



IRF Working Group Environment

Geneva, 12 November 2008

MINUTES

Participants

Dimitris Mandalozis, Attikes Diadromes S.A., Greece – Chairman
Benedicte Corbier, Michelin, France
Car Reller, New Zealand Transport Agency, New Zealand
Jean Lalo, SOMARO, France
Andreas Biedermann, Ammann Schweiz AG, Switzerland
Djordje Mitrovic, Highway Institute, Serbia
Tony Marshall, ARUP, UK
K.K. Kapila, ICT, India
A. Srivastava, Ooms International, Netherlands
Carl Thodesen, ECOPATH, USA
Cristophe Nicodème, IRF Brussels
Laure Dezes, IRF Brussels
F.E.K. Nakpodia, Nigerian Institute of Safety Professionals, Nigeria
Senator Kosin, Nigerian Institute of Safety Professionals, Nigeria
Susanna Zammataro, IRF Geneva

Points addressed

The small introduction by the chairman - Dimitris Mandalozis - on both the activities and goals of the Working Group and on the conclusions of the Geneva Conference was followed by a brief presentation by each participant. The minutes of the last meeting (conference call on 14.05.08) were approved without amendments.

1. Publication “Innovation for Sustainable Roads – Showcasing the Road Sector Commitment to Environment”

The secretariat informed that around 28 submissions were received with significant thematic and geographic coverage. Material received was now under review and editing in order to be arranged according to a common structure (company/organisation presentation, description of the product/activity/project, benefits for the environments, contact details and pictures). The publication is planned to be finalised and printed in January. However, many of the submissions are still incomplete. More over some of the members have pledged submissions but have not yet transmitted them to the secretariat. Questions were raised as to the structure of the publication and the number of submissions allowed per company/organisation. The secretariat said that it would be awkward to penalise those members who have provided on time a number of varied and pertinent submissions. The editing process will certainly set a fair balance between all the submissions. The number of contributions might call for two publications which will introduce a natural distribution of contributions.

Decision

Leave the opportunity for submissions open until the 24th November. The target is to have the publication ready by the end of January.

Action

The secretariat will get back to the members who still have to complete the material provided. It will also update the group in January on the status of the publication.

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2. Collaboration with the "Sustainable Roads WG" IRF Brussels Office

Cristophe Nicodème, Director General and Laure Dezes, Operations Officer of IRF Brussels joined the meeting. They informed about the activities of the WG on Sustainable Roads launched by the Brussels Office on 10 June 2008. Composition, scope and mission of this new WG were presented.

As made clear by its name, this group tries to define and to analyse the different features included in the concept of "sustainability". This means looking into the question of environment, road safety, financing of infrastructure, equity and accessibility. This WG wishes also to identify possible areas of research that could be shaped into a European project and be financed by the European Commission.

Laure Dezes provided the group with a rough overview on the relevant EU activities calendar. She recalled in particular the imminent deadline for the registration of chemicals under the REACH directive; the European Commission initiative on 'The Greening of Transport' and the subsequent Action Plan; the publication by the European Commission of a communication/guidelines on the Adaptation to climate change by January 2009; the Eurovignette directive on which the Brussels office wishes to release a position paper; the noise directive for which it will be important to review and assess the solutions implemented; the Green Paper on TEN-T.

Laure Dezes said that this information is available on their website in the members section accessible through login and password. Susanna Zammataro has received a login and password to access this information. Dimitris Mandalozis welcomed the review of the calendar of activities and solicited a greater sharing of information with members to be able to provide input on time. Susanna Zammataro reported back on the last TEN-T conference held in October in Brussels to which she was invited by the Commission as a panellist. This is a clear sign of the growing up of the reputation of IRF. Susanna Zammataro stressed importance for IRF to be able to provide timely and clear input into these processes.

Decision

The group agreed on the necessity of better information sharing on EU initiatives and greater commitment in providing timely input when solicited.

Brussels office will inform Susanna Zammataro on the input under preparation to a given EU activity. They will also set clear deadlines for a feedback from members which will ensure timely presence and response from IRF.

3. Environment Policy Statement

During the conference call held on 14.05.08, the group decided to start working on an IRF Environment Policy statement and to prepare a draft on the basis of input received from some of the members. In June, it was decided together with Brussels to start with a more general policy statement on "Sustainable Roads". A first draft was prepared by the Brussels Office and circulated to the Geneva WG for discussion and amendment. Members welcomed the initiative.. After a brief discussion on "integrated transport systems" and on the necessity to include the master planning stage??? and to mention biodiversity, it was decided to proceed with comments by e-mail.

Decision

It was decided to provide comments and input in writings no later than 9th December. The WG decided to start working in parallel on an 'environment policy statement' which is complementary.

Action

The secretariat will centralise comments and input on the sustainable roads policy statement and transmit them to the Brussels office. The secretariat will start working on a first draft of Environment policy statement to be circulated to the group end of February.

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4. Collaboration with PIARC and ISO Technical Committees

Susanna Zammataro reported on the last meeting of PIARC TC A.1 "Preserving the Environment" in which IRF is an associated member. Both Dimitris Mandalozis and Susanna Zammataro attended the meeting in Glasgow and noticed with pleasure the appreciation expressed by the members of the Technical Committee for our activities and for the precious contribution that IRF can give. The next meeting is scheduled in January in Washington in collaboration with TRB. This is an excellent opportunity for IRF to stand out and to promote the activities of the members.

Exploratory contacts were held with ISO regarding the Technical Committee 207 on "Environmental Management". This was followed by a discussion regarding IRF being officially associated to the TC 207.

Decision

As much information as possible will be shared on the work of e PIARC TC. As to ISO, the group concluded that despite the importance of its work, it would be difficult time wise and money wise to provide technical input.

5. Work plan for 2009

The group discussed the activities for 2009. Besides finalising the publication "Innovation for Sustainable Roads" and the work on the Environment policy statement, the secretariat proposed to start working on a set of environmental guidelines.. There was discussion on what the guidelines should focus on (eg. technical aspects, general themes, a single specific topic, etc.).

Decision

It was decided to work on a general set of guidelines.

Action

The secretariat will make a proposal as to the list of topics to be covered and the initial structure for the work. Carl Reller from the New Zealand Transport Agency kindly offered to provide some examples of guidelines and policy statements delivered by the Agency.

6. Time and venue of the next WG meeting

It was decided to work as much as possible by conference call and to gather for a meeting only when necessary to finalise work. Therefore dates were left open for the time being. A meeting may be called in springtime if necessary.

Geneva, 03.12.08

Susanna Zammataro
Environment Project Manager

Dimitris Mandalozis
Chairman