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Working Party on Road Transport

Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport

Twenty-first session
Geneva, 17 June 2019

Report of the Group of Experts on the European Agreement concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport on its twenty-first session

I. Attendance

1. The AETR Group of Experts held its twenty-first session in Geneva on 17 June 2019, chaired by Mr. R. Symonenko (Ukraine).
2. Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great and Northern Ireland.
3. The European Union, the European Commission on Joint Research Centre (JRC), and the following non-governmental organizations were represented: Association of International Road Carriers, Confederation of Organization in Road Transport Enforcement (Corte), In Group, International Road Transport Union (IRU), Mintrans Russia, FSI Rosavtotrans, National Association of Automobile and Urban Passenger Transport Enterprises, and Stoneridge.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

4. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/48).

III. Programme of Work

A. Development of proposals for amending the AETR Agreement, including Article 22bis

5. The experts from the Russian Federation and European Commission provided updates on their positions (indicated in ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.3) a possible amendment to the AETR Agreement, in particular to Article 22bis. While both parties largely reiterated their previous positions, they also reported on measurable progress achieved during recent bilateral consultations (see agenda item 2(b) below). The Chair reiterated that the

discussions on Article 22bis (and other relevant provisions) take place simultaneously with work on Appendix 1C, and thus, in future, all amendment proposals are expected to be consolidated.

B. Appendix 1C

6. At the last session, the Group of Experts requested the European Commission to amend draft Annex 1C (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2018/1) to incorporate the proposed/requested changes contained in Informal document Nos. 2, 6 and 7, and to submit ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2018/1/Rev.1. In lieu, the European Commission – for this session - submitted Informal documents No.1 and No.2. Informal document No. 1 contains tables of equivalence between Annex 1C in Regulation (European Union) 2016/799 and the AETR Agreement while Informal document No. 2 contains amendment proposals (identified in track changes) which aim at modifying the European Union “Annex IC” into Appendix 1C of the AETR Agreement. The latter document does propose to remove all references to European Union legislation and replace them with references to the appropriate AETR terminology.

7. The Group did not review the informal documents (nor did it resume its discussions of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2018/1), however it held in-depth discussion focusing on three main outstanding issues (in relation to Appendix 1C). First, the data protection concerns which according to the Russian Federation and EC can be resolved by an appropriate formulation in Appendix 1C. Second, the strength of DSRC signal transmission which may make the DSRC system non-operational. Third, the use of CEN references in the context of DSRC which still require to be addressed. The Chair invited the Group of Experts to provide -for the next session-specific amendment proposals addressing all three outstanding issues using Informal document No. 2 for that purpose.

C. Dedicated short range communication

8. At the last session, the Russian Federation proposed that the Group of Experts consider the possibility of switching off Dedicated Short-Range Communications (DSRC) manually or automatically in countries where its use may not be legal. The Group of Experts agreed that the use of the road-side DSRC equipment is optional while DSRC components embedded in the vehicle unit are mandatory. Given that the vehicle unit’s DSRC can only be activated upon receiving a signal from the road side DSRC equipment, prohibiting (or not employing) the road-side DSRC equipment appears to be sufficient.

D. Application of Regulation (European Commission) No. 561/2006 in the “AETR area”

9. The Group of Experts briefly reviewed this topic and agreed to keep this item on the agenda so that it can be revisited at future sessions if so desired.

IV. Amendment of Article 14

10. The secretariat informed the Group of Experts that in order to accommodate the request of the Government of Egypt to amend Article 14 (to make the country eligible to accede), an AETR contracting party is required to formally submit an amendment proposal-to such effect-to the Secretary-General.

V. TACHOnet

11. At the last session, the Group requested that the European Commission submit ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2019/1/Rev.1 for the next session taking into account the feedback received on the graphs, diagrams and references to European Union and European

Commission regulations in Informal document No. 4 (February 2019). Due to an oversight, ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2019/1/Rev.1 has not been translated into French and Russian. The secretariat explained the changes and advised that the above-mentioned document in three languages will be available for the twenty-second session.

VI. Reconciliation of “AETR regimes” in the European Union and non-European Union contracting parties after 15 June 2019

12. At the last session, the Group of Experts agreed on a set of high-level principles to reconcile the AETR regime in European Union and non-European Union contracting parties after 15 June 2019 (Annex of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/47). The Group also agreed that the non-European Union AETR contracting parties would provide their agreement or objection to the high-level principles in writing to the secretariat by 15 March 2019. The secretariat has received letters from eight non-European Union AETR contracting parties. Six were in support of the high-level principles (Georgia, Liechtenstein, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine), while one was not in support (Russian Federation), and one conditionally supported the principles (Belarus).

13. The Group of Experts committed to intensifying its work with the objective of finalizing Appendix 1C within one year (that is, by 15 October 2020). In parallel, the Group agreed to continue formal and informal discussions on the high-level principles with the objective to potentially make a proposal to the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) at its next meeting.

14. The Group of Experts requested the European Commission to consider the possibility of installing and servicing smart tachographs in countries which are non-European Union members.

15. The European Commission provided information on its Group of Experts on Smart Tachograph which focuses on technical issues. It will provide updates on the work of their working group, the conclusions of which will have an impact on the European Union legislation.

VII. Other Business

16. The secretariat informed the Group of Experts that its request to extend the mandate (which was to expire on 30 June 2019) has been agreed by the Inland Transport Committee (as well as by the Executive Committee). The Group of Experts may continue its work until 30 June 2021 (subject to future extensions if deemed necessary).

17. The Group of Experts did not discuss other business.

VIII. Date and Place of Next Meeting

18. The next meeting is scheduled for 15 October 2019 in Palais des Nations in Geneva. The deadline for the submission of formal documents is 31 July 2019.

IX. Adoption of the report

19. The Group of Experts adopted the report of its twenty-first session.