



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

TRANS/WP.24/2003/8  
22 July 2003

Original: ENGLISH

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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

Working Party on Combined Transport

(Fortieth session, 29 September – 1 October 2003,  
agenda item 12)

**COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF  
TRANSPORT (ECMT)<sup>1/</sup>**

**Note by the UNECE secretariat**

**A. BACKGROUND AND MANDATE**

1. During the review of its organization and working methods undertaken by the Working Party at its thirty-eighth session, it was agreed that in view of the close relation between the subjects treated in the Working Party and in the ECMT Working Group on Combined Transport and given that the delegates attending the two groups are often the same, the possibility of organizing back-to-back or joint sessions in one and the same location should be considered. (TRANS/WP.24/97, para. 73). The Inland Transport Committee, at its sixty-fifth session in February 2003, endorsed in principle the approach taken by the Working Party in this respect and stressed the necessity of pursuing the review process in close cooperation with the ECMT (TRANS/2003/13; ECE/TRANS/152, para. 95).

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<sup>1/</sup> Circulated by the ECMT under the symbol ECMT/CS/COMB(2003)1.

2. At its thirty-ninth session, the Working Party requested the secretariat and its Chair and Vice-chair to prepare, in cooperation with the Chairperson of the ECMT Group on Combined Transport, representatives of the European Commission and other interested delegations, a new programme of work for the Working Party as well as a new concept for the organization of its work (TRANS/WP.24/99, para. 12).

3. In accordance with this mandate, the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Working Party met on 20 June 2003 with representatives of the ECMT and the European Commission (DG TREN) as well with a few experts and the UNECE secretariat and considered how to streamline the working procedures and the relevant institutional machineries of ECMT and UNECE in this field.

## **B. PROPOSED COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

4. It is proposed to establish a “Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group on Intermodal Transport” consisting respectively of an ECMT and an UNECE segment. Such a Joint Meeting would ensure coordination of the respective activities of the ECMT and UNECE inter-governmental bodies, whereby ECMT would focus on the political aspects of work and UNECE on the relevant technical and legal aspects of intermodal transport.

5. In principle, this Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group would be organized annually under the auspices of ECMT during a (in principle) two day spring session in Paris and under the auspices of the UNECE during a (in principle) three day autumn session in Geneva. This arrangement, proposed to be applicable as of 2004, would result in the following structure:

Spring session (to be hosted by ECMT in Paris)

2 day session

First day: ECMT segment

Second day: UNECE segment

Scheduled date: 24-25 March 2004

Autumn session (to be hosted by UNECE in Geneva)

3 day session

First day: ECMT segment

Second and third day: UNECE segment

Scheduled date: 27-29 September 2004

6. The ECMT secretariat would provide conference facilities for the spring session and the UNECE secretariat would provide conference services for the autumn session of the Joint Working Party/Group (interpretation, back-up secretariat assistance, etc.). This would include at least

interpretation services from and into English, French and Russian. The ECMT and UNECE secretariats will provide the respective professional secretariat services as well as preparation and translation of documentation, including agendas and reports, for their respective segments in line with applicable rules and procedures established by the competent OECD (Paris) and UNOG (Geneva) conference services.

7. The Terms of Reference as well as all applicable rules of procedure and established practices of the two organizations will apply with regard to their segments of the meeting. This also holds true for the participation of Governments, IGOs, NGOs and other observers at the respective segments.

8. In addition to the creation of the Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group on Intermodal Transport, it is envisaged to organize, possibly in autumn 2004, a joint ECMT/UNECE Seminar on the consequences on the organization of intermodal transport in Europe resulting from the development of intermodal transport services on interregional rail links between Europe and Asia to be held in a CIS country (possibly Ukraine). This should include the participation of relevant international organizations in Europe and Asia (e.g. ESCAP, UNCTAD, EC, OSZhD, etc.).

9. The Working Party may wish to consider the above proposals with a view to their adoption and transmission to the Inland Transport Committee for approval at its February 2004 session.

10. The ECMT will also consider this proposal in its Combined Transport Group to be held on 25 November 2003. This proposal and its consequences should then be included in the triennial programme of work of the Conference to be submitted to the Council of Ministers to be held in May 2004 in Ljubljana.

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