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Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure

Nineteenth session
Belgrade, 13–14 September 2011
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda
Reference Model of the TIR procedure: Contributions of the network of eTIR focal points

Summary of the activities of the network of eTIR focal points

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. At its 124th session in February 2010, the Working Party on Customs Questions Affecting Transport (WP.30) supported the secretariat's call to organize activities of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (GE.1 or Expert Group) at long distance, by means of a network of focal points for eTIR (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/248, para. 22). At its 125th session, it stressed the importance for every Contracting Party to nominate a focal point for the eTIR project and to inform the secretariat accordingly (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/250, para. 19). This document presents the status of the network of eTIR focal points and summarizes its activities in 2011 up to date.

II. Members of the network of eTIR focal points

2. The following nineteen Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention have nominated at least one eTIR focal point: Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The e-mail addresses of the focal points are available on the eTIR website (www.unece.org/trans/bcf/etir/focals.html).

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III. Information received from the network of eTIR focal points

3. Since the eighteenth session of the Expert Group, eTIR focal points have not communicated to the secretariat any issue or input to be brought to the attention of GE.1.

IV. Queries to the network of eTIR focal points

4. At its eighteenth session, the Expert Group took note of two amendment proposals contained in Informal document GE.1 No.1 (2011). The Expert Group decided to further discuss the first proposal (i.e. to include international declaration mechanisms) at its nineteenth session, on the basis of a revised document to be prepared by the secretariat. The Expert Group decided to forward the second proposal (i.e. to make use of the guarantee chain's database to validate guarantees which have not yet been accepted by Customs) to WP.30, for its June 2011 session, together with version 3.0 of the eTIR Reference Model. Consequently, the secretariat prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/5, which presents the amendment proposal in details. Furthermore, the Expert Group mandated the secretariat to request the views of the network of eTIR focal points on the latter proposal, which then, after review, could be transmitted to WP.30 as a technical recommendation by the network of eTIR focal points (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2011/6, para. 11).

5. On 18 April 2011, the secretariat sent an e-mail to the eTIR focal points with a query, as reproduced in the annex. In brief, the question was whether the validation of the guarantee prior to the beginning of the TIR transport could be done through the eTIR international system against the guarantee chain systems. Table 1 shows that, from a technical perspective, six eTIR focal points supported the proposal and one did not. The argument for not supporting the proposal is that it will unnecessarily complicate the procedure and slow it down. Indeed, the proposal requires that the eTIR international system, the guarantee chain system and the connection between the two function. If there is no technical problem and the guarantee chain registers each guarantee it has issued without delay with the eTIR international system, the information in the eTIR international system is perfectly reliable and can be used to validate the guarantee.

Table 1
Replies to the secretariat query 2

	Positive	*Negative*	*Other*
Query 2	Czech Republic, Finland, France, Poland, Serbia and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Turkey	-

V. Further considerations

6. In conclusion, six eTIR focal points have expressed an opinion in favour of the amendment proposal and one against. At its 128th session, WP.30 considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/5 and noted that the eTIR focal points did not share a common view of its technical viability. Consequently, WP.30 requested GE.1 to study the proposal further and resubmit it after finalization of its deliberations.

7. To that extent, GE.1 may wish to take the views of eTIR focal points into account when re-evaluating the amendment proposal contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/5.

8. Finally, the GE.1 may wish to recommend WP.30 to request once more Contracting Parties that have not yet nominated an eTIR Focal Point to do so and to encourage focal points to provide inputs for GE.1 meetings also at their own initiative.

Annex

Question sent on 18 April 2011 to eTIR focal points

[…] Taking into account the comments of the Expert Group at its eighteenth session, the secretariat prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/5, presenting the amendments required to adequately implement the proposal in version 3 of the eTIR Reference Model (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/4). A track changes version of the eTIR reference model has also been produced for the Expert Group.

In line with the mandate by the Expert Group, the secretariat would like to have your views on the proposal and on the amendments contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/5.

__ "Yes, I support the proposal. The eTIR Reference Model version 3.0 should be changed in line with the amendment presented in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/5.",

__ "No, I don't support the proposal. The eTIR Reference Model version 3.0 should not be changed."

__ "Other. Please explain :.....".

Comments, if any (including comments on the amendments) .....