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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 (AETR)

Twenty-third session

Geneva, 24 February 2020

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

I. Attendance

1. The AETR Group of Experts held its twenty-third session in Geneva on 24 February 2020, chaired by Mr. R. Symonenko (Ukraine).
2. Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Finland, Germany, Italy, Norway, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine.
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) and International Road Transport Union (IRU). Continental Automotive GmbH, In Group, and Stoneridge participated as observers.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

4. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/52).

III. Programme of Work

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

5. At the last session, the Group of Experts had reviewed ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.3 and agreed on a number of changes. The secretariat incorporated these changes and issued ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.4. At this session, the Group continued discussing this document, agreed on some changes, and requested the secretariat to prepare ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.5 for the next session.

6. The Group of Experts also discussed the need to introduce a provision on the transition mechanism necessary to facilitate the introduction of “smart tachographs” once Appendix 1C enters into force. As a result, the Group agreed to work simultaneously on Appendix 1C, amendment to Article 13 (transitional period), and to reflect on drafting an interim agreement that would aim at providing mutually agreed road map on completing the work on Appendix 1C and its subsequent implementation. The secretariat referred to ECE/TRANS/SC.1/S (22 April 2010) and ECE/TRANS/SC.1/S/390 (23 April 2010) as possible examples (press release available at <http://www.unece.org/?id=17921>) to follow.

B. Appendix 1C

7. At the last session, the Group of Experts had reviewed Informal documents No. 1 and 2 (October 2019), submitted by the European Commission, made some changes, and requested the secretariat to issue the revised documents. Subsequently, the secretariat prepared Informal documents No.1/Rev.1 (October 2019) and No. 2/Rev.1 (October 2019) while the European Commission submitted Informal document No.1 addressing a few remaining questions in the above documents. At this session, the Group discussed Informal document No.1 and agreed on a number of changes proposed by the European Commission. These changes will ultimately be reflected in future ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2018/1/Rev.1. In addition, following bilateral consultations between the Russian Federation and European Commission, the Group of Experts agreed on a number of changes to Informal document No.2/Rev.1 (October 2019). These changes will also be ultimately reflected in future ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2018/1/Rev.1.

C. Dedicated Short Range Communication (DSRC)

8. At the last session, while discussing Informal document No. 2 (October 2019), in particular Table 14.1 item D4 (**) (page 16), the Group of Experts agreed that the vehicle unit’s DSRC can only be activated upon receiving a signal from the road side DSRC equipment. At this session, the Russian Federation proposed the alternative text and the Group agreed to it.

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. The Group will be invited to continue its discussions on the subject.

IV. Amendment of Article 14

10. The secretariat reminded 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. The secretariat also suggested to consider amending Article 14 to make – for example - all United Nations member States eligible to accede (as per the ITC Strategy in ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2).

V. TACHOnet

11. The European Commission presented ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2019/1/Rev.2. The Russian Federation suggested that the document as well as TACHOnet in general be a subject of bilateral discussions with the European Commission prior to the next session of the AETR Group of Experts in June.

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

12. The Group of Experts took note of the Russian Federation’s intervention about difficulties encountered by Russian transport operators at a Finish border due to “the use of trucks not equipped with smart tachographs”. The Group agreed that “smart tachographs” are not mandatory in the AETR contracting parties until a new Appendix 1C enters into force.

VII. Other Business

13. The Group of Experts did not discuss any other business.

VIII. Date and Place of Next Meeting

14. The next meeting is scheduled for 15 June 2020 at Palais des Nations in Geneva. The deadline for the submission of formal documents is 23 March 2020.

IX. Adoption of the Report

15. The Group of Experts adopted the report of this session.
