E. Muzio (UIRR), L. Kovács (European Commissioner), R. Colle (UIRR), Dr. Berenyi (UIRR)

The Statutory General Assembly (SGA) of the International Union of Combined Road-Rail Transport Companies (UIRR) took place on June 25, 2007 in Brussels. The annual accounts in balance, the composition of its governing bodies, the increase of traffic as well as the implementation of a strategy aiming at the development of CT were on the agenda. During the gala dinner following the SGA, the European Commissioner in charge of Taxation and Customs Union Mr. László Kovács, who honoured us with its presence, underlined the importance of adopting, on the short term, a modernised Community Customs Code enabling a faster crossing of the borders as well as the necessity to concentrate security measures on the consignments which have a higher level of risk.

In his welcome address, after having presented the state of the traffic and the trends, Mr. Eugenio Muzio, Chairman of the Board of Directors, reminded us of the conditions which are required for a sustainable CT development. He had also underlined the total support of the UIRR to more extended safety/security rules which would show a reasonable relationship with the risks, knowing that these are already largely mastered in CT. Finally, the SGA extended Mr. Rudy Colle's contract by a further two years. He will thus

continue to act as Director General of the UIRR with Mr. Martin Burkhardt and will also be in charge of the INTERUNIT secretariat for the next two years. The next day, the General Assembly of INTERUNIT, the association regrouping the railway undertakings (RU) members of the GTC/UIC and the UIRR operators, met to discuss mainly the quality of railway services and various aspects regarding the use of wagons. Faced with the disappointing results of the quality charter signed with the RUs in 2005, it was decided to forge ahead and to create a project group which will aim at working out a quality label. (see art. p. 2).

GA 2008

At the invitation of its Slovenian Member company Adriakombi, the UIRR selected the area of Portorož (Koper) to hold its 2008 GA. The fact that the EU presidency will be taken up by Slovenia during the first half of the year 2008 does but increase the relevance of this decision. This country, real crossroads between North West Europe and the Balkans, will at that moment hold important cards to promote CT in view of a sustainable mobility in Europe.

Logistics

The UIRR looks forward with due interest to the adoption of the European Commission action plan regarding logistics in freight transport, which has been announced for October 17th. The UIRR did indeed assiduously take part in the elaboration of proposals which in its view should aim at a very active role from the EU authorities in the development and implementation of all relevant framework conditions enabling ultimately a full and fair liberalisation of rail and which would leave to the actors concerned the handling of the more specific market issues (i.a. loading units).

Service quality

After the good results achieved in this area from 2001 to 2004, punctuality declined again in 2005 and 2006 to reach the unacceptably low level in international regime of only 53% of trains on time (definition: less than 30 minutes late compared with the scheduled hour for the handing over at arrival of the first loading unit).

The CT operators who are members of the UIRR are commercial companies obviously aware of the fact that service quality is an essential criterion for the transports market in its choice of such or such mode or combination of modes for the carriage of goods. Thus they continuously search ways to improve punctuality which is the most measurable and noticeable parameter as profitability is very closely linked up to the narrowest possible timetable coincidence between the programming of means and their effective use.

In view of the absence of a really convincing improvement as expected from the Joint Commitment as regards Quality which was signed in July 2005 by the Chairmen of the Group for Combined Transports of the UIC and of the UIRR, the latter

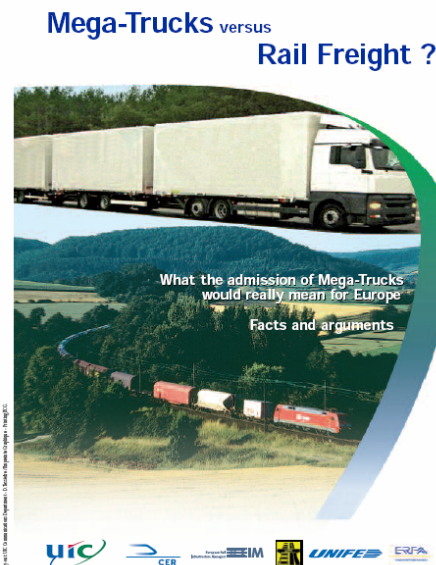
took the initiative of a revival action called "Labelling of quality". This action aims at entrusting a specialised and freelance consultant with a mandate to draw up an exhaustive report of the situation regarding quality in CT.

The access to all relevant data would be guaranteed to him by the railway sector but also by the terminal managers in order to build up the image which the clients have up- and downstream of CT, i.e. the road hauliers and freight forwarders.

In a second stage, improvement objectives would be set to the various actors of the CT chain so that the services are really competitive in the sense meant by the market, as well as a close monitoring procedure accompanied with correction measures. A peculiar care will be given to the information to the customers. A precise master plan should be adopted by early November.

With the same concern to support better quality, the UIRR has asked the European Commission to stay attentive to the recorded trends and to consider any measure useful for that purpose.

Gigaliners Brochure



Further to the pioneer actions of the UIRR as regards mega trucks, the UIC associated five other railway associations (CER, EIM, UNIFE, ERFA, and of course, UIRR) with the conception of a brochure specifying the

consequences of a generalised introduction of mega trucks in Europe.

Significant cost of the adaptation of road infrastructures, harmful impact on road safety and environment, increase of the imbalance between the freight transport modes would be as many damages caused by longer and heavier trucks. Such an introduction would in fact go against EU's objectives regarding transport policy, namely the pursuit of a sustainable mobility by a steady transfer of freight from road to more ecological modes. Faced with this danger, the railway actors continue to make sure they improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of their CT services and rail freight transport.

This document, which is available in English, French and German, can be downloaded from our web site www.uirr.com (under the heading 'Media Centre', 'Brochures and Studies').

Access to infrastructure (PERFN)

Among the reasons put forward to explain the current shortcomings in quality, the capacity shortages (slots) hold an important place on several CT routes, not surprisingly in particular on those which have the densest traffic flows (Alpine transit among others).

Such shortages proceed from two phenomena, particularly critical for freight when they appear simultaneously:

- an ever stronger network saturation due to an insufficiency of investments in rail stretches and in more effective operational methods;
- the withdrawal without prior notice of production means (locomotive, driver, slot) planned for freight services, to help out a passenger train.

To solve these shortcomings and to support a growth of rail freight favouring a sustainable mobility, two solutions first cross the mind:

- to foresee a complete network totally dedicated to freight;
- to grant priority slots for freight trains on a mixed passengers/freight network.

The first solution comes against a profitability problem as in any case demand justifies it in foreseeable term only on certain routes.

The second formula is applicable only with great moderation if the general planning of trains is not to be burdened by an excess of constraints which are counter-productive in the end.

Hence the concept imagined by the CER of a 'Primary European Rail Freight Network' (PERFN), network consisting of a certain number of lines, limited in numbers, which would be fully dedicated to freight and in complement of a mixed passenger/freight network. This key-network would be conceived in such a way that it offers sufficient capacity to absorb a rail freight growth evaluated at more than 70% by 2020.

The main vector of the rail freight development being Combined Transport, the UIRR participated in the elaboration of the CER document describing this concept, of which it shares the general principles.

The document is set to be the subject of complementary discussions and should result, among others, in the organisation of top level conferences focusing each on specific and crucial corridors, this being the wisest approach since it would involve on each of them all the actors and Authorities concerned in order to lead to a fair and strict planning of investments.

UIRR new website

End of May, the UIRR Office launched its new web site. Its address remains unchanged www.uirr.com. Since then, more than 18 000 visitors – that is to say the equivalent of 200 visits daily – have been consulting the different pages of the web site, in particular those of the media centre, of the section dedicated to the members and the European CT terminals data bank. Among the most downloaded documents, we find the recent publications (2006 Annual Report, 2006 Statistics, brochure on mega trucks and the 2007 version of the brochure regarding dangerous goods), the newsletters and the "classics" (the book "30 ans de l'UIRR", Focus on Combined Transport and the study on CO₂ emissions in Road-Rail CT).

Project **SINGER**

The Road-Rail Combined Transport operators of the new Member States, especially in Hungary and in Slovenia, were offering a CT network based mainly on rolling motorway services. The aim of the Singer project (Slovenian Intermodal Gateway to European Rail) was to set up a CT network based on offers of direct trains in unaccompanied transport (with semi-trailers, containers...).

With the financial support of the EU Commission within the Marco Polo programme, the SINGER project partners have in two years time developed a two-layer production scheme: -first they have created a network of four block trains interlinking the Ljubljana gateway terminal to other important economical hubs such as Verona, Munich, Budapest and the port of Koper; (cont.p.4)

-second, they have linked these block trains to existing or new national network connections such as from Verona to the south of Italy, from Budapest to the North of Hungary/Romania/Ukraine, from Munich to the North of Germany by using the Kombi-Netz2000+ and finally from Ljubljana to Zagreb.

Besides, the project partners have improved their computer systems by developing specific applications such as single counters to consult the timetables and the online bookings. A customer can thus easily book transports from the port of Koper in Slovenia to Ludwigshafen in Germany. Moreover, they created interfaces between their own server and the CESAR server (European interface for the tracing of loading units in CT available at:

www.cesar-online.com).

Since 2005, they have been transferring more than 342 mio. TKM from road to rail, that is to say the equivalent of more than 50.000 road vehicles.

Results of the INSECTT project

The partners of the INSECTT project (INtermodal SEcurity for Combined Transport Terminals) presented the results of their works in Brussels on July 04, 2007. This meeting brought together around fifty participants from various professional horizons. This project, which had the support of the Marco Polo programme of the European Commission, has been carried out over the last two years by the UIRR and its member companies Adria Kombi, Cemat, Hupac, Kombiverkehr and Novatrans. The project has its source in the following acknowledgement: in the air and maritime sectors new security measures are being taken up but some concepts cannot be used in land transport because the situation on the transshipment yards is completely different. The aim of INSECTT consisted in analysing measures and plans which are already applied in various countries as well as

their feasibility and in taking into account the best concepts in order to propose harmonised European procedures. Within this context and among other things, the harmonisation of the identification procedures of the truck drivers who deliver/pick up loading units has been carried out.



From left to right: M. Burkhardt (UIRR), E. Muzio (UIRR), P. Norroy (DG TREN)

The UIRR presented two key documents on that occasion:

- the risk analysis dedicated to the CT terminals. This document will act as a reference in this matter and will be distributed by priority to the UIRR companies, the terminal managers and the authorities concerned;

- recommendations regarding the improvement of security in CT. They are intended for all the actors of the freight transport chain and are based on a cooperative and shared responsibilities approach. The training of the staff is another major pillar of the works carried out. At the end of the meeting, Mr. Patrick Norroy, responsible for the project at the Directorate General for Transport and Energy of the Commission, expressed his satisfaction in view of the project results.

The level of security in rail transport is already high; the UIRR and its member companies see to it that it is improved further without harming the appeal and efficiency of CT.

Agenda

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| ERA Board of Directors UIRR Board of Directors | 30.10.2007 06.11.2007 | Lille (F) Brussels (B) |
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