

## PROTOCOL

### of the Meeting of the Norwegian-Latvian Joint Committee On International Road Transport Oslo, 2-3 September 2014

The Joint Committee, referred to in Article 4 of the Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Republic of Latvia relating to International Transport by Road, concluded on 3 June 1994, held its meeting in Oslo on 2-3 September 2014.

The delegations are listed in the appendix.

The following agenda was adopted by the delegations:

1. Exchange of information regarding the development of foreign trade and road transport.
2. Transport of goods by road.
  - a. General Exchange
  - b. Cabotage
3. International passenger transport.
  - a. General Exchange
  - b. Passenger rights in road transport
  - c. Occasional passenger cabotage provisions
4. Miscellaneous
  - Further development of the ECMT multilateral quota for road transport – i.e. the work with the Quality Charter
  - Road user charges
  - ERRU
  - Other issues

#### **Item 1.**

#### **Exchange of information regarding the development of foreign trade and road transport**

The meeting started with a presentation by the Latvian delegation of statistical data and information on trade and transport between the two countries. Latvia pointed out that Latvian export to Norway measured in million EUR, has increased substantially between 2011 and 2012, but only with a slight decrease from 2012 to 2013. They also pointed out that Latvian import from Norway in million EUR has decreased during the same period.

Latvian statistics for trade in tons, showed a substantial increase in Latvian import from Norway for the period 2011-2013. The Latvian export to Norway in tons shows a decrease.

The Latvian delegation pointed out that the main export goods to Norway for 2013 included base metals and articles of base metals (51,5 million EUR), wood and articles of wood (43,9 million EUR) and other goods (67,1 million EUR). The main import



goods from Norway for 2013 includes mineral products (25,2 million EUR), live animals/animal products/fish etc. (13,5 million EUR), machinery and mechanical appliances, electrical equipment (7,5 million EUR).

The Norwegian delegation also presented statistics on general trade tendencies between the two countries. Norway pointed out that sea transport is the dominant mode for freight transport between the countries.

Both delegations handed out written information on the statistical material that was presented.

## **Item 2.**

### **Transport of goods by road**

#### **a. General Exchange**

The delegations agreed that the operation of goods transport by road between the two countries in general runs smoothly, and in line with EU/EEA legislation in the field.

As a supplement to the system of market access within the EU/EEA, Norway and Latvia exchange 50 permits for third country transport to and from countries outside the EU/EEA according to the bilateral agreement. The Latvian delegation informed that they had issued 5 third country permits for 2013. The Norwegian delegation informed that they had not issued any such permits for 2013.

The delegations agreed to continue the exchange of the quota of 50 permits for third country permits on an annual basis. It was also agreed that a request for additional third country permits would be assessed in a positive manner.

The delegations exchanged views on the possibility of liberalizing the quota system for third country permits. The Latvian delegation provided a list of countries with which third country operations had already been liberalized. The Norwegian delegation stated that liberalization of this quota is currently not on the agenda, and that it may also be difficult within the framework of the bilateral agreement.

The Norwegian delegation informed the Latvian delegation about the status of the implementation of the EU Road Package into the EEA-Agreement and Norwegian legislation. It is expected that the relevant Norwegian regulations will enter into force on 1 January 2015. At the same time a new central authority will become responsible for the issuing of licenses according to the Road Package and permits according to bilateral agreements. Community authorizations will also be made applicable for national transport operations by road.

#### **b. Cabotage**

The delegations exchanged views on cabotage in the road transport sector. In Norway there has been much focus on this, and Norway is working towards ensuring a level playing field and fair competition in the market. Challenges regarding the lack of reliable statistics for cabotage were discussed.



The Norwegian delegation informed the Latvian delegation that a working group on cabotage, with representatives from the industry and from the Government, had delivered a report on its work to the Minister of Transport in March. An English summary of the report was handed out.

The Latvian delegation informed the Norwegian side that Latvian authorities do not consider cabotage in road transport to be a problem.

The delegations exchanged views on the question of the future development of the market as regards cabotage. Latvia handed out the joint positions of the two opposing blocks on cabotage within the EU-system.

### **Item 3.**

#### **International passenger transport**

##### **a. General Exchange**

The delegations did not report of any problems as regards international passenger transport between Norway and Latvia.

Both sides confirmed that there are no regular lines between the countries.

##### **b. Passenger rights in Road Transport**

The Norwegian delegation informed the Latvian delegation of the status for implementation of Regulation (EU) No. 181/2011 on passenger rights into Norwegian legislation. The Regulation is expected to be incorporated into the EEA-Agreement within foreseeable future.

The delegations exchanged information concerning the appointment of terminals that shall offer assistance for disabled persons, and on the organization of the Complaint Handling Body for passenger complaints that shall be set up according to the Agreement. The Latvian side gave an account of its experiences with the implementation of the Regulation.

##### **c. Occasional Passenger Cabotage Provisions**

The delegations exchanged views on occasional passenger cabotage.

The Norwegian delegation stated that Norway is concerned about the lack of statistics on cabotage in the passenger transport sector, and the lack of a definition in the EU Regulation of what constitutes temporary cabotage. The Norwegian delegation also informed the Latvian delegation that the proposal to define and register cabotage in the passenger sector that was discussed during the last meeting of the Joint Committee has not been introduced into Norwegian legislation.

### **Item 4.**

#### **Miscellaneous**

- Further development of the ECMT multilateral quota for road transport – i.e. the work with the Quality Charter

The delegations discussed the ongoing work in the ECMT Road Transport Group as regards further development of the multilateral quota for road transport. The Norwegian delegation expressed some concern as regards the ambitions to develop a system of enforcement and sanctions of the adopted Quality Charter. It is important

that the system does not create an administrative burden that member countries are not ready to bear, or applies sanctions that cannot be supported by the existing legal framework.

While Norway indicated that very few ECMT licenses are issued to Norwegian hauliers, Latvia expressed the importance of the ECMT permits for Latvian hauliers.

- Road user charges

The Latvian delegation informed the Norwegian delegation of the newly implemented system of road user charges in Latvia, and handed out more detailed information on the issue. All goods vehicles with a permissible laden weight of more than 3500 kg must purchase a vignette before driving on the state main roads in Latvia. The Latvian delegation stated that the system was functioning well. Some Norwegian hauliers had already purchased the vignette.

The Norwegian delegation informed of the proposal to impose a requirement that motor vehicles with an approved weight of more than 3500 kg shall be equipped with an electronic toll collection unit when used on public roads in Norway.

- European Register of Road Transport Undertakings (ERRU)

Latvia informed that they, as one of 13 countries, have started to use the register according to the Road Package in April 2013. The Latvian delegation expressed satisfaction with the operation of the system. Norway informed that the preparations towards connecting to the ERRU-system is well under way, and that it is expected that Norwegian authorities will start using the system in January 2015.

- Other issues

Latvia informed of and handed over updated information and contact details for competent authorities for regular bus transport and abnormal loads, as well as for control authorities in Latvia.

Norway handed over the "Truckers guide to driving in Norway". The importance of having the right equipment for driving in Norway during winter time was underlined. Norway also informed of the proposal of extending the winter tyre requirements to apply also for trailers to motor vehicles with a maximum permitted weight of more than 3500 kg, and retractable axles on motor vehicles and trailer to motor vehicles each with a maximum permitted weight of more than 3500 kg. The time of enforcing this regulation is not yet decided.

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The meeting was conducted in a friendly and constructive atmosphere. Both delegations expressed the importance of the discussions and exchange of information of the Joint Committee meetings. The Latvian delegation proposed to organize the next Joint Committee meeting in Latvia.



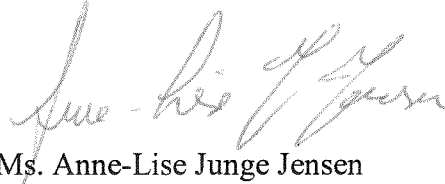
This protocol was prepared in Oslo, 3 September 2014 in two originals in the English language.

For the Latvian delegation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Annija Novikova', written in a cursive style.

Ms. Annija Novikova

For the Norwegian delegation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Anne-Lise Junge Jensen', written in a cursive style.

Ms. Anne-Lise Junge Jensen

## APPENDIX

### List of participants

The Norwegian delegation:

Ms. Anne-Lise Junge Jensen

Deputy Director General, The Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications

Mr. Hans Haavind

Senior Adviser, The Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications

Ms. Linda Solstad

Higher Executive Officer, Norwegian Public Roads Administration

Mr. Jan-Terje Mentzoni

Deputy Secretary General, Norwegian Haulier Association

Mr. Terje Sundfjord

Responsible Transport market, NHO Transport

The Latvian delegation:

Ms. Annija Novikova

Deputy Director of Road Transport Department, Ministry of Transport

Mr. Normunds Narvaiss

Chairman of the Board, Road Transport Administration

Mr. Igors Jagodins

Expert of International Road Carriage Coordination Division, Road Transport Administration

Mr. Gatis Ginters

The Embassy of Latvia in Norway