

Transport organisations promote best practice

Several European transport industry associations came together on UIRR's initiative to jointly identify best practice in a series of important aspects of intermodal transport, and then to collaborate to achieve their broad-scale acceptance and adoption within the sector.

The DESTINY (DEployment of STandards for INtermodal efficiencY) Project, organised under the Common Learning Action of the European Commission's Marco Polo Programme, has focused on the collection and dissemination of best practice in the identification and codification of intermodal loading units (ILU), load securing and dangerous goods handling, as well as certain horizontal aspects of intermodal transport, such as the use of optical character recognition (OCR) technologies, the development of eLearning tools and a European database for ILUs.

The final conference of the DESTINY Project, hosted by CEN on 18 June in Brussels, lined up the representatives of CER, CLECAT, EFIP, IRU, UIC, UIP and UIRR, the coordinator of this unique joint activity, to inform the multitude of sector representatives in attendance. These European transport organisations agreed that "standardisation by the sector for the sector" is a much more desirable (voluntary) method of coming to a common platform - indispensable for freight transport to function efficiently - than the alternate forms of government imposed regulation.

Besides the definition of standards and the development of best practice guidelines, the importance of an organised and coordinated promotion effort was also pointed out at the event, which is absolutely necessary to achieve a widespread understanding by the affected stakeholders, and ultimately the alignment of their daily operations.

UIRR, the industry association of road-rail Combined Transport operators and transshipment terminal managers, has long been advocating a harmonisation in the identification regime of intermodal loading units (ILU) used in the European area with the worldwide recognised BIC-Code for containers. The proposed changes were included into the standard EN13044, which created the ILU-Code to facilitate the easy and internationally compatible owner identification of European loading units. The standard named UIRR as the Administrator of the ILU-Code [for more information see www.ilu-code.eu]. The ILU-Code was also featured among the topics of the DESTINY initiative.

Freight logistics serves the entire society and facilitates the competitive functioning of the economy, hence its efficiency, safety, smooth and reliable operation is a common interest. The aims to disseminate standards and best practice within the DESTINY Project to the stakeholders of the intermodal transport sector were recognised by the European Commission, which awarded a 50% support to the overall budget of €883.000 that was the cost of the activities of 24 months.

The detailed results of the project can be found on the www.destiny-project.eu website.



Ralf-Charley Schultze

"The rarely seen unity of Brussels-based transport organisations, which was embodied in the DESTINY initiative, is superb evidence for the sector's ability to collaborate when it comes to issues that serve the benefit of all. UIRR hopes that it will be able to participate in many more such cooperative efforts in the future to advance the cause of intermodality." - remarked Director General Ralf-Charley Schultze on the occasion.

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).