

# **Eighth meeting of the Common Expert Group on professional qualifications and training standards in inland navigation**

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Time and place**

June, 21<sup>st</sup> 2013. Warwick Barsey Hotel, Avenue Louise 381 – 383, 1050 Brussels, 10:00 – 17:00

### **1. Welcome words by Mr. Marc Vanderhaegen – Ports and Inland Navigation, DG MOVE**

Mr. Marc Vanderhaegen welcomes the participants to the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CEG on professional qualifications and training standards co-chairing with CCNR. Mr. Marc Vanderhaegen points out that the agenda consists of four points of substance and that the closing date of the public consultation on professional qualifications is the current day.

### **2. Presentation and discussion of the concept concerning the electronic tools in support of professional qualifications in inland navigation.**

The eSRB is considered as an important element of the system for proving qualifications. However, the framework will possibly not be able to cover all technical aspects of the tool, so it seems useful to complement the new initiative with a new element, an initiative on electronic tools in support of professional qualifications in inland navigation. The new initiative will set out the main principles and will be accompanied by standards, which will be elaborated later in a similar manner as the legal framework on qualifications.

The new initiative will facilitate the introduction of an e-SRB, where logbook and working time will be left out for the moment, however the legal framework introduced by the new initiative would be flexible and would keep a possibility to add new elements. Consequently, there would be two proposals: on professional qualifications and on concept concerning electronic tools.

The key issue of the discussion was whether it is useful or necessary to take the two step approach whereby first we would harmonise the traditional way of proceeding and then take the step for an electronic initiative. On the harmonisation according to the traditional elements: eSRB and eLogbook. On the eSRB we could conclude that the added value of an intermediate harmonisation is not necessarily very high, because of the process of mutual recognition and the fact that the content is already “harmonised” throughout Europe. Harmonisation of the current systems with respect to the logbook would not necessarily solve existing problems and also the step of mutual recognition would not be a step that would solve particular problems. The second step is the aspect of introducing a combined electronic system, combining the system of logbook and SRB. Everybody is seeing in the short, medium or longer term the interest of going towards such a system.

Regarding the legal framework on electronic tools, it is clear that first general requirements would need to be elaborated; technical standards would be developed later. Another issue that needs further analysis is to which extent such an initiative could be linked to the discussion on the working time framework.

COM explains that on the side of the COM internal reflection will continue and any other ideas are welcomed in the coming weeks. The direction now would be to organise the two elements: professional qualifications and eSRB. The IA work will be taken into account, as well as the results from the public consultation and COM will come up at the next meeting with an approach on how to organise these two processes.

### **3. Presentation and discussion of the contribution prepared by the consultants with regard to the evaluation of Directive 96/50**

Stakeholders express their satisfaction about the result. PANTEIA representative clarifies that Rhine system should not be faced out gradually as some stakeholders assumed. CCNR underlined that rivers don't respect borders therefore we need to go on with the Pan-European approach aiming at high level of safety across boards in Europe. It is a united market and non-EU members should be taken into account.

Regarding the distinction between private and commercial vessels, some stakeholders voiced the opinion that private vessels should be included in the scope of the discussed initiatives, however only with respect to safety and communication. It is clarified that there is a legal instrument within the UNECE framework which deals with the licences for private vessels.

### **4. Presentation and discussion of the contribution prepared by the consultants with regard to the impact assessment procedure**

The PANTEIA representative clarified that plusses (+) and minuses (-) have been set based on logical reasoning and were compared with the preliminary results of the public consultation. Stakeholders expressed their satisfaction about the results. Comments were made on the words 'workers' and 'boatmaster' used in the presentation. Further definition of the terms was requested by the participants. It was explained that not all boatmasters are workers, many of them are self-employed. PANTEIA representative specified that the analysis considered all workers and no distinction has been made between personnel and self-employed. Furthermore, it was underlined by the stakeholders that first the harmonisation of qualifications should be achieved and then the repeal (replacement) of Directive 96/50 should take place.

Stakeholders commented also on the accidents and safety, are there any statistics in relation with the current legislation. PANTEIA representative replied that there are some which are related to the working time directive, e.g. accidents due to human errors. He stressed out that the harmonisation of qualifications will not reduce the number of accidents. Moreover, he mentioned that the number of accidents as depicted is meant to be done in a conservative way and is very probably an underestimation. Furthermore, there are also types of accidents which do not fit into any statistics. Stakeholders highlight the fact that there are some MS that have changed their ways of counting accidents. Some of the stakeholders voiced the opinion that there are accidents related to professional qualifications but there are also other factors which influence the number of accidents like drugs and alcohol.

Regarding the question of attractiveness of IWT professions, CCNR remarks that although it is not a reason for the initiative, it should be mentioned in the context of the situation on the employment market. The statistics prove that there is a problem to get new workers in. COM is referring to the

fact that the I.A. procedure has certain constraints and the option of attractiveness has been taken into consideration. However, the attractiveness is not completely removed from the concept, since there would be an effect on the employment and social aspects are relevant as well under the scope of the initiative.

### **Information about state of play with regard to the public consultation**

COM clarified that the extraction of data took place on Wednesday 19th of June so the results presented are not the final ones. So far there have been 66 responses. In general the public consultation shows support for the initiative.

### **5. Any other business and closure of the meeting**

It is clarified by COM that the meeting notes of the previous meeting will be resent to ensure that everyone received them together with all the presentations of today. It is also mentioned by COM that it is important to ensure that everyone has received the meeting notes from all the meetings of the CEG in the past. Therefore all meeting notes will be once again sent to the participants for information and comments. After receiving the meeting notes, the participants are expected to submit their comments, if any, within two weeks' time. In case no comments are made, the meeting notes will be assumed as adopted.

Next meeting will take place in autumn 2013 at the premises of the Commission.

### **List of participants**

<b>MINISTRY / ORGANISATION</b>	<b>MINISTRY / ORGANISATION</b>
Department of Mobility and Public Works - Belgium	Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie - France
Federal Public Service Mobility and Transport - Belgium	Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology - Austria
Ministry of Transport - The Netherlands	STC-Group
Ministry of Transport - Czech Republic	EDINNA (Education in Inland Navigation)
Maritime and Coastguard Agency - United Kingdom	European Barge Union (EBU)
European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)	European Skippers Organisation (ESO)
Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development – Slovakia	NEA/ PANTEIA
National Transport Authority Road, Railway and Shipping Office Shipping Department - Hungary	CBR/CCV
Directoraat-Generaal Rijkswaterstaat, Corporate Dienst.- The Netherlands	BDB - Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschiffahrt e.V.
Swedish Transport Agency	Danube Commission
CCNR (Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine) - ZKR	Sava Commission

