



Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires

Zwischenstaatliche Organisation für den internationalen Eisenbahnverkehr

Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

WG TECH

51st Session

Minutes

London, United Kingdom

Hybrid meeting, 14-15.11.2023

WG TECH 51 SUMMARY 14-15 NOVEMBER 2023

The United Kingdom, in the shape of Mr Vaibhav Puri, was elected to chair the session.

- 1. The agenda as submitted in document TECH-23035 of 18 September 2023 and as amended during the session was approved.**
- 2. The minutes of WG TECH 50, including a modification proposed at the session by the European Commission concerning the use of the EVR, were approved.**
- 3. The Secretariat presented the latest developments in OTIF.**
- 4. For discussion**

WG TECH 51 reviewed and discussed the working documents that had been prepared for the session. In summary, the following was discussed or agreed on the different items¹:

4.1. Draft proposal for revision of UTP WAG:

- WG TECH reviewed documents TECH-23020 version 3 and TECH-23039, both dated 16 October 2023, and had no comments.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the documents and recommended that they be submitted to CTE 16 for adoption.

4.2. Draft proposal for revision of UTP Noise:

- WG TECH reviewed documents TECH-23021 version 3 and TECH-23037, both dated 16 October 2023. It made an editorial correction on page 4 of TECH-23021, so that the text would correctly refer to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1694.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the documents and recommended that they be submitted to CTE 16 for adoption.

4.3. Draft proposal for revision of UTP TCRC:

- WG TECH reviewed documents TECH-23022 version 3 and TECH-23038, both dated 16 October 2023. WG TECH modified the last paragraph in section 2.2 of TECH-23022 on the exchange of operational information between IMs and RUs.
- With this modification, WG TECH was satisfied with the documents and recommended that they be submitted to CTE 16 for adoption.

4.4. Draft explanatory document on the UTP TCRC:

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23019 version 3, dated 16 October 2023. On page 4, the text was modified to explain that IMs and RUs had to have arrangements to exchange operational information, without going into further detail.
- With this modification, WG TECH was satisfied with the document and recommended that it be submitted to CTE 16 for approval.

4.5. Draft Annex D to the EST UR concerning supervision (including a presentation by the United Kingdom on experience with coordination in the scope of supervision):

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23018 of 16 October 2023, and had no comments.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the document and recommended that it be submitted to CTE 16 for approval.
- WG TECH welcomed the United Kingdom's presentation on binational railway safety supervision between Great Britain and France and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and invited other competent authorities to share their experiences as well.

¹ To suit the availability of speakers, the United Kingdom's presentation under sub-item 4.5 was dealt with as the first sub-item under agenda item 4 and the review of the ERA technical document under sub-item 5.2 was dealt as the first sub-item under agenda item 5.

4.6. Update to the application guide for the UTP LOC&PAS:

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23015 version 3 of 16 October 2023, and had no comments.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the document and recommended that it be submitted to CTE 16 for approval.

5. **Developments in European Union regulations that are of relevance to COTIF (presented by the European Commission and the European Union Agency for Railways)**

5.1. Status update concerning the development of the European vehicle register (EVR):

ERA informed the meeting of its recommendation to revise the EVR requirements submitted to the European Commission on 19 October 2023. The recommendation would be considered by RISC.

5.2. Review of the ERA Technical Document entitled “Requirements for conformity assessment bodies seeking notification”:

- ERA presented its Technical Document with requirements to be met by assessing entities. The presentation covered various aspects, including an explanation of the general scope of the accreditation scheme, its place in the EU legal framework, fundamental principles, challenges, and the required independence of persons carrying out assessments and persons providing consultancy services.
- WG TECH took note of the accreditation scheme and document TECH-23040.

Status update on the revision of TSIs:

The European Commission presented the subjects to be dealt with by the EU in the coming period, in particular the migration of RID vehicle requirements to the WAG TSI, the development of specifications for the Digital Automatic Coupler (DAC) and the ongoing process to merge the TAF and TAP TSIs into a single TSI.

6. **The cross reference table of EU and OTIF terminology was reviewed.**

7. **The EU – OTIF equivalence table was reviewed.**

8. **Any other business**

8.1. Joint Coordinating Group of Experts (JCGE) letter and advice on migration of wagon-related requirements from RID to UTP/TSI with proposed amendments

- WG TECH took note of document TECH-23036 of 16 October 2023 with the advice of the JCGE concerning the transfer of vehicle requirements from RID to UTP WAG. It also noted the feedback from the Chairs of RISC and CTE that the target date for the entry into force of these amendments should be 1 January 2027.

8.2. Consultation on OTIF’s long-term strategy

- The OTIF Secretariat informed WG TECH that OTIF’s long-term strategy was being developed. The Secretary General had drafted a document setting out a proposal, which would be submitted to the General Assembly for adoption in 2024.
- The OTIF Secretariat explained that in 2021, the General Assembly had instructed the Secretary General to consult OTIF’s organs on the draft long-term strategy. The CTE was one of these organs. As the CTE would not convene before the draft long-term strategy had to be submitted to the General Assembly, the Secretary General would consult the CTE in a written procedure.

8.3. Draft provisional agenda for the 16th session of the Committee of Technical Experts:

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23041 of 16 October 2023. It suggested adding a new agenda item 6.5 *Draft handbook for the application and implementation of the APTU and ATMF UR*. With regard to agenda item 6.4, *Possible future revision of the ATMF UR*, the CTE could discuss the topic at the session, but the Secretariat was not requested to draft proposals of substance for this agenda item.

- WG TECH approved the provisional agenda for CTE 16 as proposed by the OTIF Secretariat and as amended at the session.

9. Next sessions

Bern, Ittigen (hosted by Switzerland), hybrid, 13 June 2024.

DISCUSSION

Welcome by the OTIF Secretariat

Mr Bas Leermakers (Head of OTIF's Technical Interoperability Department) who, together with Ms Maria Price (participating remotely) and Mr Dragan Nešić, represented the OTIF Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat"), welcomed all the participants and opened the 51st session of WG TECH. The meeting was hosted by the United Kingdom's Department for Transport and took place in the offices of the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB), in a hybrid format. The list of participants is attached to these minutes as [Annex I](#).

Welcome by the Department for transport

Mr James **Le Grice**, Head of Rail Safety and Standards of the United Kingdom's Department for Transport, welcomed the delegates and the Secretariat on behalf of the government of the United Kingdom and gave an overview of the state of the art of the rail network and rail transport in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, including some historical facts. He emphasised the high level of rail safety in the United Kingdom, where the latest statistics showed that the United Kingdom's railways were among the safest in the world. Mr Le Grice also noted that after Brexit, Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSIs) no longer had effect in the United Kingdom and had been replaced with National Technical Specification Notices (NTSNs). These NTSNs defined the technical and operational standards that had to be met to comply with the 'essential requirements' and to ensure the interoperability of the railway system.

Welcome by the RSSB

Mr Vaibhav **Puri**, Director of Sector Strategy of RSSB, welcomed the delegates and the Secretariat to the RSSB premises. He reminded the meeting of the tragic rail accidents at Southall and Ladbroke Grove, which had led to the creation of the RSSB. Mr Puri then explained the objectives, membership, structure, funding and working methods of the RSSB. He emphasised that the RSSB was an independent organisation in the railway sector, whose primary focus was risk management. He clarified that the RSSB did not itself take decisions or perform inspections. Instead, RSSB served as a platform for its stakeholders in the railway sector to agree collectively on solutions for the railway industry. Lastly, he explained the process of implementing changes in the railway sector, starting from the idea of a change to the change being implemented and the pivotal role of the RSSB in that process.

The **Secretariat** explained the practical arrangements for the hybrid format of this session of WG TECH.

ELECTION OF CHAIR

The **Secretariat** proposed the United Kingdom (Mr Vaibhav Puri) to chair the session. There were no other proposals. Mr Puri accepted the nomination. WG TECH unanimously elected GB, in the shape of Mr Vaibhav Puri, to chair this session.

The **Chair** thanked the participants for the confidence they had placed in him.

1 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The **Secretariat** reminded the meeting that the provisional agenda for WG TECH 51 had been submitted with the invitation letter TECH-23035 of 18 September 2023. Before the meeting, the Secretariat had uploaded two additional documents to be reviewed by WG TECH: 8.1 "Joint Coordinating Group of Experts (JCGE) letter and advice on migration of wagon-related requirements from RID to UTP/TSI with proposed amendments" and 8.2 "Draft provisional agenda for the 16th session of the Committee of Technical Experts (CTE)". At the session, the **Secretariat** proposed an additional item to be considered by WG TECH: "Consultation on OTIF's long-term strategy".

At the request of **GB**, its presentation under sub-item 4.5 "Draft Annex D to the EST UR concerning supervision" was dealt with as the first sub-item under agenda item 4.

At the request of **ERA**, its presentation on the “Requirements for conformity assessment bodies seeking notification” under sub-item 5.2 was dealt with as the first sub-item under agenda item 5 (Developments in European Union regulations that are of relevance to COTIF) on the second day.

The **Chair** concluded that WG TECH 51 had approved the agenda as amended during the session ([Annex II – Approved agenda](#)).

2 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 50TH SESSION OF WG TECH

Document: [WG TECH 50 draft minutes](#) Provisional minutes of WG TECH 50

The **Secretariat** informed the meeting that the provisional minutes had been sent for review to delegates who had attended the 50th session of WG TECH (Gümligen, 7-8 September 2023). The Secretariat had received comments from CH and CER. The modified provisional minutes had been uploaded for the attention of WG TECH 51. After uploading, the Secretariat had received additional suggestions from the European Commission (hereinafter “the EC”) and ERA concerning ERA’s presentation on the use of the EVR. The latter suggestions were reviewed and accepted at the meeting. There were no further comments.

The **Chair** concluded that the modified minutes of the 50th session of WG TECH, including a modification proposed at the session by the EC, were approved and asked the Secretariat to place them on OTIF’s website².

3 INFORMATION FROM THE OTIF SECRETARIAT

The **Secretariat** gave an overview of relevant official communications since the previous session:

- The JCGE letter (TECH-23036 of 19 September 2023)³ to the Chairs of the four committees: RID and CTE of OTIF and TDG and RISC of the EC⁴, with the advice on the migration of wagon-related requirements from RID to UTP and TSIs and with the proposed amendments in the Annex.
- Depository notification (NOT-23018/NOT-23019 of 19 September) concerning Norway’s approval of the amendments to COTIF and its Appendices D (CUV), F (APTU), G (ATMF) and H (EST) as adopted by the 12th (2015) and 13th (2018) General Assemblies.

The Secretariat also informed the meeting of the following:

- The entry into force on 1 November 2023 of the modifications to the ATMF UR (Appendix G to COTIF) as adopted by the Revision Committee using the written procedure (NOT-23010)⁵.
- The revised UTP GEN-E and UTP GEN-G, and modified Appendix I to UTP TAF adopted by CTE in June 2023 and notified in depository notification NOT-23015 of 13 July 2023⁶ would enter into force on 1 January 2024, as the Secretary General had not received any objections by the deadline of 13 November 2023.

The Secretariat reminded the meeting of circular letters TECH-23029, TECH-23030, and TECH-23031 of 8 August 2023, which had included questionnaires concerning monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the APTU and ATMF UR. The Secretariat invited those addressees who had not yet replied to the questionnaires to do so as soon as possible, even though the deadline of 8 November 2023 had passed. The Secretariat would also actively contact addressees to request responses. The Secretariat would analyse the feedback and report to CTE 16.

² [Activities > Technical Interoperability > Working Group Tech > Reports](#)

³ [Activities > Dangerous Goods > Joint Coordinating Group of Experts > Reports](#)

⁴ The four committees: OTIF’s RID Committee of Experts and Committee of Technical Experts and EC’s Transport of Dangerous Goods Committee and Railway Interoperability and Safety Committee

⁵ [Activities > Revision Committee > Notifications > 2022-2023](#)

⁶ [Activities > Technical Interoperability > Notifications > 2023](#)

4 FOR DISCUSSION

4.1 Draft proposal for revision of UTP WAG

Document: [TECH-23020-v3](#) Draft document version 3
[TECH-23039](#) [Draft] proposals for decision

The **Secretariat** reminded the meeting that WG TECH 50 had agreed that the OTIF Secretariat should prepare two drafts of the UTP WAG for CTE 16: one version with the RID-related requirements, and one without. This might enable the RID-related requirements to be adopted in 2024, which would mean that the UTP would enter into force in January 2025. However, in light of the letter from the JCGE (agenda sub-item 8.1) and the clarification provided by the Chair of RISC, it would not be possible for the TSI to enter into force by January 2025. As the UTP should not be modified before the TSI was modified, the RID-related UTP modification should not be dealt with by the CTE in 2024. Therefore, in agreement with the Chair of CTE the OTIF Secretariat had only prepared one draft version of the UTP WAG, which did not include the RID-related requirements.

The Secretariat then presented the third version of draft working document TECH-23020 and draft working document TECH-23039, both dated 16 October 2023. Among other matters, the new version included improvements to the text in point 0.3 concerning the concepts of free circulation and general operation.

There were no comments.

The **Chair** concluded this agenda sub-item as follows:

- WG TECH reviewed documents TECH-23020 version 3 and TECH-23039, both dated 16 October 2023, and had no comments.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the documents and recommended that they be submitted to CTE 16 for adoption.

4.2 Draft proposal for revision of UTP Noise

Document: [TECH-23021 v.3](#) Draft document version 3
[TECH-23037](#) [Draft] proposals for decision

The **Secretariat** presented the third version of draft working document TECH-23021 and draft working document TECH-23037, both dated 16 October 2023. The new version introduced several changes, including the requirement for conformity assessment of all brake blocks after 28 September 2033 and the redrafting of Appendix H concerning transitional provisions.

CER suggested an editorial correction to the text to update the reference to the EU text on page 4, which was shown on the screen and tacitly agreed.

There were no further comments.

The **Chair** concluded this agenda sub-item as follows:

- WG TECH reviewed documents TECH-23021 version 3 and TECH-23037, both dated 16 October 2023. It made an editorial correction on page 4 of TECH-23021, so that the text would correctly refer to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1694.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the documents and recommended that they be submitted to CTE 16 for adoption.

4.3 Draft proposal for revision of UTP TCRC

Document: [TECH-23022 v.3](#) Draft document version 3
[TECH-23038](#) [Draft] proposals for decision

The **Secretariat** presented the third version of draft working document TECH-23022 and draft working document TECH-23038, both dated 16 October 2023.

Initially, WG TECH had no comments on either document. After the discussion under agenda sub-item 4.4 regarding the arrangements for the exchange of operational information between IMs and RUs (section 2.2, last paragraph of TECH-23022), WG TECH amended the text to reflect accurately the outcome of the discussion.

The **Chair** concluded this agenda sub-item as follows:

- WG TECH reviewed documents TECH-23022 version 3 and TECH-23038, both dated 16 October 2023. WG TECH modified the last paragraph in section 2.2 of TECH-23022 on the exchange of operational information between IMs and RUs.
- With this modification, WG TECH was satisfied with the documents and recommended that they be submitted to CTE 16 for adoption.

4.4 Draft explanatory document on the UTP TCRC

Document: [TECH-23019 v.3](#) Draft document version 3

The **Secretariat** presented the third version of draft working document TECH-23019 dated 16 October 2023. The changes in the previous version had been accepted by WG TECH 50 and a new set of changes were shown in track changes. The latest amendments provided further clarification of the scope and purpose of UTP TCRC and the relationship between the IMs, RUs and keepers. The meaning of “good state of maintenance of the vehicle(s)” had also been made clearer, as well as the parameters relevant to the route concerned in terms of the vehicles in the train and the train composition. The Secretariat informed the meeting that once CTE 16 had approved the explanatory document, it would be published on OTIF’s website.

GB thanked the Secretariat for the updated document. It also wanted to discuss the wording “*operational means in place*” on page 4, first sentence. The word “operational” had a specific meaning and GB wondered whether it had been used intentionally or whether more neutral wording could be used instead.

The **Secretariat** explained that, in the text, it had aimed to describe the fact that IMs and RUs had to have the necessary systems, tools, or methods in place to exchange operational information that may affect route compatibility. This could be as simple as establishing a telephone connection. To be more neutral, the Secretariat suggested using the term “*arrangements*” instead of “operational means”. The text was shown on the screen and tacitly agreed. The Secretariat pointed out that the discussion was also relevant to the draft UTP TCRC and that the text should be changed accordingly (see agenda item 4.3).

The **Chair** noted that there were no additional comments. He also noted that there was consensus to make similar modifications to the draft UTP TCRC. He then concluded this agenda sub-item as follows:

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23019 version 3, dated 16 October 2023. On page 4, the text was modified to explain that IMs and RUs had to have arrangements to exchange operational information, without going into further detail.
- With this modification, WG TECH was satisfied with the document and recommended that it be submitted to CTE 16 for approval.

4.5 **Draft Annex D to the EST UR concerning supervision (including a presentation by the United Kingdom on experience with coordination in the scope of supervision)**

Document: [TECH-23018](#)

Draft document

The **Secretariat** presented the draft document TECH-23018 dated 16 October 2023. It reminded the meeting that WG TECH 49 and 50 had already reviewed the text but had not made any suggestions for improvements.

The **Chair** noted that there were no comments on the draft document at this session either.

Presentation by the United Kingdom on experience with coordination in the scope of supervision

The **United Kingdom** gave a brief overview of binational railway (British and French) safety supervision in two separate presentations, one concerning supervision of the Channel Tunnel between Great Britain and France and the other concerning traffic between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. With regard to supervision with France, Mr Ben **Shirley** gave an overview of the roles of the safety authorities involved. The binational Channel Tunnel Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) is responsible for overall supervision of the tunnel under the Treaty of Canterbury and acts as the NSA for the British section. The French National Railway Authority (EPSF) is responsible for the French section. His presentation focused on the roles of these authorities and the governance and interaction between the IGC's Channel Tunnel Safety Authority (CTSA), the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and the French NSA EPSF. Mr Shirley highlighted that joint railway safety inspections are led by EPSF and are carried out on the basis of annual inspection plans of both CTSA and EPSF, and pointed out the similarities and differences in their inspection processes. With regard to cross-border regulation, supervision and cooperation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, Mr Graeme **Banks** explained that there are several organisations involved in rail safety: the Rail Safety Authority of Northern Ireland, the Commission for Rail Regulation of the Republic of Ireland, and Translink (NI Railways) and Irish Rail. Their cooperation is based on a Memorandum of Understanding which outlines the framework for cooperation and joint working as well as regular meetings and consultation to develop inspection plans. The main focus of their cooperation is to minimise duplication and share information, particularly in the areas of rolling stock maintenance and interface arrangements. Finally, Mr Banks highlighted the similarities and differences in their inspection processes.

The **Chair** concluded this agenda sub-item as follows:

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23018 of 16 October 2023, and had no comments.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the document and recommended that it be submitted to CTE 16 for approval.
- WG TECH welcomed the United Kingdom's presentation on binational railway safety supervision between Great Britain and France and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and invited other competent authorities to share their experiences as well.

4.6 **Update to the application guide for the UTP LOC&PAS**

Document: [TECH-23015 v.3](#)

Draft document version 3

The **Secretariat** presented the third version of draft working document TECH-23015 dated 16 October 2023. It pointed out that all the amendments in the previous version had been accepted and that there was only one editorial change in 2.7.2 in the blue rectangle concerning clarification of the wording on rolling stock "intended for placing on" the EU market. This change was indicated in track changes.

The **Chair** concluded this agenda sub-item as follows:

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23015, version 3 of 16 October 2023, and had no comments.
- WG TECH was satisfied with the document and recommended that it be submitted to CTE 16 for approval.

5 DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPEAN UNION REGULATIONS THAT ARE OF RELEVANCE TO COTIF (PRESENTED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY FOR RAILWAYS)

5.1 Status update concerning the development of the EVR

The OTIF Secretariat informed the meeting that ERA had submitted its recommendation to revise the EVR requirements to the EC on 19 October 2023. The draft revised text would be formally discussed by EU MSs and reviewed by RISC. The Secretariat also informed the meeting that it had actively participated in ERA's working party and had provided feedback in order to ensure that the modified rules remained compatible with COTIF and that the recommendation included more precise provisions regarding the use of EVR by non-EU CSs.

UIP made two points regarding the text of the recommendation on the EVR. The first point concerned the new principle of public availability of all EVR data. Representative bodies at EU level had considered this point to be unnecessary and potentially harmful to businesses, as competitors could study investment decisions by analysing which types of wagons competing companies were investing in. The second point related to technical documents as appendices to the EVR decision, similar to TAF TSI/UTP, which should also be considered at OTIF level.

The **Chair** concluded this sub item as follows:

- ERA informed the meeting of its recommendation to revise the EVR requirements submitted to the European Commission on 19 October 2023. The recommendation would be considered by RISC.

5.2 Review of the ERA technical document entitled “Requirements for conformity assessment bodies seeking notification”

Document: [TECH-23040](#) Working document for review by WG TECH 51
[ERA Assessment Scheme](#)
[000MRA1044 v.2.0](#)

The **Secretariat** had submitted a short working document TECH-23040 dated 16 October 2023, which explained the reason why WG TECH was invited to review the ERA technical document. It reminded the meeting that CTE 15 had discussed the need to analyse the relevance to COTIF of an ERA technical document concerning requirements for conformity assessment bodies. The relevant COTIF provision in this context was UTP GEN-E, which would enter into force on 1 January 2024. The Secretariat highlighted that due to its public nature, the accreditation scheme was also accessible to and could be used by non-EU entities. However, some of the ERA requirements might not be relevant to non-EU CSs, as they related exclusively to EU law or concerned the assessment of products and services outside the scope of COTIF.

ERA (Mr Jean Paul **Lodzinski**) presented ERA's technical document with the requirements to be met by assessing entities. The presentation covered various aspects, including an explanation of the general scope of the accreditation scheme, its place in the EU legal framework, fundamental principles, its content, challenges, and the required impartiality and independence of persons carrying out assessments and persons providing consultancy services. Lastly, Mr Lodzinski clarified that the document replaced a previous version and included transitional measures concerning conformity assessment bodies (NoBos) accredited or recognised according to the previous version. For new accreditations, the new version would apply once it had been adopted by the General Assembly of the European Accreditation Association (EA), which was expected to take place by the end of November 2023. The new version would apply from 31 December 2024 to NoBos that had a valid accreditation. With regard to recognition, NoBos that had previously been recognised would have to start applying ERA's technical document from 1 January 2025, while for new recognitions, it would apply immediately.

GB wondered how the presumption of conformity in accordance with the EU assessment scheme could be the basis for mutual recognition beyond the EU, i.e. to be extended in the context of COTIF.

The **Secretariat** reminded the meeting that the aim of the technical rules of COTIF was to facilitate the movement of vehicles in international traffic and that COTIF did not regulate the provision of services in

other countries or govern product marketing. The Secretariat then made a number of points with regard to COTIF and EU law.

Firstly, it explained that there was a general principle within UTPs that NoBos notified in accordance with EU law were automatically also deemed competent to carry out assessments in accordance with COTIF's UTPs. This meant that NoBos registered in the EU's NANDO database, regardless of whether they were registered in accordance with the old or new accreditation scheme, were considered competent to assess vehicles for UTP compliance in the scope of COTIF.

Secondly, the opposite was not true: non-EU assessing entities were not automatically deemed competent to carry out TSI assessments in accordance with EU law. TSI assessments in accordance with EU law were in the exclusive competence of NoBos. The remit of non-EU assessing entities under COTIF was limited to carrying out UTP assessments, irrespective of whether the TSIs and UTPs were equivalent and irrespective of the fact that the EU accepted UTP-compliant vehicles in international traffic into the EU.

Thirdly, it explained that COTIF did not provide a legal basis for trade and did not therefore regulate the placing of vehicles on any market. To place a vehicle on the EU market, EU law had to be complied with, which included TSI conformity assessment by a NoBo. Similarly, to place a vehicle on any other (non-EU domestic) market, the rules applicable in that state or market had to be applied, including the technical requirements and rules on conformity assessment.

Fourthly, and linked to the third point, COTIF did not regulate the provision of services in other countries. This meant that assessing entities or NoBos alike could not assert rights to provide their services in another state solely on the basis of COTIF. Nevertheless, states could decide to accept a foreign assessing entity or NoBo providing such services on their territory, but this was not regulated under COTIF.

Finally, and linked to the fourth point, the results of the assessments in accordance with EU law and TSIs, or in accordance with COTIF and UTPs, had to be mutually accepted for the purpose of COTIF by all Contracting States. This was the case irrespective of which assessing entity or NoBo carried out the assessment and irrespective of where it was carried out. This meant that the certificates that confirmed compliance with the UTPs/TSIs should not be called into question by any state or actor for the purpose of admitting this vehicle to international traffic in the scope of COTIF.

UIP agreed with the Secretariat. In its view, there was no legal basis for cross acceptance in terms of legal compliance between COTIF and the EU. It was of the view that the monitoring of NoBos and accreditation schemes were only relevant at EU level, not under COTIF.

GB raised a question with regard to the strict rules in the ERA technical document concerning the separation of the provision of consultancy and assessment services. It asked ERA what the main challenges for the sector had been in terms of creating a division between the consultancy and assessment services, bearing in mind that in reality, there was a limited number of experts and these were often shared.

ERA (Mr Lodzinski) stated that there were several challenges that ERA wanted to address in connection with the rules on separating consultancy and assessment services. ERA wanted to prevent the possibility of a NoBo relying only on external experts, where the NoBo was effectively a one-person company that only signed off documents. According to ERA, this was not compatible with the rules in the EU Interoperability Directive. Another challenge concerned the impartiality and independence of external experts hired by NoBos. The argument was that external experts were not impartial, because they would come from the sector and should not therefore also work for an assessing entity. ERA had drafted the requirements on impartiality and independence, in coordination with DG GROW and DG MOVE. ERA suggested that a possible future idea was to set up database of experts where people could freely register their competences. Such a database, accessible to the public, could be of help to all entities in finding the expertise they required.

GB also asked ERA whether the voluntary application of an accreditation scheme by DeBos would impose restrictions on their consultancy activities.

ERA (Mr Lodzinski) explained that in accordance with the EU Interoperability Directive, the rules for NoBos applied *mutatis mutandis* to DeBos. Therefore, the accreditation scheme should apply in principle. However, DeBos could also be subject to national rules, so that there might be other rules that apply to them.

The **Chair** thanked ERA for the presentation, summarised the discussion that followed, noted that the accreditation scheme provided some very useful principles and concluded as follows:

- WG TECH welcomed ERA’s presentation about its Technical Document with requirements to be met by assessing entities. The presentation covered various aspects, including an explanation of the general scope of the accreditation scheme, its place in the EU legal framework, fundamental principles, challenges, and the required independence of persons carrying out assessments and persons providing consultancy services.
- WG TECH took note of the accreditation scheme and document TECH-23040.

Status update on the revision of TSIs

The **representative of the EC** (Ms. Alice **Polo**) informed the meeting of developments regarding the merging of the TAF and TAP TSIs into a single Telematics TSI and the developments concerning the revisions of the specifications for the European Vehicle Register (EVR). The aim of both developments was to simplify and harmonise the many existing tools at EU level and replacing them by a single tool for each function. She informed the meeting that the single Telematics TSI was expected to be adopted in June 2024, but the date of entry into force had not yet been agreed upon. This subject, together with the recommendation to revise the EVR and a new mandate for ERA concerning the revision of other TSIs would be discussed at RISC in November 2023. With regard to the migration of the RID vehicle requirements to the WAG TSI/UTP, and the development of specifications for the digital automatic coupler (DAC) in both WAG TSI and LOC&PAS TSI, these would be included as soon as they were available. The meeting was also informed that the revised TSIs included new annexes to improve the referencing of standards.

CER was concerned whether the planned EU harmonisation as explained would be compatible with the existing tools that were already being used by the sector. CER saw a risk that the developments would generate extra costs for the sector, in particular for companies that had already invested in specific solutions. **UIC** and **UIP** agreed with CER.

UIP informed the meeting of the sector’s position regarding the new TSI revision package. There were concerns about the changes to the relevant TSIs that could impose additional barriers and would be very difficult to implement within the framework of COTIF.

CH inquired what steps the Secretariat would take once a single Telematics TSI entered into force in the EU, which the EC anticipated would be at the end of next year.

The **Secretariat** informed the meeting that it had been following the development of a single Telematics TSI as an observer in the relevant ERA working groups. It reminded the meeting that only telematics applications for freight had been taken over into COTIF, but not the telematics applications for passengers. The Secretariat suggested awaiting the final version of the single telematics TSI and then to analyse the possible next steps. This would be in accordance with the existing practice. Provisions that were not needed or not suitable for COTIF would not be taken over. The 2-column layout of UTPs was used for this purpose.

The **Chair** thanked the EC for providing the update and concluded as follows:

- The European Commission presented the subjects to be dealt with by the EU in the coming period, in particular the migration of the RID vehicle requirements to the WAG TSI, the development of specifications for the Digital Automatic Coupler (DAC) and the ongoing process to merge the TAF and TAP TSIs into a single TSI.

6 CROSS REFERENCE TABLE OF EU AND OTIF TERMINOLOGY

Document: [TECH-17049](#)

Working document for review by WG TECH 51
(published on 16 October 2023)

The **Secretariat** presented the document. There were no modifications compared with the version submitted to WG TECH 50.

WG TECH took note of the document without any comments.

7 EU – OTIF EQUIVALENCE TABLE

Document: [TECH-18024](#)

Working document for review by WG TECH 51
(published on 16 October 2023)

The **Secretariat** presented the document. Compared with the version submitted to WG TECH 50, there were some small editorial improvements, an updated reference to EU legislation (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1694) and an updated *Comments* column to reflect the ongoing discussions in WG TECH 49, 50, and 51 on the revision of UTP WAG, UTP Noise and UTP TCRC. It was also noted that changes in the EU texts had to be analysed with regard to their impact on the UTP LOC&PAS, UTP PRM and UTP INF. All these changes were indicated in track changes.

WG TECH took note of the document without any comments.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Joint Coordinating Group of Experts (JCGE) letter and advice on migration of wagon-related requirements from RID to UTP/TSI with proposed amendments

Document: [TECH-23036](#)

The letter of the JCGE with Annex INF 1
(published on 19 September 2023)

The **Secretariat** introduced the document and main points of the letter sent by the Chair of the JCGE to the Chairs of the following four committees: RID and CTE of OTIF and TDG and RISC of the EC. Suggestions for amendments were listed in the Annex to the letter. After receiving the letter, the Chair of the RISC committee had suggested aiming for a date of entry into force of 1 January 2027, as 1 January 2025 was not feasible (RID was published once every two years, on 1 January of odd years only). This suggestion was supported by the Chair of the CTE. With regard to the work planning, the Secretariat suggested that WG TECH review the RID-related amendments to the UTP WAG in 2024-2025. The amendments to the UTP should enter into force on 1 January 2027.

The **Chair** noted that there were no comments on the subject and concluded this sub-item as follows:

- WG TECH took note of document TECH-23036 of 16 October 2023 with the advice of the JCGE concerning the transfer of vehicle requirements from RID to UTP WAG. It also noted the feedback from the Chairs of RISC and CTE that the target date for the entry into force of these amendments should be 1 January 2027.

8.2 Consultation on OTIF’s long-term strategy

The **Secretariat** informed the meeting of the development of OTIF’s long-term strategy. The 15th General Assembly had instructed the Secretary General, in consultation with the organs of OTIF, to prepare a long-term strategy for OTIF and to submit it for adoption at the next ordinary session of the General Assembly in September 2024. The Secretariat explained that the two-year work programme would be supplementary to the draft long-term strategy, which set out the following strategic objectives:

1. To ensure the effective and uniform application of OTIF law
2. To expand the application of OTIF law over the widest possible geographical area
3. To ensure that OTIF law remains relevant over time
4. To enhance OTIF’s leading role in international rail transport and contribute to finding synergies with other relevant international organisations and associations
5. To contribute to the harmonisation and unification of international railway law systems.

The Secretariat also explained that, in accordance with the action plan, the consultation on the draft long-term strategy should be completed by February 2024. The final proposal should be submitted to the General Assembly in early June 2024, i.e. before the next CTE meeting. The Secretary General would therefore like to consult the CTE using a written procedure. This would mean that the draft long-term strategy would be sent together with a cover letter to the CTE members, which were all MSs, and to the EU.

The **Chair** concluded this agenda sub-item as follows:

- The OTIF Secretariat informed WG TECH that OTIF’s long-term strategy was being developed. The Secretary General had drafted a document setting out a proposal, which would be submitted to the General Assembly for adoption in 2024.
- The OTIF Secretariat explained that in 2021, the General Assembly had instructed the Secretary General to consult OTIF’s organs on the draft long-term strategy. The CTE was one of these organs. Because the CTE would not convene before the draft long-term strategy had to be submitted to the General Assembly, the Secretary General would consult the CTE in a written procedure.

8.3 Draft provisional agenda for the 16th session of the Committee of Technical Experts

Document: [TECH-23041](#)

Draft provisional agenda for the CTE 16

The **Secretariat** presented a proposal for the agenda of CTE 16.

With regard to agenda sub-item 4.4. *Modification of Appendix I to the UTP TAF*, the Secretariat mentioned that a proposal would depend on the availability of the relevant ERA technical documents. In accordance with established practice, ERA would prepare the proposal to amend Appendix I and submit it to the OTIF Secretariat for further processing.

With regard to agenda sub-item 6.4. *Possible future revision of the ATMF Uniform Rules*, the Secretariat expressed its views on the way forward on this subject. The Secretariat saw merit in simplifying and improving the readability of the ATMF UR. At the same time, the Secretariat saw difficulties in modifying the ATMF UR under the current procedure for revising COTIF. For a full revision, a decision by the General Assembly was necessary. The Secretariat mentioned that the 13th General Assembly had adopted a new, simplified procedure for modifications to COTIF adopted by the General Assembly. This new procedure would not require the approval of MSs after a decision had been taken by the General Assembly, but would instead rely on the possibility for MSs to object to a decision that was taken. The absence of objections would automatically lead to entry into force. This new procedure was comparable to the procedure for UTPs, after they were adopted by CTE. The Secretariat noted that this new procedure still had to be approved in accordance with the current procedure, meaning that 2/3 of all MSs had to formally approve it. This had not yet happened. Thus, the Secretariat proposed that a proposal for revision of the ATMF UR should only be submitted to the General Assembly once the new procedure was applicable. Nevertheless, the CTE could already discuss and draft revised provisions. The Secretariat suggested briefly discussing the subject at the CTE, which could decide on the way to proceed.

The Secretariat also proposed that item 6 be amended by adding a new sub-item entitled “*Draft handbook for the application and implementation of the APTU and ATMF UR*”. The purpose of the handbook would be to provide practical guidance and to clarify the application of these Uniform Rules. It was not entirely clear whether the CTE could approve a handbook itself, or could only recommend its approval to the Revision Committee or General Assembly. This was a question of legal competences that was not clearly defined in COTIF. The Secretariat informed the meeting that in parallel a handbook concerning the application of the CIM and CUV UR had been drafted by the OTIF Secretariat’s Legal Department and that this was being reviewed by the ad hoc Committee on Legal Affairs and International Cooperation (JUR).

The **Chair** noted that there were no other suggestions for the agenda of CTE 16 and concluded as follows:

- WG TECH reviewed document TECH-23041 of 16 October 2023. It suggested adding a new agenda item 6.5 *Draft handbook for the application and implementation of the APTU and ATMF UR*. With regard to agenda item 6.4. *Possible future revision of the ATMF UR*, the CTE could

discuss the topic at the session, but the Secretariat was not requested to draft proposals of substance for this agenda item.

- WG TECH approved the agenda of CTE 16 as proposed by the OTIF Secretariat and as amended at the session. ([Annex III](#))

9 NEXT SESSIONS

The following sessions will be held in a hybrid format. If new travel restrictions are imposed, the sessions will be held remotely:

- 16th session of the CTE on 11 and 12 June 2024 in Bern
- 52nd session of WG TECH on 13 June 2024 in Ittigen, Bern (hosted by Switzerland)
- 7th Joint Coordinating Group of Experts (JCGE) on 17 September 2024 in Bern
- 53rd session of WG TECH on 18 and 19 September 2024 in Bern
- 54th session of WG TECH on 20 and 21 November 2024 (venue to be confirmed)

CLOSING REMARKS

The **Chair** thanked all participants for the productive discussion and thanked the OTIF Secretariat for preparing all the documents.

On behalf of the delegates, the **Secretariat** thanked the Chair for his work in chairing the 51st session of WG TECH and thanked the host, the Department for Transport and the Rail Safety and Standards Board of the United Kingdom, for providing the meeting logistics.

The **Chair** then closed WG TECH 51.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ANNEX I

I. Gouvernements / Regierungen / Governments**Albanie/Albanien/Albania**

M^{me}/Fr./Ms Eneida Elezi Foreign Affairs responsible officer
remote Albanian Railways - Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy

Allemagne/Deutschland/Germany

M./Hr./Mr. Philipp Unger Technischer Regierungsamtsrat
remote Eisenbahn-Bundesamt

Autriche/Österreich/Austria

M./Hr./Mr. Thomas Helnwein Amtssachverständiger
remote Bundesministerium für Klimaschutz, Umwelt, Energie,
Mobilität, Innovation und Technologie

Croatie/Kroatien/Croatia

M./Hr./Mr. Darjan Konjić Senior Advisor
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Sector for Railway Infrastructure
Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure

M^{me}/Fr./Ms Matea Jakšić Professional Associate
remote Directorate for Railway Infrastructure and Transport Sector
for Railway Infrastructure
Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure

France/Frankreich/France

M./Hr./Mr. Henri Dupuis Chargé de missions
in person Autorité française de sécurité ferroviaire (EPSF)

M./Hr./Mr. Julien Roger Chargé d'affaires réglementaires et juridiques
remote, 2nd day Autorité française de sécurité ferroviaire (EPSF)

Italie/Italien/Italy

M./Hr./Mr. Rocco Cammarata Head of Technical Standards of Vehicles Office
remote Agenzia Nazionale per la Sicurezza delle Ferrovie e delle
Infrastrutture Stradali e Autostradali (ANSFISA)

Norvège/Norwegen/Norway

M ^{me} /Fr./Ms	Pia Strand	Senior Adviser
remote		Norwegian Railway Authority

Pakistan

M./Hr./Mr.	Muhammad Farooq Iqbal	Director General Operations
Malik		Ministry of Railways
remote		

**Royaume-Uni/
Vereinigtes Königreich
United Kingdom**

M./Hr./Mr.	James Le Grice	Head of Rail Safety and Standards
in person		Department for Transport

M ^{me} /Fr./Ms	Michelle Cole	Head of Rail Standard
in person		Department for Transport

M./Hr./Mr.	Ben Shirley	HM Principal Inspector of Railways
in person, 1 st day		Office of Rail and Road

M./Hr./Mr.	Vaibhav Puri	Director of Sector Strategy
in person		Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)

M./Hr./Mr.	Graeme Banks	Head of Rail Safety (acting)
in person		Department for Infrastructure of Northern Ireland, Gateway & EU Relations Division

Serbie/Serbien/Serbia

M ^{me} /Fr./Ms	Ksenija Dunjić Pavlović	EU Integration and International Cooperation Officer
in person		Directorate for Railways
		Section for Railway Market Regulation, Licencing and Passenger Rights

Suisse/Schweiz/Switzerland

M ^{me} /Fr./Ms	Linda Ay	Project Manager Safety and Interoperability
remote		Federal Office of Transport of Switzerland - FOT

Türkiye

M./Hr./Mr. remote, 1 st day	Mustafa Kırmızıgül	Head of Certification Department Directorate General for Regulation of Transport Service
M./Hr./Mr. remote	Cengiz Çakmak	Branch manager Directorate General for Regulation of Transport Service
M./Hr./Mr. remote, 1 st day	Samet Palabiyik	Engineer Directorate General for Regulation of Transport Service
M./Hr./Mr. remote, 1 st day	Abdulgaffar Berk	Engineer TCDD TAŞIMACILIK A.Ş (TCDD Transport S.C.)
M ^{me} /Fr./Ms remote, 1 st day	Sinem Kaya	Logistics chief TCDD TAŞIMACILIK A.Ş (TCDD Transport S.C.)
M./Hr./Mr. remote, 1 st day	Ömer Batuhan Karataş	Officer TCDD TAŞIMACILIK A.Ş (TCDD Transport S.C.)

**II. Organisation régionale d'intégration économique
Regionale Organisation für wirtschaftliche Integration
Regional economic integration organisation**

Union européenne / Europäische Union / European Union

**Commission européenne/
Europäische Kommission/
European Commission**

M ^{me} /Fr./Ms remote	Alice Polo	Policy Officer European Commission - Directorate General for Mobility and Transport Unit C4 – Rail Safety and Interoperability
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**European Union Agency for Railways
(ERA)**

M./Hr./Mr. in person	Christoph Kaupat	Project Officer Networks, International and IMS Unit, ERA
M./Hr./Mr. remote	Jean-Paul Lodzinski	Project Officer Monitoring, Analysis, Research and Stakeholders Unit, ERA

III. Organisations et associations internationales Internationale Organisationen und Verbände International Organisations and Associations

CER

M./Hr./Mr. Gilles **Quesnel** Directeur Interopérabilité, Normalisation et Recherche
in person Europe (SNCF)
CER / SNCF

OSJD

M./Hr./Mr. Radovan **Vopalecky** Chairman of the Commission on Infrastructure and Rolling
remote Stock
OSJD – Committee of the Organization for Cooperation of
Railways
Commission on Infrastructure and Rolling Stock

UIP

M./Hr./Mr. Gilles **Peterhans** Secretary General
in person, 2nd day UIP – International Union of Wagon Keepers

UIC

M./Hr./Mr. Jozef **Fázik** Senior advisor
in person Union internationale des chemins de fer (UIC)

IV. Secrétariat Sekretariat Secretariat

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APPROVED AGENDA**ANNEX II**

Election of chair

1. Approval of the agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of the 50th session of WG TECH
3. Information from the OTIF Secretariat
4. For discussion:
 - 4.1. Draft proposal for revision of UTP WAG
 - 4.2. Draft proposal for revision of UTP Noise
 - 4.3. Draft proposal for revision of UTP TCRC
 - 4.4. Draft Explanatory document to the UTP TCRC
 - 4.5. Draft Annex D to the EST UR concerning supervision (including a presentation by the United Kingdom on experience with coordination in the scope of supervision – first under agenda item 4)
 - 4.6. Update to the application guide for the UTP LOC&PAS
5. Developments in European Union regulations that are of relevance to COTIF (presented by the European Commission and the European Union Agency for Railways)
 - 5.1. Status update concerning the development of the EVR
 - 5.2. Review of the ERA technical document entitled “Requirements for conformity assessment bodies seeking notification” (first item on day 2)
6. Cross reference table of EU and OTIF terminology
7. EU – OTIF equivalence table
8. Any other business
 - 8.1. Joint Coordinating Group of Experts (JCGE) letter and advice on migration of wagon-related requirements from RID to UTP/TSI with proposed amendments
 - 8.2. Consultation on OTIF long-term strategy
 - 8.3. Draft provisional agenda for the 16th session of the Committee of Technical Experts
9. Next sessions

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE CTE 16**ANNEX III**

- Opening of the session
- Election of the Chair
- 1. Approval of the agenda
- 2. Presence and quorum
- 3. Items for information:
 - 3.1. General information from the OTIF Secretariat
 - 3.2. Report from the Committee of Technical Experts' working group TECH
- 4. Items concerning the adoption of binding provisions:
 - 4.1. Revision of the UTP WAG
 - 4.2. Revision of the UTP Noise
 - 4.3. Revision of the UTP TCRC
 - 4.4. [Modification of Appendix I to the UTP TAF]
- 5. Items concerning approval of non-binding guidance and recommendations:
 - 5.1. Explanatory document on the UTP TCRC
 - 5.2. Revision of the application guide for the UTP LOC&PAS
- 6. Items for discussion:
 - 6.1. Progress report on development of the EST UR (Appendix H to COTIF)
 - 6.2. Draft Annex D to the EST UR concerning Common Safety Method for Supervision
 - 6.3. Progress report on monitoring and assessing implementation of the APTU and ATMF Uniform Rules
 - 6.4. Possible future revision of the ATMF Uniform Rules
 - 6.5. Draft handbook for the application and implementation of the APTU and ATMF UR
 - 6.6. Migration of wagon related requirements from the RID to the UTP WAG
 - 6.7. Work programme of the Committee
- 7. Any other business
- 8. Next session