ECG News

Truck Ship Compound Train Barge

ECG – The Association of European Vehicle Logistics

Issue 15.12, 23rd – 27th March 2015

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ECG Spring Congress & General Assembly

28-29th May 2015, Lisbon, Portugal

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ECG & other industry events

►**ECG Maritime & Ports Meeting**, **on 23rd April**, in Koper, Slovenia

►**ECG Eastern Regional Meeting**, **on 23rd April**, in Koper, Slovenia

►**ECG Board Meeting and Spring Congress&General Assembly**, **on 28-29th May**, in Cascais, Portugal

► **ECG Quality Working Group Meeting**, **on 9th June 2015**, in Brussels, Belgium

► **ECG UK & Ireland Regional Meeting**, **on 10th June 2015**, in Liverpool, UK

►**Automotive Supply Chain Congress**, **on 10-11th June 2015**, in Liverpool, UK

►**ECG Board Meeting**, **on 7th July**, in Naples, Italy

►**ECG UK & Ireland Regional Meeting**, **on 12th November**, in London, UK

►**Automotive Supply Chain Global Awards**, **on 12th November 2015**, in London, the UK

►**ECG Russia Regional Meeting, (TBC)**

NEWS FROM BRUSSELS

ECG Annual Dinner Debate: ECG urged to continue to make its voice heard on Weights and Dimensions

*(Source: **ECG**, 25th March 2015)* Speaking last night to the almost 100 strong audience at ECG's Annual Dinner Debate, MEP Wim van de Camp, EPP Co-ordinator for the Transport Committee and Rapporteur of the Committee's own-initiative report on the implementation of the 2011 White Paper, urged ECG members to continue their long standing efforts regarding the Weights & Dimensions Directive. For more than 15 years ECG has relentlessly called for a harmonisation of maximum loaded length of car transporters across Europe to at least 20.75m. Harmonisation means a difference of up to 3 cars loaded, resulting in increased efficiency, less trucks on the roads, less costs for consumers and less CO_2 emissions.

Van de Camp praised ECG's efforts so far on making its voice heard and called on ECG not to wait until the review clause of the revised Directive 96/53 to continue its lobbying campaign but to seize the opportunities ahead, such as the upcoming "road package" in spring 2016. Furthermore he cautioned ECG members to "start your lobby in your own capitals", stressing the importance of addressing this issue at national level. "We need to find a new equilibrium between regional approaches and the 28 Member States" he said, stating that current fragmentation leads to too much compromise and hampers decision making in the Council.

Jon Kuiper, CEO of Koopman Logistics Group called for a level playing field in the transport sector, citing the problems of social dumping and lack of harmonisation of national regulations as a real impediment to the business of logistics. "We are operating on a European basis in an environment of national laws" he stated and called for harmonised European legislation with fair and consistent enforcement to prevent cumbersome national initiatives. He stressed that what the industry needs is social standards, quality jobs and legal enforcement. ECG Executive Director Mike Sturgeon put forward that "we are operating less and less in a single market and increasingly in a group of 28 individual Member States". Participants agreed that transport logistics requires an integrated policy approach, across modes and sectors and with European harmonisation.

Kuiper also addressed the issue of administrative burden and called for less bureaucracy through digitalisation. This was echoed by Sandro Santamato, Head of Unit Maritime Transport & Logistics at DG MOVE who stated that the "transport sector can benefit the most from digitalisation". He further clarified "We can eliminate the paperwork if we can move to electronic documentation accepted by national administrations". He also informed the audience on a soon to be organised Digital Transport and Logistics Forum which will bring together industry players and aim for optimal utilisation of existing infrastructure and making logistics more efficient.

Also speaking, Dr. Jörg Mosolf, CEO of Horst Mosolf GmbH & Co. KG referred to the Combined Transport (CT) Directive and called for the inclusion of Finished Vehicle Logistics into the current definition of CT as a category of loading unit. He also addressed the current issue of the German minimum wage and its challenges for the European transport industry, questioning how companies could be expected to meet the requirements of the legislation when there was a significant lack of clarity on its application and enforcement even in Germany. MEP van de Camp reminded the audience, which included prominent Members of the European Parliament, as well Commission and Council Officials and logistics company executives, that "the German Minimum wage is a social progress" but conceded that its impact on road transport was challenging and the issue needed to be handled. Speaking from the floor, Michael Nielsen of the IRU agreed, stating that its application to "highly mobile workers such as drivers is questionable".

The need for pragmatism and practical solutions was consistently called for by MEP van de Camp affirming that in these “pragmatic times” industry and lawmakers needed to work together to achieve better regulation and better implementation. “The optimum can be the enemy of the maximum” he declared. “Sometimes the optimum just takes too much time – let’s be practical and go on in a faster way”. ECG President Costantino Baldissara agreed, voicing his confidence that European lawmakers had an increasingly better understanding of the needs of the logistics industry and his belief that “we are in good hands”.

ECG Note: *Presentations and programme of the Dinner Debate are available on the ECG website. Photos of the event will follow soon!*

European Parliament divided over German minimum wage regulation

(Source: EurActiv, 27th March 2015) Should national minimum wage laws apply to truck drivers passing through a certain EU Member State? Countries with lower wages are sceptical and the European Parliament is in disarray. The European Parliament was divided in a minimum wage debate on 25th March with Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc. MEPs in Brussels discussed whether minimum wage regulations in an EU Member State should also apply to foreign truck drivers passing through that country. Bulc made it clear that national regulations must comply with EU law. The Commission has not yet concluded its investigation of German measures and their effects, she said. For this reason, Bulc explained, the Commission cannot yet provide a clear response to the parliamentary question. But, she said, the Commission would address the question on social standards and working conditions in the transportation sector in its legislative proposals for the “road transport package” planned for 2016. Germany was the 22nd EU Member State to introduce a minimum wage when the regulation took effect on 1st January 2015. The European Commission is currently investigating Germany’s enforcement of the new minimum wage law, including for foreign truck drivers in transit. Complaints were submitted from several EU Member States, claiming a limitation of competitive freedom and excessively high bureaucratic obstacles. At the end of January, the German government temporarily suspended the minimum wage requirements for truck traffic. Germany’s Labour Minister Andrea Nahles explained the reasoning behind the move after a meeting with her Polish counterpart Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz in Berlin. The new arrangement also applies to inspections which have already been started. “If procedures have already begun, these will be cut short,” the Labour Ministry reported. But the suspension only applies to transit traffic and not to cross-border traffic with a start or destination in Germany. On 21st January, the Commission initiated an EU pilot procedure to investigate whether applying the minimum wage to transit routes through Germany is compatible with EU law. The Ministry said the suspension will apply until the EU’s inspection has concluded. On 25th March many MEPs emphasised the necessity of avoiding social dumping and promoting fair competition among transport companies. Some of them suggested introducing an EU-wide minimum wage and called on the Commission to make proposals on the protection of social rights and working conditions for drivers. This should also include a “black list” of companies who disregard the requirements, the MEPs said. Vice Chairman of the Parliament’s Committee on Employment, Thomas Mann (EPP), said he was surprised that Bulc did not do anything “meaningful”. “In the plenary, she was not able to make any precise indication over whether German minimum wage rules for foreign truck drivers are compatible with EU law or not,” he stated. By suspending the minimum wage for purely transit travel, Mann said the German government commensurately reacted to “the sometimes excessive criticism from Eastern Europe”. “Now the European Commission should work out how to prevent competition distortions, which burden the employer and the mid-sized companies in the transport and logistics sectors,” Mann concluded. German MEP Jutta Steinruck described the discussion over the legality of Germany’s minimum wage law as strange. “In EU law, truck drivers fall

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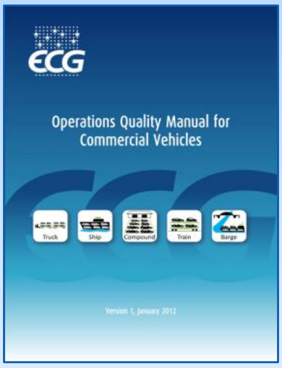

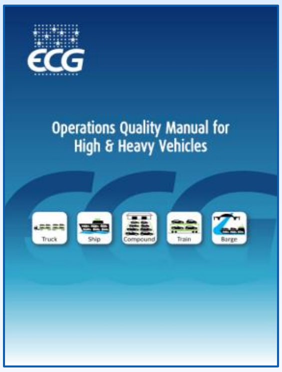

- Written by the Quality Working Group and the H&H Working Group composed of OEMs and LSPs.
- The manuals can be downloaded from: http://www.ecgassociation.eu/PublicationsReports/ECGOperationsQualityManuals.aspx

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under the provisions of the Posting Directive or the Rome I Regulation," said the social and employment policy spokesperson from the German Social Democratic Party. "Both rules make it possible for Member States to create their own rules on the protection of employees from abroad," Steinruck commented. Other MEPs emphasised that the application of national minimum wage laws for transit drivers hinders the free movement of goods. This would contradict the EU's internal market laws and subsidiarity principle, because it creates additional costs and bureaucratic obstacles for transport companies from abroad, the MEPs pointed out. For MEP Gesine Meißner, transport policy spokeswoman for ALDE, the German government has overshot the target with its minimum wage law. "Our European neighbours are right to be frustrated, because Germany is including international transit, so that it can in part decide the salaries for foreign transport companies – not to mention the added bureaucratic burden." On 23rd March, Polish truck drivers blocked streets protesting at the German border against Germany's minimum wage. The freight forwarders accused the German government of breaking EU law. The chairman of the Association of Television Transport, Jan Buczek said "we are being crushed by the increase in costs". Road haulage companies from Austria, Poland and Hungary are taking action against the German minimum wage with a constitutional complaint. The complaint was submitted to the German Constitutional Court on 11th March. A ministry spokesperson said the German Labour Ministry will be waiting "calmly" for the Karlsruhe-based court to make a decision

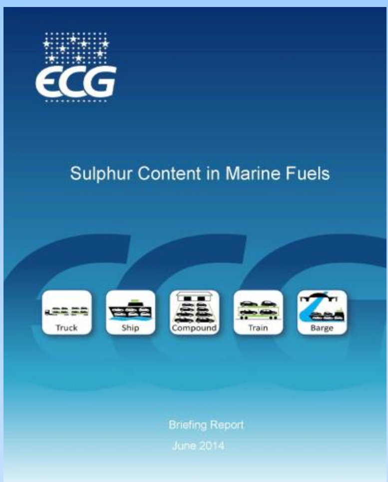
ECG has created a page dedicated to the German minimum wage issue. It is updated as the situation evolves.

Report on the exchange of views between port CEOs and Transport Commissioner Bulc

(Source: European Commission, 25th March 2015) The Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc met the leaders of 20 of the largest European ports and port organisations on 19th January 2015. After a short introduction by João Aguiar Machado, DG MOVE, and a presentation of the Trans-European Network policy by the European Co-ordinator Kurt Bodewig, Commissioner Bulc presented her vision for the transport policy with a focus on creating value for people, stimulating innovation and promoting sustainable models that will generate growth and employment. She expressed her wish to capitalise on the great potential of ports. She underlined the importance of serving business through integrated cross-modal logistics and services. Reduced energy dependence will make a wider deployment of alternative fuels and electrification of transport necessary. Europe must also export its technologies and solutions in the area of transport, and together with this, its social and environmental values. Commissioner Bulc stressed the challenges that ports face co-operating with their cities and the role of innovation and exchange of good practices between transport sectors. Views were then exchanged based on a discussion paper on six questions on: global and general challenges faced by European ports, connectivity to land and maritime transport, innovation in port logistics, investments in ports, energy and climate policy and port cities. A report has been published on the exchange of views between the Commissioner and the representatives from ports. Part I of the report presents a summary of the responses for each question, while the detailed points expressed by each participant, based on their interventions and written contributions, can be found in Part II.

The report can be downloaded via the Commission's website.

Briefing paper on the sulphur content in marine fuels updated



As the Regulation on sulphur content in marine fuels came into force on 1st January, ECG has updated its Briefing paper to better inform our readers.

The new rules will affect companies that operate routes in the Sulphur Emission Control Areas (SECAs), i.e. the North Sea with the English Channel and the Baltic Sea. In these zones the sulphur content of the fuel can't surpass 0.1% which is a great technical and financial challenge for these operators.

The Briefing paper contains IMO and EU regulatory background and analysis of the latest developments, as well as a glossary of terms.

Download your copy from the ECG website!

http://www.ecgassociation.eu/publicationsreports/ecgpositionandbriefingpapers.aspx

Commissioner Bulc and Transport Ministers of the Alpine states sign declaration to promote sustainable transport in the region

(Source: European Commission, 20th March 2015) On 19th and 20th March 2015, Commissioner Bulc met in Innsbruck with the Transport Ministers of the seven Alpine States – Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Switzerland and Liechtenstein to discuss the development of transport solutions across the Alpine region. Central to the discussions was the question on how to solve growing mobility needs without increasing negative effects on local people's living conditions and the unique natural heritage. "An integrated and future-oriented transport concept for the Alpine region is vital for both the overall performance of Europe's transport system and the preservation of nature and peoples' living conditions in this region. With our new Trans-European Transport Network's policy (TEN-T), we have powerful instruments to help drive such a process forward," said Violeta Bulc, European Commissioner for Transport. The Commissioner and the Ministers confirmed their joint commitment to completing all the key railway projects within the next 15 years and formally signed a declaration to promote sustainable transport in the region. These include "flagship" projects of the TEN-T such as the planned Brenner and Lyon – Torino base tunnels. Each of the tunnels requires investments of over €8bn. Equally important are the many other Alpine crossing projects, which are included in the TEN-T and, therefore, benefit from strong support at EU level. European Co-ordinators – also present at the Innsbruck Conference – reconfirmed their willingness to bring together all the different actors and to stimulate coherent and efficient approaches. In the presence of some 500 participants, the Commissioner, Ministers and promoters of key Alpine crossing projects discussed the particular challenges of preparing, implementing and financing large-scale projects that cross borders of several Member States. Once completed, these projects will significantly change trade flows and passengers' mobility across the Alps and improve economic relations within the internal market. They involve challenging opportunities for industrial innovation – both in construction techniques and mobility services. Financing these projects is crucial for Europe's transport system. The Commission is committed to putting the Connecting Europe Facility to best possible use in order to tackle the transport challenges in the Alps. The investment will contribute to the creation of jobs and boost the European economy, consequently strengthening its global competitiveness.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Russia approves $166m in subsidies for car plants

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 20th March 2015) Russia will provide carmakers with 10bn roubles ($166m) in subsidies in a bid to support an industry struggling to cope with the country's economic downturn. However, the industry is only expected to return to growth in 2016 and is therefore likely to need more government support than the measures announced by the Russian government on 19th March. Car sales in Russia have fallen sharply as the economy has weakened, as consumers put off big-ticket purchases and automakers look for ways to cut costs and review their strategies for what was once a booming market. In addition to lower sales car producers have seen their margins fall by 10-15% as a result of the rouble weakening, which has increased the cost of imported components, as well as higher metal prices, the government said on its website. "Most carmakers currently work with a minimum profitability level. (The) budget allocation of 10bn roubles will allow (them) to utilise additional production capacity in the first quarter in the amount of around 110,000 vehicles and preserve jobs," it said. According to the state statistics office the production of passenger cars in Russia fell 17% in February year-on-year to 130,000 vehicles. The government is considering allocating additional funds this year to its car-

Events in Brussels

Association Européenne des Concessionnaires d'Autoroutes et d'Ouvrage à Péage (ASECAP) holds a high-level event entitled "Concession model, an efficient tool to foster growth across Europe: How to build a level playing field to attract private investors" on **30th March**
http://www.asecap.com/english/

The ITS Conference 2015: "A Digital Strategy for Mobility: from capacity to connectivity" will be organised by the European Commission on **24th April**
http://tinyurl.com/qyat2xz

buying incentive program which offers discounts to buyers trading in their old vehicles and also subsidizes loans and leasing terms. The Russian car market is forecast to shrink by up to 35% in 2015 according to PricewaterhouseCoopers after falling by 10% to 2.49 million unit sales last year. The Russian Economy Ministry said it expects the domestic car market to return to growth in 2016.

Volkswagen will cut production and jobs at Russian plant

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 23rd March 2015) Volkswagen announced that it will reduce shifts and lay off at least 150 workers at its Russian car plant in Kaluga. The plant will work four days a week from April to July this year, while in May the number of shifts will decrease to two from three, VW said. Production will be suspended for two weeks in May. "In the first months of 2015 the Russian car market continued to feel the impact of a weak economy, significant price increases and high interest rates. We don't expect that to change in the coming months,' VW said in a statement. The company noted that its Russian investment plans were intact, with the construction of an engine plant and an auto parts warehouse on schedule. "The Russian market still has a significant growth potential long-term," VW said in the statement. Daniel Schwarz, a Frankfurt-based analyst for Commerzbank, said: "We are expecting another passenger-car market decline of about 25% in Russia this year. Adjusting capacity makes sense." VW has already sent more than 100 workers from Russia to Germany for training programs and will transfer some employees from Kaluga to the nearby engine factory or the company's warehouse operation outside Moscow, company sources said. VW is the latest western carmaker to change direction in Russia as economic sanctions hamper growth and consumer spending. General Motors announced last week that it would idle a plant in St. Petersburg and halt sales of its Opel brand and most Chevrolet models, all but abandoning the market. Global carmakers started to reduce shifts at Russian factories last year to counter contracting demand for new vehicles as the rouble weakened against other major currencies. The downturn caused ripple effects across the industry as many car manufacturers had previously invested heavily in production capacity in the Russian market. The country had been forecast by analysts and industry executives to overtake Germany as Europe's largest sales region before the economy faltered.

Korean carmakers cut exports to Russia amid falling sales

(Source: Automotive logistics News, 23rd March 2015) The export of cars from South Korea to Russia dropped by 71.5% year-on-year at the beginning of 2015, according to a report from the Korea Automobile Manufacturers Association (KAMA). The sudden decline, due to poor sales in the Russian market, has forced some of the companies to announce the end of import supplies and a focus on getting the most out of their existing plants in Russia, while others may have to close local production altogether. That said, Hyundai-Kia is showing some resilience in terms of sales in Russia but exports from South Korea have dropped. "According to official statistics, in January, the supply of new cars to Russia dropped to about 3,100 cars, whereas a year earlier it was 10,860 cars," stated the KAMA report. Sales of Hyundai vehicles in Russia dropped 5% in February, based on the same month last year, while those for Kia fell by 6%, according to figures from the Association of European Business (AEB). However, SsangYong saw a massive 72% drop in February, from 2,000 units down to 560, and Daewoo suffered a 64% drop to 1,640 units sold, compared to February 2014. Korean carmakers report that export supplies at the beginning of 2015 fell not only in Russia but in the neighbouring Commonwealth of Independent State (CIS) countries. Across the region covering the CIS and non-EU countries in Europe in January, Hyundai Motor reduced supplies from the 5,600 units seen in the previous year to 2,700 cars. Kia also reduced the number of vehicles supplied from 4,400 cars to 2,400 cars. However, GM Korea saw the most notable decline, with volumes down from 6,700 to 1,360 cars. Representatives of Hyundai-Kia

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said that both carmakers had managed to optimise logistics flows and the decrease in imports by focusing on supplies from plants in Russia. The Korean carmaker has facilities around St Petersburg. However, it seems that some Korean car manufacturers are considering a completely contrary strategy in dealing with the crisis, with rumours that SsangYong may cancel its contract with Russian company Sollers for the assembly of vehicles in Russia's Far East region to fully focus on imports. "The reason for SsangYong's decision may be connected with the fact that Sollers failed to reach the full production capacity, which is part of its agreement on industrial assembly with the Russian government," said a representative of the government. "Therefore, the company may not receive the expected benefits on decreased import duties on car components." The other reason for such a decision, according to market experts, could lie in the fact that, at the end of last year, the Russian government decided to decrease the level of state subsidies for the movement of cars from plants in the Far East of the country to the European region, where the main sales centres are located. Carmakers operating in the Russian Far East have repeatedly claimed that the partial cover through subsidies for internal logistics spending was crucial for car manufacturing in Russia.

EUROPE

Eastern European trucks vandalised in 'dumping' protest

(Source: Lloyd's Loading List, 23rd March 2015) At least 37 trucks and vans registered to Eastern European operators have been vandalised in the last few days in north-western France in what are being viewed as protests against alleged unfair competition from freight transport companies using drivers from lower-wage countries - or 'dumping' as it is sometimes termed in competition parlance. The attacks in the Brittany region have apparently focused mainly on Polish and Lithuanian-registered vehicles and in one incident, seven trucks and trailers were daubed with paint overnight in a lay-by area on a major road linking Nantes and Quimper. A spokesman for the *Collectif des Transporteurs Routiers de Bretagne*, an organisation set up to defend the interests of the region's hauliers, commented: "One can understand the anger and exasperation of people on seeing Eastern Europe trucks in Brittany when they themselves have no work. But at the same time, we condemn this kind of action; it is not the solution." He continued: "Cabotage is having a very serious impact on Brittany's hauliers, which the government needs to recognise and act upon. If it does nothing, then those behind these acts are doubtless ready to go further in their protests." A new French law, passed in the National Assembly last month and to take effect at the end of this year, will impose statutory minimum wage regulations on foreign truck drivers plying international routes to and from France and undertaking 'cabotage' in the country.

Berlin paves way for passenger car tolling

(Source: EurActiv, 25th March 2015) After much debate over the details of a controversial tolling regulation in Germany, experts from the centre-right and Social Democratic Party (SPD) agreed on changes to the planned law late night on 23rd March. The Bundestag hopes to decide on the passenger car toll in a roll-call vote on 27th March. One of the key changes is the price for short-term vignettes for foreign drivers. Now, the ten day vignette will not only be available at the price of €10, but also in two other categories: €5, €10 and €15. Two-month vignettes will also be sold in three categories (€16, €22 and €30) instead of the single €22 price planned before. The price category is determined on the basis of the size and emissions of the car. This change is supposed to make it easier for the European Commission to accept the measure, after it pushed Germany to make adjustments. Among other things, the Commission said it considered short-term prices to be much too high compared to the year-long vignette. Alexander

Dobrindt, the Minister for Transport wants the toll to be collected from all *Autobahn* users. For domestic drivers, the fee also formally applies to federal roads. But car owners registered in Germany are expected to be reimbursed for the tolling fee through the automobile tax. German drivers must automatically buy a year-long vignette, the bill says, while foreigners can also buy the 10 day or 2 month version. As a result, only foreign car drivers actually pay the toll in the end. Dobrindt plans to start collection of the toll in 2016. After control and other administrative costs, the Minister estimates annual revenue at €500m. Perhaps the most significant challenge the bill still faces is the European Commission's assessment for possible discrimination against foreigners. The Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc indicated that she could see potential for a German passenger car toll in compliance with EU law, during a visit to Berlin at the end of January. After a meeting with Dobrindt, Bulc said she was convinced that "solutions" are possible in the transition to user-financing that are compatible with the EU Treaties. Gesine Lötzsch from the Left Party, who is Chairwoman of the Bundestag's Budget Committee, warned of a "massive waste" of tax money. "The annual cost of collecting the toll, including the cost of the automobile tax, is estimated at €205m. Another one-time cost for both laws in the amount of €456m is added to that," she calculated. Balance this sum and the state must "spend almost half a billion euros to even reach the point of collections." It is doubtful that these revenues will then be higher than the costs. Meanwhile, Austria and the Netherlands are also criticising Dobrindt's tolling plans. In early December Austria's Minister for Transport Alois Stöger presented benchmark results from a legal evaluation. There, he referred to the passenger car toll as an "indirect discrimination" and thereby in violation of EU law. Austria is considering "all legal steps to the extent of a lawsuit" before the European Court of Justice, he said. MEP Claudia Schmidt transport policy spokeswoman for the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) in the European Parliament also confirmed the country's intent to take action if Dobrindt's plans come through.

'Intelligent' technologies open new avenues for European transport

(Source: EurActiv, 20th March 2015) Connected vehicles filled with communication technologies offer an unprecedented opportunity to achieve the European Union's dream of an integrated multi-modal transport system, according to EU policymakers and industry experts. MEPs and interest groups took stock of the Union's transport policy at a European Parliament public hearing on 17th March. Wim van de Camp, a Dutch legislator from the centre-right European People's Party (EPP), presented a report reviewing the implementation of the Transport White Paper and policy roadmap, adopted by the European Commission in 2011. The roadmap contained 40 initiatives for the next decade that are expected to dramatically reduce Europe's dependence on imported oil and cut carbon emissions in transport by 60% by 2050. "The objective for the next decade is to create a genuine single European transport area [...], easing the process of integration and the emergence of multinational and multimodal operators," van de Camp said in his report. The MEP hailed the progress made so far but stressed that a lot remained to be achieved. The decarbonisation of transport, including legislation on charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, was still pending, he said. The same goes for the harmonisation of social conditions for workers in the road haulage sector. Major changes are expected with the further opening of the European transport market, the Dutch MEP said. With ongoing investments in greener cars, better roads and infrastructure, the challenge is to "adapt to innovation and new market needs", he claimed. According to the International Road Transport Union's Michael Nielsen, lawmakers and industry should put in place forward-thinking policies, "as it is not sure if we will drive the same vehicles in 2030". Using technologies to find a parking space or choosing an optimal route will make the industry much more efficient and safer, Nielsen predicted. Hermann Meyer from ERTICO-ITS Europe, a public-private organisation involved in the production of intelligent transport systems (ITS), said that implementing information and communication technologies to transport will be "a game changer". "ITS will help integrate different modes of transport so that we have one common transport system, which serves the traveller and logistics operations," said Meyer. According to Meyer, the European Commission estimated that with ITS in place, fatalities will be reduced by 30% and road congestion by 15% by 2020. The same research predicts that ITS will turn into a business worth €28bn in five years. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) aim to provide services related to different modes of transport and traffic management. It supports the industry in collecting, exchanging, and processing data, said Meyer. For example, ITS could offer timely information about where to catch a bus, facilitate the booking of a ticket, or use the necessary information to computerise the driving of a car. "Such services can make transport safer, more efficient and comfortable," said Mayer. A lot of data is available out there, but not exchanged, according to Meyer. If used correctly and in accordance with data protection rules, it "will empower the traffic management to provide better services for drivers". In order to make the most out of these innovations, Meyer said the Commission should propose a common European strategy. Adequate policy initiatives, a good infrastructure and Member States' political will are crucial for the success of ITS deployment, he said. Any new rules, however, should be clear, simple, and uniformly interpreted, according to Nielsen. The EU should also ensure adequate enforcement of such rules, allowing a level playing field. "If these market conditions are not fixed in the future, no matter how innovative we are, we will not be efficient. We need to fix how we are operating today in

order to ensure we operate more effectively in the future," Nielsen said. Van de Camp's report echoes the same ideas, but doubted if the EU could achieve an integrated transport policy. "Mutually complementary action will be needed at national, regional and local levels of government as well as by citizens and industry themselves," van de Camp said. "[The Commission's White Paper] demonstrates that the work has only started, and the major efforts needed to transform the EU transport system lie ahead of us," he said.

ECG Note*: MEP Wim van de Camp was the host of ECG's Annual Dinner Debate, held on 24th March in Brussels.*

EU to co-finance greener and smarter cargo management from Rotterdam port

(Source: INEA, 25th March 2015) The EU's TEN-T Programme will support with nearly €570,000 the pilot launch of an IT solution helping to match truck schedules in Rotterdam port. The new tool, Boxreload is expected to reduce the number of lorry journeys leading to both environmental and business benefits. Road hauliers carrying goods often travel one way with empty containers. Managing better the truck schedule, especially for SMEs, to match freight journeys would most likely lead to cuts in freight operating costs, fuel usage, and ultimately carbon emissions. It will also contribute in reducing traffic in congested port areas. The aim of this project is to test Boxreload, an IT freight tool, on competing hauliers operating in the Rotterdam area. The tool's effectiveness will be assessed in terms of business sustainability, empty journeys and CO_2 emissions saved, and the results will be widely shared in the transport industry. Previous studies have already demonstrated that the solution works from a technical perspective and has business benefits. A pilot deployment is now required to further define the solution, demonstrate its commercial viability on a larger scale and facilitate deployment in other locations. The project was selected for EU funding with the assistance of external experts under the TEN-T Annual Call 2013, priority 'Decarbonisation/substitution or environmental cost reduction'. Its implementation will be monitored by INEA, the European Commission's Innovation and Networks Executive Agency. The project is to be completed by end of December 2015.

The Port of Bordeaux to pioneer green energy management with EU support

(Source: INEA, 23rd March 2015) The EU's TEN-T Programme will support with over €400,000 an energy efficiency initiative at the Port of Bordeaux in France. It will combine energy saving measures and alternative energy production plans to decrease the transport sector's dependency on oil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Intense oil-based transport and logistics activities of European ports can have an important impact on the environment. This project will address the need for sustainable energy management by delivering a replicable set of environmental measures and preparing the construction of the first European hydrokinetic turbine farm in the Gironde estuary near Bordeaux. The project's outcomes will feed into a larger initiative aiming to implement the methodology in Bordeaux and other European ports. The project was selected for EU funding with the assistance of external experts under the TEN-T Annual Call 2013, priority 'Decarbonisation/substitution or environmental cost reduction'. Its implementation will be monitored by INEA. The project is to be completed by December 2015.

HGV Road User Levy a "huge success" one year on, says government

(Source: Commercial Motor, 25th March 2015) The HGV Road User Levy has raised more than £44m in revenue from foreign-registered trucks in its first year of operation, announced UK Transport Minister Robert Goodwill on 25th March. Foreign HGV operators from 90 countries have purchased more than 1.8 million levies since the levy was launched on 1st April 2014, with 98% comprising those in the highest band (band G) - of £10 per day or £1,000 per year. Goodwill said: "The HGV levy is proving a huge success and it is absolutely right that all trucks using UK roads should make a contribution to the wear and tear they cause." He added that "this levy is supported by the British haulage industry and has levelled the playing field for operators. UK-registered vehicles regularly pay their way through tolls and user charges in Europe and it is only fair that foreign HGVs are not exempt from charges in this country." UK-registered vehicles pay the levy either annually or six-monthly alongside their VED (Vehicle Excise Duty). For foreign operators, transactions are made online using a dedicated foreign payment system. More than 90% of foreign levies purchased have been for less than a week. Top payers include operators from Poland, which account for more than 26%, Romania at nearly 12% and Spain, which purchased over 8% of all foreign levies. Where the levy has not been paid, the driver faces a £300 on-the-spot fine at the roadside. Enforcement agencies have issued some 2,500 fixed penalty notices and collected fines of more than £750,000 for non-levy payment.

REST OF THE WORLD

Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics earns recognition as John Deere "Partner-level Supplier"

(Source: Automotive Purchasing, 20th March 2015) **Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics** has earned recognition as a Partner-level supplier for 2014 in the John Deere Achieving Excellence Program. The Partner-level status is Deere & Company's highest supplier rating. The Norway-based company was selected for the honour in recognition of its dedication to providing products and services of outstanding quality as well as its commitment to continuous improvement. WWL accepted the recognition during formal ceremonies held on 3rd March in Moline, Illinois. Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics is a supplier of ocean transportation and logistics services to John Deere's operations globally. Suppliers who participate in the Achieving Excellence program are evaluated annually in several key performance categories, including quality, cost management, delivery, technical support and wavelength, which is a measure of responsiveness. John Deere Supply Management created the program in 1991 to provide a supplier evaluation and feedback process that promotes continuous improvement.

Ford aims to triple exports from India with new plant

(Source: Automotive News Europe, 26th March 2015) Ford Motor has invested $1bn in a new plant in western India that will help the automaker triple exports from the country, CEO Mark Fields said. Ford plans to make India an export hub for cars such as the EcoSport, a subcompact SUV that it exports to Europe from India, and for its new Figo Aspire, which is based on the European Fiesta. The new factory will nearly double Ford's installed production capacity in India to 610,000 engines and 440,000 vehicles a year, Fields said at the launch of the plant on 26th March. The Sanand plant will have an initial installed annual capacity of 240,000 vehicles and 270,000 engines, Ford said in a statement. Ford currently builds the EcoSport at its plant in Chennai in southern India

PRESS RELEASES

CLECAT outlines its position on the way forward for EU White Paper on Transport

(Source: CLECAT, 25th March 2015) At the hearing of the EESC on "The White Paper on Transport" on 6th March CLECAT addressed the needs of the logistics sector with regards to the future European transport policy. Mr Marc Huybrechts, President of CLECAT, said: "The logistics sector is best placed to consider transport as a system rather than a collection of individual modes, and this way of thinking must be adopted by the whole transport sector and policy makers. The goal must be to make all modes and the connection between them as efficient and sustainable as possible through infrastructure, ICT and open markets."

The success of this will be strongly dependent on the success of key policies aimed at market opening, international co-operation and agreements safeguarding competition in international transport and trade, and greater innovation to improve the efficiency of all modes of freight transport. With this in mind, CLECAT has identified 5 priorities: completion of Europe's single transport market, internationalisation, digitalisation, innovation and better connectivity through sound infrastructure investment.

Mr Huybrechts took the opportunity to express his concern about new burdensome reporting requirements for industry as a consequence of new national regulations. This is perceived by many as a move towards protectionism and against the spirit of a single European transport market. He noted: "We fear that this may lead to a proliferation of national rules and urge the European Commission to question these developments in the strongest possible ways."

The CLECAT position on the White Paper can be read on the association's website.

IRU Conference highlights road transport's key role in boosting economic growth in Eurasia

(Source: IRU, 20th March 2015) Over 200 participants from 12 Eurasian countries discussed road transport's key role and potential for boosting economic growth, at the 10th IRU International Road Transport Conference on "New trends in the development of international road transport in Eurasia", organised in partnership with the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and Executive Committee of the CIS Co-ordinating Transport Council.

H.E. Mr Nikolay Asaul, Russian Deputy Minister of Transport, said, “The Russian Ministry of Transport and IRU have reached a new level of co-operation in our joint work to fully reinstate TIR on the territory of the Russian Federation, our recent signing of a TRANSPark Agreement to provide data on secure parking areas, and through other efforts. The Ministry of Transport praises the IRU for its active work in eliminating barriers to trade through the facilitation of road transport, promoting the image and competitiveness of the industry and providing professional and high quality services.”

Conference participants notably adopted a Resolution that calls on competent national authorities to remove barriers to road transport, thus allowing it to boost economic growth across Eurasia through facilitated trade. It highlights the harmonisation of national and international road transport legislation concerning Customs procedures and the full reinstatement of the TIR Convention on the territory of the Russian Federation, as priorities for immediate action. It also recommends increasing access to the road transport market.

Business representatives attending an EEC round table at the conference expressed their opinion on road transport legislation and its implementation in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). They notably stressed their support for road freight transport’s liberalisation in the EEU to be implemented from 2016 to 2025.

Please read the resolution on the IRU website.

How safe are your roads? Commission road safety statistics show small improvement for 2014

(Source: European Commission, 24th March 2015) Following two years of solid decreases in the number of people killed on Europe’s roads, the first reports on road deaths in 2014 are disappointing. According to the figures released on 24th March, the number of road fatalities has decreased by approximately 1% compared to 2013. This follows on the 8% decrease in 2012 and 2013. The figures reveal a total of 25,700 road deaths in 2014 across all 28 Member States of the EU. Whilst this is 5,700 fewer than in 2010, it falls short of the intended target decrease.

Violeta Bulc, EU Commissioner for Transport said: “It’s sad and hard to accept that almost 70 Europeans die on our roads every day, with many more being seriously injured. The figures published today should be a wake-up call. Behind the figures and statistics there are grieving spouses, parents, children, siblings, colleagues and friends. They also remind us that road safety requires constant attention and further efforts.” She added: “We need to step up our work for the coming years, to reach the intended EU target of halving the number of road deaths by 2020. Let’s work together to make sure more people come home safely at the end of their journey. This is one of my priorities and should be one of the priorities of all governments in all the Member States!”

In 2014, the country specific statistics show that the number of road deaths still vary greatly across the EU. The average EU fatality rate for 2014 is expected to be 51 road deaths per million inhabitants. Malta, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom continue to report the lowest road fatality rates, with less than 30 deaths per million inhabitants. Four countries still report fatality rates above 90 dead per million inhabitants: Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania.

However the figures do show that the total number of EU road deaths has decreased by 18.2% since 2010. Some European countries report a better than average road safety improvement over the years. This is the case of notably Greece, Portugal and Spain. Equally Denmark, Croatia, Malta, Cyprus, Romania, Italy, Slovenia and the Czech Republic report a reduction of road deaths above the EU average for 2010-2014.

The report can be read on the Commission’s website. The reaction of the European Transport safety Council can be found on the organisation’s website.

ERFA grows stronger and urges acceleration towards a market oriented rail system

(Source: ERFA, 25th March 2015) EU Transport Commissioner, Violeta Bulc, used the occasion of the ERFA event to highlight the quality and cost challenges in the rail sector. Improving reliability, punctuality and the efficiency of services must be addressed in order to strengthen rail’s competitiveness. Commissioner Bulc pledged her support for a 4th Railway Package that ensures fair competition and removes incentives for discrimination against new entrants.

ERFA President Irmtraut Tonndorf confirmed that many discriminatory practices and outdated structures exist that deter growth and investment in the rail sector, as she called for abuses of dominant position on the

European rail market to be investigated. The ERFA President invited EU decision makers to set the course for a market oriented infrastructure management that supports rail business with a partnership approach.

At its annual event held in Brussels on 24th March ERFA, which represents new entrants on the rail market, urged a move away from a monopoly mind-set in the rail sector towards attractive, dynamic and innovative rail services. Infrastructure managers should act as the business partners of railway undertakings, striving to provide quality services for all operators, and not as detached administrators of a monopoly.

At the ERFA seminar event discussing the contribution of open markets for rail development, the success story of today's separated UK rail model was highlighted by Jeremy Long, CEO for European Business at the MTR Corporation. Strong growth in demand for rail services, highest ever number of services, improved quality of stations and trains, were just some of the successes highlighted in the UK, where fair access to the rail network is the norm.

The advantage of the separated model in releasing the creative energy of the rail sector was confirmed by Dirk Brueckmann from the ETH Institute in Switzerland, while Erich Forster from Westbahn laid bare the reality of life as a newcomer, where the incumbent has and uses the tools at its disposal to deter competition.

Denis Choumert, Director of Logistics Ciments Calcia confirmed that the lack of a level playing field on the French rail network, amongst others, was a problem for the customers, as it undermined the competitiveness, innovation and ultimately the attractiveness of the rail sector.

Olivier Onidi, Director for the European Mobility network in the European Commission, concluded the seminar by reiterating the stiff competition rail faces from the other modes of transport. The principle of competition in the rail sector is recognised by every EU Member State, strengthening the European Commission's resolve to conclude a successful 4th Railway Package. Mr Onidi particularly acknowledged that in co-operation with the Competition authorities the EU needed to adopt a more aggressive approach on financial transparency.

At a critical time in EU decision-making over the fate of railways in Europe, ERFA reiterates its call for policy-makers to support the fundamental principles of transparency, non-discrimination and fair and equal access to the rail network Europe-wide, as proposed by the Market pillar of the 4th Railway Package.