

Fourth meeting of the Common Expert Group on professional qualifications and training standards in inland navigation

Time and place

December 3, 2012. Warwick Barsey Hotel, Avenue Louise 381 – 383, 1050 Brussels, 10:00 – 17:00

1. Welcome words by Mr Dimitrios Theologitis, Head of Unit B.3 – Ports and Inland Navigation in DG MOVE

Mr. Theologitis welcomes the participants of the fourth session of the CEG on professional qualifications and training standards and summarises the outcome of the last session of the CEG. Furthermore the process of a full public consultation is addressed.

2. Presentation and discussion of the newest draft of a concept/proposal for an EU legal instrument on the recognition of professional qualifications and on the minimum level of training in inland navigation. Presentation of proposals concerning the content of the draft concept made by members of the Common Expert Group.

DG MOVE explains the new concept which concentrates especially on the draft annex. There were contributions sent to DG MOVE from France, the Netherlands, the Danube Commission, the Sava Commission and Austria which were discussed during the meeting.

3. Presentation of the draft paper concerning the content of the annexes (Knowledge of unusual situations (KUS))

DG MOVE clarifies that Local knowledge requirements have on the one hand the potential to restrict navigation and on the other are justified on grounds of safety. The situation is not yet transparent insofar as it is not clear what exactly a boatmaster has to be aware of. DG MOVE intends to go into two directions: as a first step all existing river stretches in Europe should be evaluated; as a second step a strategy will be developed based on a set of criteria (morphology of river basins, risk tools/use of electronic charts) to determine a minimum necessary content of the local knowledge requirements. This has to be agreed in comitology, therefore the Member States will be requested to deliver a raster. DG MOVE hopes that this will be a transparent process, where only unknown stretches will be removed from legal obligation to require local knowledge.

DG MOVE also suggests that it could be open for discussion how to work towards possibilities to allow the use of simulators, and remarks that this should be based on a specific structure/procedure. The discussion should focus on a harmonized system and not on harmonized exams.

DG MOVE sees the necessity of making a difference between real “local situations” on the one hand and “difficult situations” on the other hand whereas the latter ones should be part of an exam, which is generally accepted by the participants of the CEG. DG MOVE confirms

that Waterways of Maritime Character (WMC) will indeed be part of the necessary reflection. The goal is to have one system to deal with WMC and another system for other LKR. Registration of Certificates and Access to data by competent authorities and the management of the use of RIS and radar certificates were also discussed.

4. Information about public consultation

A public consultation will be undertaken by the use of a questionnaire. After the presentation by NEA/PANTEIA input can be given. NEA/PANTEIA specifies that the impact assessment process is an important step in the legislation process. The targeted audience is broad: companies, institutions, citizens etc. Therefore, it is a lot of work in order to create support for the initiative. The feedback of the CEG is welcome. A hard copy with answers will be sent to DG MOVE. There will be open and also closed questions; this improves the opportunity to express one's opinion very precisely. Policy drivers, objectives and options are identified and assessed. The starting point is the observation that the IWT labour sector is not functioning optimally due to a number of obstacles. These obstacles are characterised by deficits related to qualification and training of IWT workers. The deficits can negatively affect the safety in IWT.

NEA/PANTEIA mentions that the draft questionnaire reflects the main outlines of the initiative and helps to finalize the impact assessment. The consultation period will last twelve weeks. The draft version will contain 20 questions - the final version slightly more. The results will be integrated in the impact assessment in mid-March.

The issue of translating the questionnaire into Dutch, German and French or even into more languages was on the table. DG MOVE clarifies that the EU translation service cannot be used for the translation of the questionnaire and suggests that the translations are made by volunteers.

Next steps

NEA clarifies that in the second part of the week the draft questionnaire will be sent around. There is a deadline for response on 11 December 2012. DG MOVE adds that stakeholders from outside the EU will also be considered. Thus, asks whether it would be possible to promote the questionnaire via websites and existing channels.

5. Any other business and closing of meeting

CCNR mentions that a 5th meeting is planned in Strasbourg concerning legal framework and annexes on the 29th or the 31st of January 2013 and DG MOVE mentions that another one will be organised in Brussels in the end of February – beginning of March.

List of participants

MINISTRY / ORGANISATION	MINISTRY / ORGANISATION
Department of Mobility and Public Works - Belgium	Federal Ministry of Transport - Germany
Federal Public Service Mobility and Transport - Belgium	Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology - Austria
Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy - Poland	Romanian Naval Authority
Ministère de l'Ecologie, du Développement durable et de l'Energie - France	Ministry of Transport - The Netherlands
Ministry of infrastructure - Serbia	Ministry of Transport - Czech Republic
Ministère du Développement durable et des Infrastructures - Luxembourg	Maritime and Coastguard Agency - United Kingdom
Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development – Slovakia	Ministry of Transport and Communications - Lithuania
National Transport Authority Road, Railway and Shipping Office Shipping Department - Hungary	Inspector Inland Waterways Transport Executive Agency - Bulgaria
Directoraat-Generaal Rijkswaterstaat, Corporate Dienst.- The Netherlands	European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF)
CCNR (Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine) - ZKR	EDINNA (Education in Inland Navigation)
Sava Commission	European Barge Union (EBU)
European Skippers Organisation (ESO)	BDB - Bundesverband der Deutschen Binnenschiffahrt e.V.
Panteia	Danube Commission