

## AUTUMN 2017 PLENARY SESSION OF THE CCNR

Ref: CC/CP (17)11

Strasbourg, 7 December 2017 – The Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) held its autumn plenary session on 7 December 2017 chaired by Mr Reto Dürler, the head of the Swiss delegation. The meeting concluded the two-year Swiss presidency of the organisation.

### CCNR STRATEGY

At its plenary session, the CCNR approved strategic guidelines on which its future activities will be based. On the one hand, the guidelines confirmed the Mannheim Act and its underlying principles as a basis for the CCNR's future activities. On the other hand, the guidelines demonstrate the CCNR's intention to contribute its particular skills to a close collaboration with the EU and other international organisations in order to promote sustainable Rhine and European inland navigation.

The environment in which the navigation of the Rhine and CCNR operate is subject to constant change. The navigation of the Rhine is increasingly integrated into the global economy. More than ever, political, legal, social and technical decisions affecting the navigation of the Rhine have a European dimension. The CCNR therefore sees the need to align its activities with strategic guidelines that take account of this change and the forces driving it.

The CCNR's objective is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable navigation of the Rhine and further afield. As such, the CCNR will continue to support national, regional and global sustainability targets and initiatives, in particular by agreeing the Vision of emission-free inland vessels by 2050. The CCNR will continue to promote the advantages of inland navigation as a high-quality means of transport and support the shifting of traffic onto inland waterways, by using innovation and digitalisation to meet the new challenges confronting inland navigation. The CCNR intends to remain the authoritative centre of excellence and first port of call for all inland navigation issues, fully exploiting its expertise and wide-ranging wealth of experience in the process.

In the next few years the CCNR will plan its work on the basis of the strategic guidelines that its delegations, assisted by the Secretariat and at the initiative of its President since September last year, have developed. It will align its future work programmes and relationships with EU institutions, in particular the European Commission, and other international organisations, with the guidelines.

### PRESIDENCY OF THE CCNR

The plenary session was the opportunity to emphasise a number of other highlights of the period 2016-2017. Mr Reto Dürler particularly highlighted the stepping up of cooperation with the European Commission, in particular the drawing up of the harmonised technical requirements for inland navigation vessels with the adoption of the ES-TRIN 2015 and 2017 standards. The European Committee for drawing up Standards in the field of Inland Navigation (CESNI), established in 2015, has reached its cruising speed, also being involved in important work on the professional qualifications of navigation personnel. The recent progress in the market observation arena has also been applauded. 2016 also saw the publication of the interim report on "Vision 2018", the CCNR roadmap for enhancing

inland navigation and its sustainable development. Finally, the increasing importance of RIS applications also attracted attention, with the staging of a huge online survey to evaluate the implementation of the obligation to fit an Inland AIS and an electronic chart display device and the holding of the 5th RIS workshop on 17 November 2017, which will inevitably influence the organisation's future work.

Germany will hold the presidency of the CCNR in 2018-2019. For Mr Achim Wehrmann, its head of delegation, consolidating cooperation with the EU will remain a priority, as will support for the CCNR's traditional core tasks, all this consistent with the strategic document adopted in the plenary meeting. The 150th anniversary of the Mannheim Act, celebrated on 17 October 2018, will be the opportunity for a critical and constructive debate on the current relevance and development potential of this founding text. With the benefit of its experience and expertise, the CCNR will also maintain its prominent involvement in new technologies and innovation by means of real world regulations. 2018-2019 will also be the opportunity for the CCNR and its partners to take stock of the activities relating to the organisation's "Vision 2018" and to decide on a possible adjustment of its objectives, while taking account of the strategy document.

### ONGOING COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION: ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEW CHAPTERS

In the presence of Mrs Daniela Rosca, head of the ports and inland navigation unit at DG MOVE, representing the European Commission, and of representatives of several international organisations and Observer States, the CCNR reiterated its profound commitment to enhanced and sustained cooperation with the European Union. Mrs Rosca highlighted the successful partnership with "a lot of good stories to tell" and welcomed the involvement and the support of the CCNR on the matters related to European inland navigation. She also welcomed the CCNR strategic guidelines and their focus on green, efficient and digitally connected inland navigation, and warmly saluted Germany's presidency of the CCNR for the next two years.

The CESNI is an exemplary and efficient model, enjoying broad-based participation by all participants at EU level. The CESNI boasts acknowledged know-how and expertise beyond the confines of the CCNR and EU, Serbia and Ukraine having acquired Observer State status in 2017. Following the adoption of the new standard on technical requirements for inland navigation vessels in 2017, in 2018 CESNI is preparing to adopt several sets of professional qualification standards which will be directly incorporated into the delegated acts of the new EU directive on the recognition of professional qualifications in the field of inland navigation, formally adopted at the EU Council on 4 December.



*Mr Reto Dürler (head of the Swiss delegation)  
and Mr Achim Wehrmann  
(head of the German delegation)*



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Thanks to this very positive outcome, DG MOVE and CCNR will prepare the next stages of their partnership in the first half of 2018, in close consultation with all participants. Accordingly, next year CESNI will adopt a new work programme for 2019-2021.

### **2018: AN EVENTFUL YEAR FOR EUROPEAN INLAND NAVIGATION**

The plenary meeting was also the opportunity to emphasise what a special year 2018 will be for inland navigation, with several significant events both at a European and international level, in addition to the 150th anniversary of the Mannheim Act.

Particular mention was made of: i) the year of Multimodality announced by the Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc, combined with the Bulgarian, Austrian and Romanian presidencies of the EU Council, ii) the Wroclaw international conference project on 18-19 April organised by Poland in close collaboration with the UN-ECE, iii) the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Belgrade Convention, the foundation agreement of the Danube Commission, in association with the 90th session of the Danube Commission on 29 and 30 June in Belgrade.

### **THE CCNR IS AMENDING ITS REGULATIONS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE EUROPEAN STANDARD LAYING DOWN TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INLAND NAVIGATION VESSELS (ES-TRIN 2017/1)**

At its plenary session in December 2017, the CCNR also adopted three resolutions enabling an amendment of its regulations to take account of ES-TRIN 2017/1. The Rhine Vessel Inspection Regulations (RVIR) were amended to incorporate a reference to the ES-TRIN 2017/1. The technical regulations themselves were covered by the content of the standard and can therefore be deleted in the RVIR. It also marks a closer alignment with the EU's legal framework. The previous references to paragraphs in the RVIR, in the Rhine Police

Regulations (RPR) and the Regulations for navigation personnel on the Rhine (RPN) were also amended. These amendments come into force at the same time as the Standard on 7 October 2018.

### **COMPOSITION OF THE CHAMBER OF APPEAL**

Following the honourable resignation of judge Mr Krijn F. Haak (Netherlands), the CCNR appointed as his replacement Mr Willem P. Sprenger (Netherlands) as deputy judge.

### **ABOUT THE CCNR**

The Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) is an international organisation that exercises an essential regulatory role in the navigation of the Rhine. It is active in the technical, legal, economic and environmental fields. In

all its areas of action, its work is guided by the efficiency of transport on the Rhine, safety, social considerations, and respect for the environment.

Many of the Central Commission's activities now reach beyond the Rhine and are directly concerned with European navigable waterways more generally. The Central Commission works closely with the European Commission as well as with the other river commissions and international organisations.



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## ANNEXES (for the specialist press)

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### **ECONOMIC SITUATION OF INLAND NAVIGATION IN EUROPE**

In partnership with the European Commission, the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) published its 2017 annual Market Observation report on inland navigation in Europe in September and its quarterly Market Insight report in November. The outcome of close collaboration between the two institutions, these two reports provides an exhaustive overview of the market situation and of developments in European inland navigation during 2016 – for the September annual report – and during the first quarter of 2017 – for November's quarterly report.

In 2016, river transport represented goods transportation of almost 145 billion tonne kilometres, with an ongoing important concentration within the Rhineland countries. In particular, container transport is growing at 4.6% for the European Union as a whole to reach 15 billion tonne kilometres. Passenger transport, in particular the river cruise segment, also continued its upward trajectory in 2016: the 335 cruise vessels plying the Rhine, Danube, Seine, Elbe, the Rhone and other European Union rivers carried a total of 1.36 million people. The favourable economic context, with growth in industrial output and world trade, has had a positive effect on the transport sector and on inland navigation in particular. The poor harvests of summer 2016 in France and the low water conditions on the Rhine and on the Danube also influenced river transport, this time for the worse.

Notwithstanding an improvement in the economic situation in Europe, the volumes carried by inland navigation fell in the first quarter of 2017. Although the situation had recovered compared to the end of 2016, the total transport performance on the Traditional Rhine decreased by 12% in Q1 2017 compared to Q1 2016, and on the Danube the reduction was 22%. This is primarily attributable to low-water and icebound periods which severely affected navigation on the Danube early in the year. However, the evolution is not homogenous all over Europe. In particular, inland navigation goods transport increased in Belgium at the beginning of 2017, and this increase was strongly supported by container transport that continued its strong upward trend in Belgium, with an increase of almost 20%.

During the second quarter of 2017, transport demand recovered, with transport performance on the Rhine 2% up compared with the second quarter of 2016. Over the same period, transport performance increased by 8% on the Danube. If one looks at the entire first half of 2017, however, one will see a fall in the transport performance of goods compared with 2016 of 5% on the Rhine and 6% on the Danube.

The full annual and quarterly reports can be downloaded as a PDF in English, French, German or Dutch at <http://www.ccr-zkr.org/13020800-en.html> or consulted directly online at: <http://www.inland-navigation-market.org/en/>

### **THE CCNR CLARIFIES THE APPLICATION OF REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING SECTOR KNOWLEDGE WHEN SEVERAL BOATMASTERS ARE MANDATED**

Following a judgement by its Chamber of Appeal, the plenary assembly of the Central Commission of the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) has clarified the requirement in the Rhine Police Regulations which define the requirements applicable to the boat master.

To ensure an unambiguous command situation on-board, this amendment to the wording of article 1.02 (1) of the Police Regulations now states that a single person is responsible as boatmaster, including when the crew requirements of the Regulations for Rhine Navigation Personnel require the presence on-board of several boatmasters. This also means that only the boatmaster in charge is required to possess the sector knowledge corresponding to the sector on which the vessel is operating.

This modification of the requirements applicable to boatmasters aligns the wording of the Rhine Police Regulations with real world practice without this in any way affecting safe navigation. At the same time it allows the navigation of the Rhine to operate according to a legal framework that is as simple, clear and harmonised as possible. This amendment will come into force on 1 June 2018.

### **PUBLICATION OF THE FINDINGS OF THE CCNR SURVEY ON THE OBLIGATION TO FIT AN INLAND AIS AND INLAND ECDIS DEVICE OR COMPARABLE ELECTRONIC CHART DISPLAY DEVICE**

Upon its adoption, the CCNR had expressed its desire to undertake an evaluation of the implementation of the obligation to fit an Inland AIS and Inland ECDIS device or comparable electronic chart display device. Accordingly, after two years of implementation, it conducted a wide-ranging survey of this obligation involving boatmasters, the authorities and installation companies. There was a very high participation in this survey and its findings, containing a wealth of lessons, have just been published.

To improve the safe navigation of the Rhine and to provide boatmasters with additional information, with effect from 1 December 2014 the CCNR introduced the obligation to fit Inland AIS and Inland ECDIS devices or comparable electronic chart display devices. Two years after the decision being implemented, in 2016 it decided to conduct an online survey to gather information from the various participants, to evaluate the difficulties and problems encountered by users as best it could, and to enable those individuals affected by the regulations to propose improvements. Over a two-month period, more than 1000 fully completed questionnaires and more than 400 partially completed questionnaires, but usable all the same, were received. More than 90% of the responses came from boatmasters. Also taking part in the survey were companies installing the equipment in the vessels, waterway administrations and police services.

At its plenary session in Strasbourg on 7 December 2017, the CCNR made a point of thanking the numerous participants in this survey for their detailed and comprehensive contributions, which have enabled a hitherto unrivalled database on the implementation of river information services to be created.

This information constitutes an important underpinning for future CCNR work on river information services (RIS) and more. To this end, the work to distil the conclusions and recommendations has commenced and the findings should be presented in 2018. Furthermore, the CCNR wishes to demonstrate its desire for transparency, to share its data and to involve all the participants in its work. It is therefore making the information from the survey available for use by national authorities, international organisations, the inland navigation sector, applications developers, equipment manufacturers and the RIS expert groups.

The document containing the survey results can be downloaded from the CCNR website ([http://www.ccr-zkr.org/files/documents/ris/eng\\_Ais\\_e.pdf](http://www.ccr-zkr.org/files/documents/ris/eng_Ais_e.pdf)) and will be sent to the various participants who provided their e-mail address.



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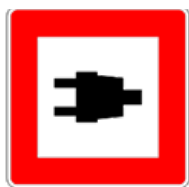
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## **POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION OF A REQUIREMENT TO USE LAND-BASED POWER CONNECTIONS**

Berths in urban areas are indispensable for inland navigation. At the same time these berths can cause nuisance to local residents. The Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) has responded: by amending the Rhine Police Regulations (RPR) the competent local authorities will be able to target and avoid possible nuisance while imposing the minimum possible requirements on shipping.

The CCNR has supplemented article 7.06 of the RPR and introduced a new mandatory sign, shown below. When this sign is displayed, the new (3) of article 7.06 makes it mandatory for the boat master to connect his vessel to the land-based power system. While at berth, he is required to cover all his electrical power requirements from this land-based power system.

The new (4) introduces a derogation from this obligatory connection for vessel capable of meeting their own energy requirements while berthed using alternative forms of power supply that emit no noise nor any gaseous and particulate pollutants.



Whether this sign is displayed or not is for the competent local authorities to decide. These authorities can provide for variations whereby, for example, this

obligation only applies at night

What the CCNR would like to achieve with this decision, which comes into effect on 1 June 2018, is to provide the competent local authorities with a framework that takes account of inland navigation challenges and local residents' expectations of berths. Because the trend to "living on the water" and citizens' increasing intolerance to noise and pollutants is increasingly causing problems with stationary craft. This framework regulation therefore makes it possible to compel a vessel occupying a berth to connect to the land-based power network unless it is generating its energy in an environmentally friendly way. It offers a solution acceptable to all sides: the vessel's skipper can rely on being able to find an alternative power source to his on-board electrical generators and local residents can count on lower noise levels.

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At its meeting on 6 July 2017, the European Committee for drawing up Standards in the field of Inland Navigation (CESNI) adopted edition 2017/1 of the European standard laying down technical requirements for inland navigation vessels (ES-TRIN 2017/1). The CCNR and European Union have expressed their intention to enact ES-TRIN 2017/1

in a coordinated way, with effect from 7 October 2018, by means of a reference in their respective legislative frameworks.

At its plenary session in December 2017, the CCNR adopted three resolutions enabling its regulations to be amended to take account of ES-TRIN 2017/1. The Rhine Vessel Inspection Regulations (RVIR) have been modified to introduce a reference to the ES-TRIN 2017/1 and to delete the content covered by the said standard, but also to enhance alignment with the European Union's regulatory framework. The Rhine Police Regulations (RPR) and the Regulations for Rhine Navigation Personnel (RPN), which contained detailed references to the RVIR, the content of which has been transferred to the ES-TRIN, have also been amended to maintain the accuracy of these references. These amendments will come into force on 7 October 2018.

The implementation of uniform technical requirements on the Rhine and throughout the European Union's inland waterway network is part of the Central Commission's desire to enhance governance at a European level in the regulation of inland navigation and enables safe and orderly navigation to be improved yet further.



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