

INFORMATION ABOUT ACTIVITIES OF UNECE WORKING BODIES

(May 2016)

The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) for more than 60 years has been working on ensuring efficient transportation by inland waterways in Europe and the development of a pan-European inland waterway system which is an efficient, safe and sustainable transport mode.

Outcome of the seventy-eighth session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee
(23 - 26 February 2016)

The UNECE Inland Transport Committee was informed on the outcome of the negotiations on shaping the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals in the transport sector. It was proposed to put a special attention to addressing the priorities for the development of transport as the part of their structure.

The UNECE Inland Transport Committee took note of the publication “Diesel Engines Exhausts: myths and realities” estimating the impact from inland water transport in the environmental pollution; it recommended to draw attention to measures aimed at further reduction of these emissions. The Committee welcomed the activities towards the support of actions undertaken by Governments in the mitigation of negative environmental impact from transport.

Furthermore, the Committee expressed its support to the activities related to the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) Project that contributes to the respond for internationally-agreed transport demand due to the trade development between Europe and Asia; the Committee estimated financial support from a number of Governments and organizations; the Committee further took note of the information on the meeting of ASEM Ministers of Transport held 29-30 April 2015 in Riga and welcomed the parallel event on EATL issues.

In the inland water transport sector the Committee supported the activities of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) on the harmonization of standards for the pan-European River Information Services (RIS), in particular, UNECE Resolution No. 48 “Recommendation on electronic chart display and information system for inland navigation (Inland ECDIS)”.

The Committee further welcomed the report on the activities of its auxiliary bodies in 2015 on administering 58 conventions, agreements and other UN legal instruments being the international legal basis for road, rail, inland water transport, transport of dangerous goods and the construction of vehicles.

The following sessions of UNECE Working Parties relevant to inland water transport were held in Geneva in 2015:

18 – 20 February – the forty-sixth session of the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3);

24 – 26 June – the forty-seventh session of SC.3/WP.3;

09 – 11 November – the fifty-ninth session of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3).

The following issues were included in the agenda:

- work on the Recommendations on Harmonized Europe-Wide Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels (UNECE Resolution No. 61);

- Mutual recognition of boatmasters' certificates and professional requirements in inland navigation;

- Promotion of River Information Services (RIS) as well as other Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in inland navigation including the Guidelines and

recommendations for RIS (UNECE Resolution No. 57), the International Standard for Tracking and Tracing on Inland Waterways (VTT) (UNECE Resolution No. 63);

- work on further amendments to the fifth revised edition of the European Code for Inland Waterways;

- progress in the implementation of the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN and possible amendments to it; the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (Blue Book).

Russian River Register (RRR) as a TSCI member continued to take part in UNECE activities, in particular, in the twenty-eighth session of the Joint Meeting of Experts on the Regulations annexed to the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) which took place in August 2015 in Geneva.

As a Classification Society recommended for the recognition in the context of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways, RRR took part in the ninth and tenth meetings of the Informal Group of Classification Societies recommended for the recognition in the context of ADN that brings together all recommended classification societies.

Given the increased number of EU member States, the cooperation between EU and other international organizations, in particular, UNECE in the inland water transport sphere has been changed.

Today the situation becomes more difficult. Here, first of all, the European committee for drawing up common standards in the field of inland navigation (CESNI) – should be mentioned, a joint body of EU and the Central Commission for the Navigation on the Rhine (CCNR) created for the development of technical norms for inland navigation vessels and professional knowledge requirements.

EU and CCNR consider that “to avoid duplication of work and to increase the benefit of the harmonized standards developed and adopted by CESNI, the UNECE might perhaps consider discontinuing the work of SC.3 in which CESNI is active, in particular in the field of technical requirements for inland navigation vessels and of navigation personnel. If needed, the UNECE may consider referring to the harmonized standards adopted by CESNI”.

In this situation the forty-eighth session of SC.3/WP.3 held 17-19 February 2016 in Geneva made a significant work on bridging the positions and the elaboration of a strategy of SC.3 for the coming years.

RRR representatives took part in the forty-eighth session of SC.3/WP.3 where the following items were also discussed:

- possible updates to the International Convention on the Registration of Inland Navigation Vessels;

- draft amendments to the International Standards for Notices to Skippers and for Electronic Ship Reporting in Inland Navigation (Resolutions Nos. 79 and 80);

- draft amendments to Resolution No. 40 and proposals regarding a database of models of the International Certificate for Operators of Pleasure Craft.