

# PROTOCOL

of the Swiss - Latvian Joint Committee meeting on international Road Transport  
held on 30 - 31 August 2012 in Berne, Switzerland

related to the

***Agreement on International Road Transport for Passengers and Goods***  
(signed on 28 April 1998, in force since 13 December 1998)

The members of the delegations are listed in the Annex of the Protocol.

At the beginning of the meeting, the delegations agreed on the following agenda:

1. Exchange of information on road transport and trade volumes between Switzerland and Latvia
2. New development of transport policy in Switzerland and in Latvia (implementation of EU road transport package, road transport user charges in LV and CH etc.)
3. Transport of passengers and goods in accordance with the Agreement
4. Miscellaneous, including development and new perspectives on ECMT multilateral quota

## **1 Exchange of information on road transport and trade volumes between Switzerland and Latvia**

The Swiss and Latvian delegations gave information and statistical data on the development of trade as well as on road transport of goods between the two countries.

The balance of trade between the two countries is like in previous years in favor of Switzerland. In terms of transport services, the balance is still largely in favor of Latvia.

According to Swiss statistics, Latvian exports were increasing 60% in volume of tons from 2009 to 2011. Swiss exports were increasing 49% in volume of tons. According to Latvian statistics, exports were decreasing 72.8% from 2010 to 2011 (in Euro -36.9%), while imports were increasing 34.3% (in Euro +13.8%).

In accordance with information provided by the Swiss delegation import traffic (Latvia-Switzerland), in 2011 more than 80% of the exchanges of goods were carried out by Latvian vehicles. Almost 18% were carried out by third countries hauliers and only about 2% by Swiss hauliers. For exports from Switzerland, about



44% were carried out by Latvian vehicles, 26% by Swiss, which is a strong increase compared to 2009 (9%). Approximately 29% were carried out by third countries vehicles.

More than 97% (in tons) of the goods imported from Latvia to Switzerland were transported by road transport, while on the export side from Switzerland to Latvia 80% were transported by road, almost 20% by air.

Major Latvian export articles to Switzerland in 2011:

- wood products
- chemical products
- vehicles and machines
- metal products
- textiles

Major export articles from Switzerland to Latvia in 2011:

- pharmaceutical and chemical products
- machines
- watches, precision instruments

54.2% of the Latvian trucks running in Switzerland in the first semester of 2012 belong to the EURO V category. The EURO IV category makes 28.3% of the total number.

For Latvia, Switzerland stands at the 21<sup>st</sup> position in foreign trade turnover, due to high value imports.

Both delegations are asked to analyze the differences in their statistics concerning the import of goods from Latvia to Switzerland.

## **2 New developments of transport policy in Switzerland and Latvia, (implementation of EU road transport package, road transport user charges in LV and CH etc.)**

The Swiss delegation presents the new developments in transport policy, specifically some elements related to EU transport policy.

### Heavy vehicle fee LSVA

The distance-related heavy vehicle fee (LSVA) has been levied in Switzerland since 1 January 2001. It depends on the total weight of a heavy goods vehicle and its trailers, exhaust emissions, and kilometres travelled. In line with the polluter-pays principle, this covers the so-called "external costs" of heavy goods traffic. Lorries from Switzerland contribute 66% of revenues from the LSVA. In 2012 the levels of the fees were adjusted in cooperation with the European Commission. EURO VI is promoted by the Swiss government, therefore there's a discount of 10% compared to EURO IV and V given to those vehicles.



Fee categories	Euro classes	HVF rates per ton-km until 30.6.2012		HVF rates per t-km from 1.7.2012		Cost for 300 km with a 40 t truck from 1.7. 2012	
		CHF	EUR	CHF	EUR	CHF	EUR
Category 1	EURO 0, I and II	3.07 cts	2.50 cts	3.10 cts	2.52 cts	372	302.40
	EURO II with DPF	2.76 cts	2.24 cts	2.79 cts	2.27 cts	334.80	272.20
Category 2	EURO III	2.66 cts	2.16 cts	2.69 cts	2.18 cts	322.80	262.40
	EURO III with DPF	2.39 cts	1.94 cts	2.42 cts	1.96 cts	290.40	236.10
Category 3	EURO IV et V	2.26 cts	1.84 cts	2.28 cts	1.85 cts	273.60	222.40
	EURO VI	2.26 cts	1.84 cts	2.05 cts	1.66 cts	246	200

Exchange rate: 1 EUR = 1.23 CHF

#### FinöV Fund

In January 2012 the Federal Council submitted the draft bill to finance and upgrade Switzerland's rail infrastructure (FABI) to Parliament. It aims to secure funding for rail infrastructure in the long term.

#### Renovation of existing Gotthard Road Tunnel

The Gotthard Road Tunnel is the main road for trucks and passengers to cross the Swiss Alps. After 2020 latest, the tunnel has to be renovated. It's a one tube system, so there are several solutions considered:

- Closing the tunnel entirely for 2.5 years
- Closing the tunnel for a longer time, with interruptions (3.5 years, total close for 980 days)
- Closing the system for 1050 days over a period of 7 years

As an alternative, a second tube could be built before renovating the old one. The Swiss government sees this option as a priority. After discussion in the parliament a referendum is possible. Road safety is a main argument for a second tube.

#### Implementation of EU acquis in Swiss legislation

In the framework of the Joint Committee meeting CH – EU on Landtransport which takes place twice a year, information about new transport regulations is exchanged. According to the Landtransport Agreement between Switzerland and the EU, some transport acts have to be transposed into Swiss law. The last Joint Committee meeting was held on the 22 June 2012 in Berne.

Switzerland will take over the Road Package (EC 1071-1073/2009), except for the regulation on national cabotage. Implementation of Swiss legislation in this field is in course. The Swiss parliament is expected to approve legislation in 2013, its coming into force is foreseen for the end of 2013.

Recently, several regulations and directives in the landtransport sector have been discussed and are about to be integrated in Swiss law (probably in 2013), such as

- Directive 2002/15/EC, Commission Directive 2009/5/EC, Commission Directive 2009/4/EC, Commission Regulation (EU) No 1266/2009



Directive 2004/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the interoperability of electronic road toll systems in the Community: Switzerland won't take it over in its legislation, but the interoperability with EETS will be guaranteed.

Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport: Switzerland will take it into Swiss legislation but it takes still some time.

#### Implementation of EU acquis in Latvian legislation and latest developments in Latvian transport policy

The Latvian delegation completed the overview of EU transport acts in giving some position of its own implementation.

The Latvian delegation informs that after entering into force of the EU Road Transport Package a company can now receive Community licenses up to 10 years. Before it used to be 5 years. As to a copy of the Community licence the registration number of a vehicle is indicated and it is valid for a year. The information was presented on organization of road transport operations and structure of the fleet at disposal of carriers in Latvia.

Road user chargers are introduced in Latvia in 2014. They will be applied for vehicles heavier than 3.5 tons. A vignette for 1 day, 1 week, 1 months and 1 year for trucks will be available.

The Latvian side informed that for organization of border crossing at the external EU border crossing points in Latvia, it is planned to introduce electronic reservation system. The said system is going to be extended exclusively to trucks. Introduction is planned on 1 January 2013 at the border crossing points with Russia and in 2014 with Belarus.

### **3 Transport of passengers and goods in accordance with the Agreement**

#### **Freight transport**

Both delegations agreed about the very satisfying status in the freight transport sector, which is liberalized except cabotage.

#### **Regular bus services:**

At the present time just one regular service is operational (Riga-Berne by Norma-A SIA) and valid till 2014. The regular bus service Riga-Berne operates twice a week regularly and in high season four times a week. The Swiss side mentioned that it hasn't received the copy of the authorization yet. The Latvian side promised to send the copy of the authorization.

The Latvian delegation informed that as from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011 the competent authority for regular bus permits is the Latvian Road Transport Administration, Valnu Street 30, Riga, LV-1050, Latvia



The regulation on Passenger Rights 181/2011 will be implemented in Latvia as from March 1, 2013. For regular bus services involving third countries a transitional period of 4 years is introduced. The Latvian delegation indicated that they will use this interim period in order to adapt their bilateral agreements with third countries.

#### **4 Miscellaneous, including development and new perspectives on ECMT multilateral quota**

The Swiss side mentions the discussions concerning the elaboration of a multilateral agreement on regular bus services (OMNIBUS) which will take place in UN/ECE in Geneva (SC 1 meeting planned in October). Switzerland indicates that a solution has to be found in this issue (new agreement in Geneva or in Brussels). For the Latvian delegation this issue is also important. If no progress can be noted in the framework of UN/ECE or EU Commission, Latvia will put this issue on its EU presidency agenda in 2015.

Both delegations discussed about the ECMT- quotas and their actual development. Concerning the new Russian position, both delegations share the opinion that the ECMT road transport group should adopt a positive and constructive attitude but wait from the Russian Federation further detailed information on the implementation of "the condition". Both delegations support the idea of a trial period for implementing this new approach.

Both delegations are of the opinion that concerning the discussion on intermodal quota and its three options as well as on quality charter, these issues should be deeply analyzed in order to find the optimal solution for 2016.

The meeting was held in a friendly and constructive atmosphere with mutual understanding.

The Latvian delegation proposed to held the next Swiss-Latvian Joint Committee meeting on international Road transport in 2013 in Latvia. The date and place of the meeting will be determined by correspondance.

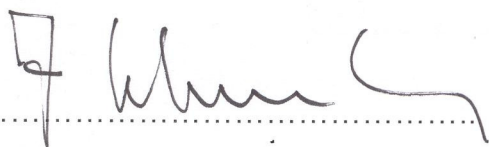
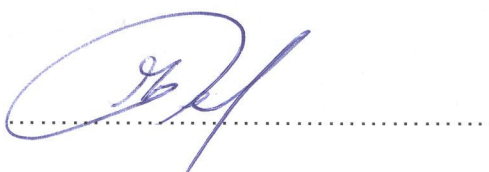
Done at Berne on 31 August 2012 in two originals in English.

FOR THE SWISS DELEGATION:

FOR THE LATVIAN DELEGATION:

Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly

Mr. Māris Pēkalis

## Annexe 1

### Participant list:

#### Swiss Delegation:

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly | - Head of Unit International Affairs, Federal Office of Transport, head of delegation |
| Mr. Matthias Rinderknecht | - Expert in the Unit International Affairs, Federal Office of Transport               |
| Ms. Anna Lena Aeschlimann | - Expert in the Unit International Affairs, Federal Office of Transport               |
| Ms. Kathrin Steffen       | - Expert in the Unit Freight transport, Federal Office of Transport                   |
| Mr. Urs Lüchinger         | - Deputy Head of Unit Vehicles and Road Taxes, Federal Customs Office                 |

#### Latvian Delegation:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Mr. Māris Pēkalis     | - Deputy Director of Land Transport Department, Ministry of Transport, head of delegation         |
| Ms. Indra Gromule     | - Head of International Road Carriage Coordination Division, Road Transport Administration        |
| Mr. Normunds Narvaišs | - Chairman of Board, Road Transport Administration  |
| Mr. Aivars Olants     | - Senior Expert, International Road Carriage Coordination Division, Road Transport Administration |