

Conclusions of Vienna (AT)
(7.May 2009)

Conclusions of the Transport Ministers within the Framework of the Follow-up Process to the Declaration of Zurich Vienna (AT), 7 May 2009

On 30 November 2001, in the presence of representatives of the European Commission and on the initiative of Switzerland, the Ministers of Transport of Germany, Austria, France, Italy and Switzerland adopted the “Declaration of Zurich concerning the improvement of road safety, in particular in tunnels in the Alpine zone”, in the light of serious accidents in the Alpine tunnels. Since then, three meetings of the Ministers have taken place in order to consider the progress of the work and to adjust priorities, i.e. in Regensburg on 11 May 2004, in Sedrun on 14 November 2005 and in Lyon on 20 October 2006, when Slovenia joined the group as a member.

The fourth meeting – now under Austrian Presidency - of the Ministers of Transport or their representatives, held on 7 May 2009 in Vienna, aims at taking note of the results of the intensive work carried out under the current Presidency, acknowledging the achieved progress and determining further steps of procedure.

According to the mandate of Lyon 2006, the organs of the Zurich Process have dealt with the following items:

Control and Regulation of road traffic in the Alpine regions

- Commissioning a study on the preconditions for the implementation of new systems for the regulation of transalpine road freight transport.
- Definition of principles, a timetable and prerequisites for incident management in the Alpine area.

Mobility in Alpine regions

Examining the possibility of a common data collection in the field of transalpine passenger transport.

Traffic safety in the Alps

Activities in the field of “safety in rail tunnels”.

State of the activities:

Heavy goods traffic management systems in the Alpine region

In view of the target to permanently improve the safety of transalpine transport, to better cope with road freight transport in a sustainable way, to provide the necessary infrastructure and to promote alternative types of transport, in particular rail transport, a study on “Best Research on Traffic Management Systems for Transalpine Road Freight Transport”, with the financial support of all members of the Zurich Group and the European Commission, has been carried out. The study aims at identifying appropriate traffic management systems for sensitive areas where such measures are feasible. It describes the process of searching, evaluating and assessing different concepts in order to find the most suitable solutions for traffic management systems for transalpine road freight transport. For the purpose of monitoring this study, a so called “Advisory Board” working group under the chairmanship of Austria, has been set up.

Based on the study, this Advisory Board has elaborated a presidency paper (including a summary) which is to serve as a basis for the decision of the Ministers of Transport. This presidency paper has been approved by the Steering Committee. The presidency paper especially focuses on the forecast of freight transport growth during 3 time periods (from now onwards to 2015, from 2016 to the early 2020ies, from 2020 to 2030), furthermore a special attention is attached to the specific situation of the environment in the Alpine region as well as the global international environmental targets (Kyoto, NEC directive). Taking into account all these mentioned aspects and the available capacities for this purpose, the different traffic management systems were analysed and evaluated in – depth and a final assessment and recommendations were made.

However, the forecast of freight transport growth, on which the study is based, did not take into account the subsequent economic global crisis, whose effects of recession could take a long time, whilst any measures would generate high costs and price rise.

In compliance with the recommendations, the Ministers of Transport or their representatives decide:

To phase the possible measures aiming at regulating the transalpine road freight transport, according to the availability of new rail infrastructures (especially Gotthard, LTF and BBT tunnels) as far as competitive rail services:

- In a **first** phase, to promote the introduction of less polluting EURO class, in particular EURO 6 as soon as it will be available on the market. In this respect, measures such as Toll modulation or special incentives according to Euro Classes will be taken into consideration in the Alpine area for possible implementation in compliance with current legal regulations and existing legal obligations in the individual countries, such as those, for example, relating to motorway concessions.

In the meantime, to endeavour to find a balanced compromise in the current discussion of the revision of Eurovignette directive.

Furthermore, to start investigations on the conditions to implement measures foreseen for the following phases.

- In a **second** phase, to examine the possible implementation of the “Toll +” concept, depending on the concrete outcomes of the revision of Eurovignette directive, in order to tackle the increasing negative effects of noise, CO2 emission and capacity constraints.
- In the **third** phase, to reach a significant modal shift in accordance with increasing rail capacity. In this respect the implementation of limitative concepts (ACE, ETS) and other possible incentive measures will be taken into consideration to support this politics.

The traffic management systems ACE, ETS and TOLL+, indicated in the presidency paper, seem indeed to be most suitable to master road freight transport in a sustainable way, i.e. reducing the environmental effects of road transport, enabling a

modal shift and improving transport safety. Nevertheless for all these systems further investigations are needed before their possible implementation, taking into account that these systems in any case shall not hamper the exchange of goods and economic growth and furthermore shall be conforming to the EC law as well as to applicable national laws.

Therefore the Ministers of Transport or their representatives entrust the Steering Committee with the following mandates:

- 1) Concerning the period until a final implementation of one of the systems mentioned above, to agree on the introduction and promotion of Euro 6 in the Alpine area at the earliest possible stage and to investigate all legal and technical conditions for this purpose.
- 2) For these three systems mentioned above (TOLL+; ACE, ETS) a comprehensive study for a possible future introduction should be carried out. Especially the following aspects have to be investigated in a fully detailed way
 - legislative background (EU- and national laws – necessary changes)
 - procedures for the definition of systems with thresholds
 - measures to be taken in the case of a staggered introduction of the systems in the individual countries
 - final spatial definitions and accompanying measures (to solve the detour problematic), also including more detailed capacity and services considerations for the rail and road sectors
 - economic effects at national and regional level of each country in connection with the above mentioned features, including the economic, logistical, social and employment-related impacts upon road hauliers.

Incident management in the Alpine area

Following the mandate of Lyon 2006, a specific working group on “Incident management in the Alpine area” under the chairmanship of Switzerland was set up. This working group focused on three main issues:

Elaborating a consensual definition of the term “incident” and a definition of the main transit axes, developing a standardised reporting system to guarantee communication and precise information between the countries involved. Furthermore the working group has started to establish a specific web site in order to complete this before mentioned reporting system with the aim to keep costs and time requirements to a minimum, to secure that this information will be provided in an efficient, less expensive and quick way and to provide road users with “up-to-date” information in the whole Alpine region. Finally the working group has elaborated a standardised course of action to be taken in the case of an incident and has compiled a list of three categories of potential measures. The first two categories mainly contain examples of technical or administrative measures, the third category already concerns political and legal measures. By drawing up this overview, the working party followed the approach that, in the case of an incident, measures have to meet the following conditions: they must be feasible, must be applied without delay by using simple procedures and they must be conceived in a manner that means they can be implemented easily, quickly and flexibly; or in other words appropriate measures should be defined that are tailored to the place, type and duration of the incident, i.e. the right measures are to be taken at the right time at the right place.

At this stage the Ministers of Transport or their representatives decided to conclude on the definition of the term “incident” and on the definition of the main transit axes, on the general approach in case of an incident, to take note of the three categories of measures and follow the recommendation of the working group, approved by the Steering Committee, as contained in the “Abstract of the Report of the Working Group on Incident Management in the Alpine Area”.

Being aware that further activities are necessary, the Ministers of Transport or their representatives entrust the Steering Committee with the following **mandates**:

- to further deepen and develop the measures as regards their feasibility and concrete application on the alpine axes
- to finalise the concept of incident and situation reporting, taking especially into account the aspects listed in the abstract report under chapter 4.

- regarding the web site to further finalise the concept, structure and contents of the web site, including financial and organisational issues (webmaster), taking into account the items listed in the abstract report under chapter 5.

Mobility in Alpine region

In the line with the mandate of Lyon 2006, the results of CAFT 04 were published and an own web site for the “Zurich Process” was created. Besides the inter active presentation of the manifold results of the study the web pages allow to communicate the total work of the Zurich process to a broader public. The pages are available in the English, German, French, Italian and Slovenian languages.

On the occasion of today´s convention the “Zurich Process homepage” will be presented and the Ministers of Transport or their representatives have been invited to solemnly activate the “Zurich Process homepage. .

Currently the CAFT data are being updated. In Switzerland, France, Austria and – this year for the first time – also in Slovenia lorry drivers are interviewed to obtain a reliable picture of transalpine freight transport. Data from railway undertakings are collected as well. Italy will provide its own data. Thus, in the same way as in 2004, a description of transalpine transport will be elaborated which all Alpine countries can approve. The survey has already started in Switzerland and Austria, the other countries expecting a start rather soon.

Furthermore, the Alpine countries will provide accurate updates of this data.

The experts also investigated which data sources for passenger transport are available in the different Alpine countries. Due to the heterogeneous situation, in order to obtain harmonised data it would be necessary to carry out a harmonised survey in all Alpine countries comparable to the one carried out for freight transport.

The Ministers of Transport or their representatives concluded:

- to publish the web pages of the Zurich process and to updated them regularly.

- to finalise the CAFT survey 09 and to publish the results commonly in due time.
- to take further efforts to broaden the supply of information on transalpine transport, also including passenger transport. The inclusion of existing data sources is intended to help minimising the input of resources.

Traffic safety in the Alps

Safety in the large transalpine railway tunnels

In order to assess whether it would be useful to set up exchanges of experiences on travel safety in the large railway tunnels, the Steering Committee asked the French delegation to carry out an evaluation. A national expert in transport safety was commissioned by France to meet major stakeholders in charge of the operation and safety of the existing main transalpine railway tunnels, and to address the most important topics in this field. After that, a meeting was organised on December, 12th 2008 in Paris, with experts, administrative senior executives and tunnel or network managers from countries of the Zurich Process in order to exchange experiences.

The main objective of the evaluation was not to compare the safety levels, but to examine the different approaches and procedures in force in the tunnels as a result of the operating conditions and the technical equipment used in the various tunnels over a period of several years of operation.

The results showed that the safety level in rail transport is very high, and considerably higher than in road transport. However, specific risks to tunnels can result in serious or even catastrophic events, and thus require specific assessment.

Special attention must be paid to four topics in the light of the growing traffic volume and current operational trends :

- 1) Hazardous goods transport ;
- 2) Combined transport (e.g. rolling road) ;
- 3) Methods for intervention, fire fighting and rescue work ;

- 4) Monitoring of developments throughout the rail transport system as regards risks in tunnel

The report suggests a regular assessment of these four topics to harmonise the operating conditions on the various lines and to facilitate crossing the Alps.

The Ministers of Transport or their representatives decide :

- to take note of the conclusions of the report, based on the exchanges between experts and on the results of December 12th 2008 meeting in Paris ;
- to welcome the principle of regular exchanges on the safety in the major alpine rail tunnels ;
- to mandate France to organize the next meeting.

New Presidency

The Ministers of Transport or their representatives thank the Austrian Presidency for the activities carried out. They decide unanimously to entrust Switzerland with the Presidency for the years 2009 – 2011. After the Swiss Presidency, the Presidency will pass first of all to Germany, then to Italy and then to Slovenia and will subsequently be continued according to the rotation principle applied in the past, once again starting with Switzerland.

Approved in Vienna (AT) on 7 May 2009