

**Resolutions of Sedrun (CH)**  
**(14.11.2005)**

## ***Zurich Group***

### ***Resolutions of the Meeting in Sedrun – 14 November 2005***

In the run-up to the Conference of Ministers planned for 2006 the transport ministers of the countries in the Alpine arc gathered for an interim meeting at the invitation of the French and Swiss ministers in order to inform themselves about the work that is currently in progress and to affirm their expectations with regard to safety, the regulation of road traffic and the promotion of rail transport as an alternative means of transport for trans-alpine freight traffic.

The fire in the Fréjus road tunnel (France-Italy) on 4 June this year which resulted in two fatalities and the closure of the tunnel for two months, demonstrates that the issue of safety is still vitally important for Alpine crossings, over which more than 130 million tonnes of freight were transported by more than 10 million lorries in 2004.

Even if the level of road traffic has stabilised or declined on Swiss crossings and in the entire Mont Blanc/Fréjus area, it is continuously rising on crossings in the eastern region of the Alpine arc (between Austria, Italy and Slovenia) and in the south (between France and Italy, on the routes between the Iberian Peninsula and southern Europe). On the whole, the share of rail transport has remained low: 32.6% in 2004, with Switzerland as the only country in which railways account for almost 65% of the total tonnage transported across the Alps.

It is essential to promote alternatives to road transport which could provide a substitute for much of the freight transport by road. The prerequisite for this is the construction of efficient railway structures that are able to offer users appropriate levels of service. In the meantime, possibilities must be sought without delay to manage current road traffic and its development more efficiently and to improve the quality of service of the existing rail axes. This is just as important in relation to the European trade routes as in relation to the life space of local residents and their access routes.

After hearing the reports of the chairs of the working groups, the ministers confirmed acknowledgement of the report of the French presidency of the Steering Committee regarding the work that has been initiated since the most recent Conference of Transport Ministers in Regensburg, and the joint mandate drawn up for the next Conference of Transport Ministers in 2006. They also thanked the members of the working groups for the work they have already carried out since the conference in Regensburg.

In order to prepare properly for the forthcoming Conference of Ministers in 2006, they request the Steering Committee and its working groups to take into account the following additions.

## **1. Safety Issues**

### **Safety of Road and Railway Tunnels**

The Ministers reaffirm their commitment to implementing the European Directive 2004/54/EC of 29 April 2004 on road tunnels into national law in the individual member states.

In 2006 the working group will present its conclusions regarding the studies on railway tunnels that have been initiated by various international bodies and specify which additional measures would be useful to meet the requirements in relation to the particular conditions of the long tunnels, especially in mountainous terrain.

It examines under which conditions measures for coach travel in Alpine tunnels of the kind recently adopted for the Fréjus road tunnel could be reinforced.

### **Technical Safety of Vehicles**

The ministers thank the working group for its review of the current situation and the first proposals regarding the decisions to be made at the next conference in 2006.

Proposals of the French delegation:

- In order to better base the decisions that are to be made in 2006 on these proposals, each Alpine country will draw up for its own territory an overview of the practical experiences they have had with incidents and accidents caused by lorries and coaches suddenly catching fire, including the causes of such incidents, and the impact of easily flammable materials which are not classified as hazardous goods. These results will subsequently be examined by the working group Vehicle Safety. The schedule for this work should be structured so that the first recommendations are available for the next Conference of Ministers in 2006.
- In the name of the transport ministers of the Alpine countries, the French minister, the current President of the Zurich Group, stresses to the international authorities which are responsible for driving tests (lorries and coaches) and the further training of long-distance lorry drivers, the importance of including the unique aspects of driving in tunnels in general, and in long tunnels in particular, in both the theory parts of driving tests for car and lorry drivers and in vocational training.
- The member states of the European Union agree to raise the awareness of the European Commission for this issue, in particular with a view to ensuring that long tunnels are included in the drafting of Directive 2003-59 on the qualifications for drivers of certain vehicle types. They will also take care that these are included in national legislation pertaining to driver training, and in the further implementation and conclusion of agreements between the European Union and Switzerland.

## **2. Topics concerning the Promotion of Intermodality, the Management and Regulation of Road Traffic**

### **Promoting Alternatives to Road Traffic**

The ministers reaffirm the importance of providing every possible form of support for rail freight without waiting for the major Alpine base tunnels to be taken into operation. They welcome the steps that have already been taken with regard to the two major

corridors Gotthard and Brenner.

In view of the forthcoming meeting in 2006 the ministers agree to examine 5-10-year projects for measures in connection with railway corridors for which there are as yet no such projects to improve service quality, especially on the existing link Lyon-Turin ( + Tauern, Wechsel? Semmering?... corridors).

### **Management and Regulation of Road Traffic in the Alpine Arc**

The working group will present the conclusions from its work at the next Conference of Ministers in 2006, in particular the analysis of the questionnaire sent to the stakeholders in Alpine traffic, giving particular attention to the following points:

- Starting from the advantages and disadvantages of the existing traffic management systems the possibility of extending to the entire Alpine arc certain measures that have already been introduced in one of the Alpine countries; within which timeframe and under which conditions?
- The possibility and (the technical, economic and temporal) preconditions for the introduction of systems to regulate freight transit traffic on roads, such as, for example, reservation systems, or to reduce this traffic, the transit exchange, for the entire Alpine arc.
- The localisation of legal obstacles, in particular those obstacles arising from the application of EU law and which could hinder the implementation or development of the proposals, or however, appear best suited to facilitating them.

### **Control of Regulation for Road Traffic, in particular the Social Regulations**

The sub-group completes its analysis of the current situation regarding the control measures implemented in the Alpine states and in 2006 will suggest possible improvements. It will explain which importance these have for the Alpine arc and whether they can be implemented directly by the Alpine states or whether they fall under other jurisdictions.

The French secretariat will contact the competent EU and UN authorities in order to learn which consequences the proposals made by the special EU-UN working group in 2002 have had and will present a report to the next Conference of Ministers on the approach. For its part, the working group will examine what progress has been made in the voluntary implementation of these measures by the Alpine states.

### **Mobility Study**

The ministers welcomed the completion of the mobility survey 2004 and congratulated all teams which had contributed to it in the individual countries. They also requested the working group to present its conclusions from the analysis, as far as they are available, to the Conference of Ministers in 2006.

The ministers reminded the working group that they would like the group to carry out a comparison of the transport perspectives of the major trans-alpine railway projects and request their respective officials to ensure that the working group receives the active support of the management companies.