



# COMBINED TRANSPORT IN BRIEF

## A real danger for Combined Transport: the MEGATRUCK



The campaign which is currently being conducted for the introduction of road vehicles with an authorised length of 25.50 m and a total weight of up to 60 t, namely the "gigaliners" or "ecocombis", is meeting with a growing response, especially in Germany. The argument advanced is that these vehicles would make it possible to have an identical transport volume with a lesser number of trucks. The supporters of an increase in weight and dimensions should not, however, rejoice too soon as an early agreement on such trucks is not in sight. The European Commission plans to launch in 2007 a call for tenders relating to a study which should examine the various aspects relating to a general authorisation of megatrucks. For this purpose, the analysis should focus in particular on the impact on transport safety, road infrastructure and intermodal competition.

In September, a study commissioned by UIRR and its German member company Kombiverkehr from the consulting firm TIM Consult revealed that, following the introduction of trucks with a length of 25 m, 55% of CT traffic would return to the road and would involve a 24% increase in journeys by trucks, which would represent a very substantial change in the competitive positions of transport modes. Existing rolling stock would have to be adapted and all investments agreed to by the companies concerned in wagons, locomotives and

craneable loading units on the one hand as well as the infrastructure financed by the public authorities on the other would be greatly devalued. In addition, the roads are not designed to withstand the stress of increased weights, and mountain roads involving bridges and tunnels would particularly give rise to problems. The same consideration obviously applies to the servicing of

cities which often takes place on narrow and winding streets. The possible establishment, on the outskirts of cities, of specific relay points for the transfer of the loading units from traditional trucks to gigaliners and vice versa would also entail enormous investments. Increased weights and dimensions therefore do not, as far as UIRR is concerned, in any way constitute a solution to the problems of road transport. UIRR therefore appeals to the Authorities to keep Directive 96/53 in force as it guarantees to the various modes of transport relatively fair access to the market. It is much more important to take measures to enhance the efficiency and productivity of the RUs which would also be beneficial for CT.

**DIOMIS** In the context of the DIOMIS project (Developing Infrastructure and Operating Models for Intermodal Shift) the UIC seeks, in cooperation with its partners, possibilities for improving the use of the rail network as well as of CT transshipment areas in order to continue to promote the transfer of transport from road to rail. DIOMIS consists of 9 work packages and is aimed at supporting new forms of collaboration and at optimising the use of capacities at terminals. In 2004, the UIC and UIRR commissioned a study on "infrastructure capacity reserves", and this aspect will again be examined, inter alia, in the context of the DIOMIS package. The initial results were presented on 12 October at a workshop in Paris.



## UIRR rejects the draft Regulation of the European Commission on enhancing security in the transport chain

UIRR basically welcomes all effective proposals aimed at fighting international terrorism. However, the enactment of such a wide-ranging legal measure should be preceded by a consistent analysis of the risks involved so that the existing danger potential can be correctly evaluated.

With its proposal for a Regulation, the Commission wishes - in addition to the one for air and maritime security - to create a system for land transport security in order to protect the entire supply chain against terrorist attacks. A voluntary certification of "secure operators" is proposed which would guarantee certain security standards and which could use simplified procedures at customs and at external borders without, however, drawing a distinction between the objective danger to the goods transported and the transport companies which are respectively active. The result, however, would be considerable administrative

work for the companies and Authorities of the Member States, the usefulness of which has not been established. Thus the cost of establishing national control Authorities would be several million euros .

Also making matters worse would be the additional costs, amounting to billions of euros, which would have to be paid by the transport companies participating in this certification, irrespective of their individual danger situation; these costs would have to be proved and be proportional only in a few cases relating to the protection envisaged against terrorist attacks .

Moreover, uncertified companies would be at a considerable competitive disadvantage at customs and at external borders. This would be inconsistent with the deregulation aimed at as well as with the strengthening of European competitiveness in the context of the Lisbon Strategy .

## Freight transport logistics in Europe - UIRR position

In the summer 2006, the European Commission published communication (COM (2006) 336) on freight transport logistics. In this document, it defends the idea that "logistics can increase the efficiency of individual modes of transport and their combinations . . . Shifts to more environmentally friendly modes must be achieved . . . At the same time each transport mode must be optimised." Whereas in the definition of the scope of the document it is stated that "developing freight transport logistics is primarily . . . a task for the industry" and that "nevertheless, the Authorities have a clear role to play in creating the appropriate framework conditions . . .", in this communication the Commission is clearly intervening by making a series of proposals which fall within the competence of the industry. UIRR is of the opinion that, as a matter of priority, the Commission should focus on the points which the industry itself cannot resolve: a more resolute way of acting in regard to liberalisation of the railway market, compliance with the competition rules, technical interoperability as well as investments to regulate the lack of capacity on the rail network .

As for certification of terminal quality and as for the one proposed for the logisticians, UIRR believes that the Commission should not intervene too much in the market seeing that an increase in "labels" of all kinds entails red tape, interference and therefore unnecessary problems without, however, guaranteeing better quality or efficiency for the system. Another important aspect of freight transport logistics is responsibility in intermodal transport. To date, no uniform agreement on the responsibility rules has been reached which would cover all modes of transport at world level. That is why several years ago UIRR drew up conditions completely covering members and clients, from delivery of an intermodal loading unit at the departure terminal to its removal at the destination terminal.

Despite these initiatives, which each day prove useful, UIRR as in the past shows an interest in a uniform system of responsibility provided that it covers in an integrated way both road and sea transport and the intermodal transport chain .

## Visit to the Dourges terminal together with the DG TREN



On 24 October 2006, UIRR arranged a visit to the LDCT Delta 3

terminal in Dourges (Northern France) for the Inland Transport Directorate of the DG TREN. On the UIRR side, Chairman of the Board Eugenio Muzio as well as the two Directors-General, Rudy Colle and Martin Burkhardt, participated. LDCT is both an internal port and an intermodal logistic centre and thus combines three different modes of transport: road, rail and inland waterways. LDCT is located on a road giving direct access to the A1 Lille-Paris motorway and has two separate rail access routes and the wide Deûle canal which gives access to the major European ports. After

presentations by the UIRR Bureau and by Tony Struyf (TRW), the manager of LDCT, Hervé Joseph-Teyssier (Novatrans), in a brief presentation told about the key data and operation of the terminal. The Director of the Inland Transport Department, Mr E. Grillo-Pasquarelli, and his team followed with great interest these various presentations as well as the explanation given by the operations manager, Nelly Severac, during the guided visit to the terminal. The guests were impressed by the size and functionality of the terminal and were able to familiarise themselves with the practice of intermodal transport.

This rewarding excursion was closed with a lunch offered by UIRR and which made it possible to continue the exchanges of ideas and to get to know one another better.

## Codification in Combined Transport

In the context of their common organisation, INTERUNIT, the UIRR companies and railway undertakings (RUs) which are members of the Combined Transport Group of the UIC have developed a coding system which makes it possible to dispatch Combined Transport (CT) consignments without a hitch on major European railway lines, even those regularly exceeding the standard railway line gauge.

Thanks to coding of the lines, loading units and wagons, it can be easily ascertained whether a loading unit put on a wagon can be dispatched on a specified line. The current system is based on the RIV contract which refers once again to UIC sheets. Previously, these two systems were compulsory for RU members of the UIC and CT operators and served to ensure the safety and speed of dispatch by CT. In the meantime, the entire European legal framework has changed and it does not seem relevant to agree contractually, as was previously the case, on rules between market players which have now become numerous. At its last meeting at the end of October in Bad Godesberg, the INTERUNIT

Technical Committee therefore proposed to record such conditions in a GCU annex relating to CT. A working group of experts from the UIC and UIRR companies was created. The latter will be responsible for a draft annex which will be open to all GCU members. An initial meeting of this group will be held on 19.12.06 in the UIRR offices in Brussels.

### New member



On the occasion of the 2006 UIRR General Assembly, Polzug, the Hamburg based CT operator, has become a member of the European network of combined transport companies. Created 15 years ago, Polzug dispatches mainly complete train-loads with containers from Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Rotterdam through the turntable of Poland and from there the containers are dispatched to the CIS countries and the new Member States in South-Eastern Europe. In the previous year, Polzug dispatched 75,000 TEUs, while for the current year more than 100,000 TEUs are planned. UIRR is happy with the membership of this new member and is delighted at the good collaboration which has been established ([www.polzug.de](http://www.polzug.de)).



## SINGER

On 8 June 2006, a conference was organised in Ljubljana in Slovenia for the purpose of presenting the initial results of the SINGER project which was supported for two years by the European Commission in the context of the MARCO POLO programme. The objective of this important project, at the crossing of the V and X corridors of the TENs, is to transfer 330 million tonnes-kilometres from road to rail by means of rail-road combined transport. The conference was opened by Janez Susnik, President of the National Council of Slovenia.



The project coordinator, Janez Merlak (Adria Kombi), announced that during the eight months of the initiative, the project operators (Adria Kombi, Cemat and Kombiverkehr) had transferred more than 85 million tkm even though some links planned under the project were not yet at the disposal of customers, in particular the direct train between Verona (I) and Ljubljana (SLO).

## TREND

On 4 July 2006, the partners of the TREND project organised in Paris a conference on the theme "Preparing the rail freight of the future". In its statement, UIRR recalled it had been (and will further be) a principal player in the search for the improvement of quality in the area of rail freight. Moreover, since 1999 it had increased its initiatives, in particular by conducting a study on this subject with its partners and by drawing up statistics on the punctuality of rail-road CT trains. The importance of concluding fair quality contracts for the sector was also emphasised. It is a fact that, while the number of these contracts is steadily increasing, UIRR has doubts about their real impact on the market because trains are really not more punctual than previously. To remedy this, railway companies should "produce" in a different way, in particular through the establishment of continuous traction between two yards.

**FASTLINK** In collaboration with UIRR, the Cemat, Novatrans and TRW companies have launched the project Marco Polo FASTLINK. In the context of such a "catalyst action", an especially fast link will be created for the first time on a major international line. The aim is to open the express freight transport market to the railways thanks to wagons which can travel at a speed of up to 140 km/h and to connect Belgium to Northern Italy in only 18 hours. Thus journey time could be better than on the road and competition will be in terms of productivity and quality rather than price. In December, the project partners will issue a call for tenders for traction on the Genk (B) - Novare (I) link.

### Agenda

GCU Codification Working Group  
BRAVO – Closing Conference  
Interunit Technical Committee  
UIRR General Assembly

19.12.2006  
April 2007 (week 16)  
22 + 23 May 2007  
25.06.2007

Brussels (B)  
Munich (D)  
Dourges (F)  
Brussels (B)



UIRR srl

31 rue Montoyer bte 11

B - 1000 Brussels

Tel. +32 2 548 78 90

Fax +32 2 512 63 93

E-mail headoffice.brussels@uirr.com

Internet www.uirr.com