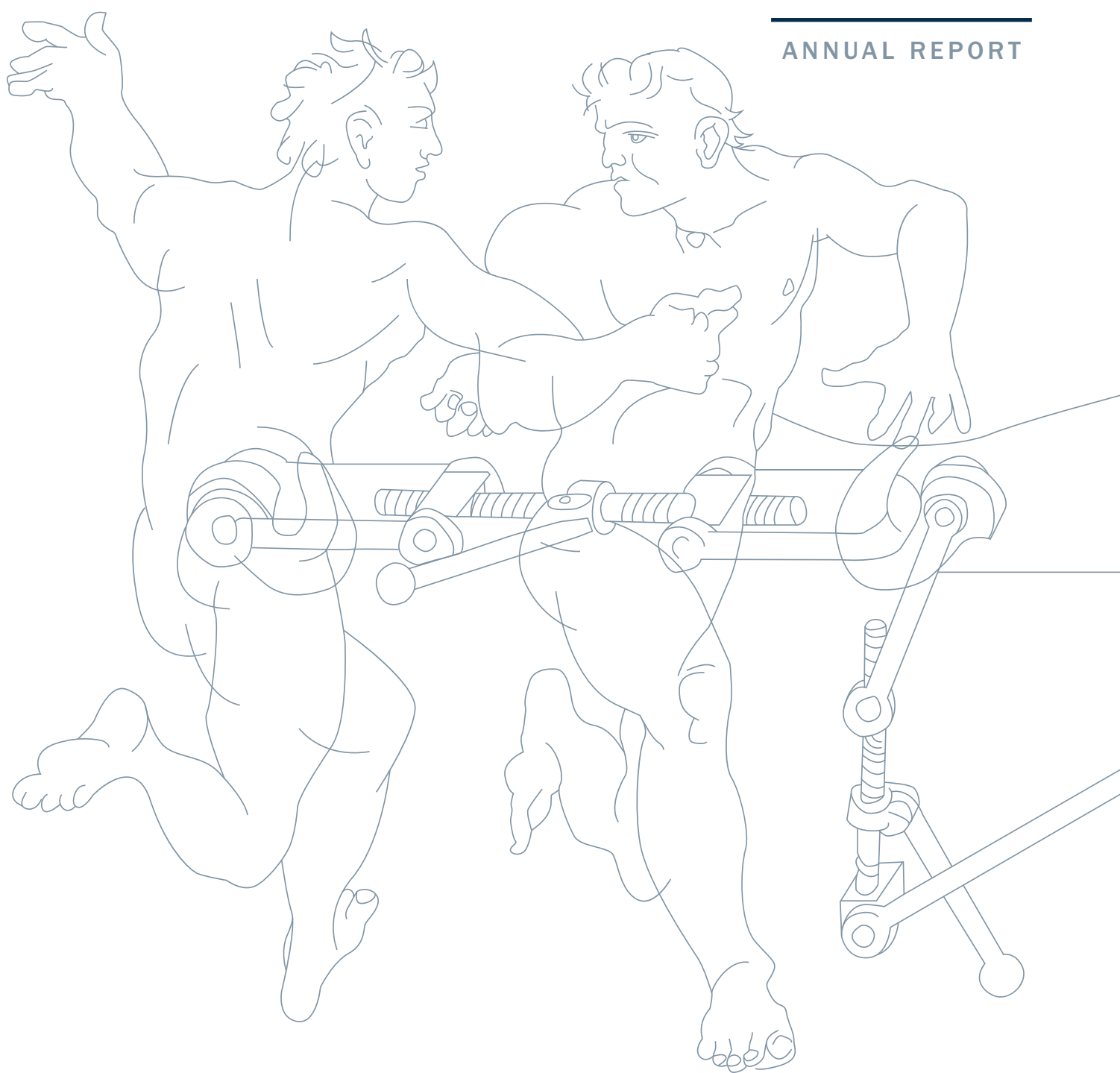




2019

ANNUAL REPORT



OTIF

Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires
Zwischenstaatliche Organisation für den internationalen Eisenbahnverkehr
Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

INTRODUCTION

For OTIF, and particularly for the staff of the Secretariat, 2019 was an unusually busy year, as well as a year of transition.

Following the departure of the Secretary General and despite limited staff resources, it was important to focus on ensuring that the Organisation continued to function.



Krzysztof KULESZA
Chair of Administrative
Committee



Wolfgang KÜPPER
OTIF Secretary General

This included preparations for holding the 14th General Assembly in February 2019, with the election of the new Secretary General for the period from 2019 to the end of 2021 and three sessions of the Administrative Committee (130th, 131st and 132nd) with its new composition.

The Secretariat also had to face some major challenges of substance.

Important parts of the 2018-2019 work programme were successfully continued and were also enshrined in the new work programme for 2020-2021.

Highlights in the legal area, whose key task is to ensure uniform railway law, were certainly the celebrations (at a symposium in Vilnius) to mark 20 years of the adoption of the Vilnius Protocol, as well as the start of the important work of the Working Group of Legal Experts and the ad hoc Committee on Cooperation.

In the field of technical interoperability, the Committee of Technical Experts and its Working Group Technology pursued further development of rules related to the admission of vehicles in international traffic. An important foundation for their work is smooth cooperation between the OTIF Secretariat, the European Commission and the European Union Agency for Railways on the basis of administrative arrangements. In 2019 significant progress was made on updating these administrative arrangements, which were initially agreed in 2013.

With regard to RID, the important work on updating the dangerous goods provisions on an ongoing basis was also ensured (RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting, RID Committee of Experts and its standing working group), as was the work on harmonising the dangerous goods provisions of RID with those of the OSJD (SMGS Annex 2). As tank-containers with a capacity twice that of conventional tank-containers are now being used for transport, important discussions have begun on the extent to which this new practice must be taken into account in dangerous goods legislation. In addition, some important steps were taken towards a possible extension of the geographical scope of application of RID.

As well as the smooth organisation of the meetings of the General Assembly and the Administrative Committees described above, work in the administration and finance area focused on maintaining control of the level of expenditure and the stability of the Member States' contributions. The encouraging stability of contribution payments that has been achieved was successfully consolidated. Preliminary work was also carried out on OTIF's building renovation and on the study on conditions of employment for the staff of OTIF.

In 2019, OTIF's communication department improved a lot of tools to make the public more aware of OTIF's work. In this respect, the organisation of the Vilnius Symposium and production of the new OTIF video deserve special mention.

The important work of OTIF's translation department should not be forgotten either. The department managed the unusually high workload with efficiency and skill.



Krzysztof KULESZA



Wolfgang KÜPPER



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADN

European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways

ADR

European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road

APTU

Uniform Rules concerning the Validation of Technical Standards and the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions applicable to Railway Material intended to be used in International Traffic (Appendix F to COTIF)

ATMF

Uniform Rules concerning the Technical Admission of Railway Material used in International Traffic (Appendix G to COTIF)

CEPIC

European Chemical Industry Council

CER

Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies

CIM

Uniform Rules Concerning the Contract of International Carriage of Goods by Rail (Appendix B to COTIF)

CIT

International Rail Transport Committee

CIV

Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of International Carriage of Passengers by Rail (Appendix A to COTIF)

COTIF

Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail

CSM

Common safety method

CTE

Committee of Technical Experts

DDD

Derailment detection devices

ECM

Entity in charge of maintenance

ERA

European Union Agency for Railways

EST

Uniform Rules concerning the safe operation of trains in international traffic

EU

European Union

GCC

Gulf Cooperation Council

IBC

Intermediate Bulk Container

JCGE

Joint Coordinating Group of Experts

NTRs

National Technical Requirements

NVR

National Vehicle Register

OSJD

Organisation for Cooperation between Railways

OTIF

Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

RID

Regulation concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (Appendix C to COTIF)

SERA

Single European railway area

SMGS

Agreement concerning International Freight Traffic by Rail (OSJD)

TAF

Telematics Applications for Freight

TSI

Technical Specification for Interoperability

UIC

International Union of Railways

UIP

International Union of Wagon Keepers

UIRR

International Union for Road-Rail Combined Transport

UN

United Nations

UNECE

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

UNESCAP

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

UNIFE

Association of the European Rail Industry

UPU

Universal Postal Union

UR

Uniform Rules

UTP

Uniform Technical Prescriptions

WCO

World Customs Organization

WG TECH

Working group TECH

OBJECTIVES/ACTIONS

OTIF as a forum for uniform international railway law

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

1. Set up a standing working group of legal experts
2. Become an open, partnership-based centre of expertise
3. Evaluate the application and implementation of COTIF

ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

Working group of legal experts to start work in 2018

Contact ATMF Contracting States and assist them in notifying their competent authorities

Assist the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) with the expansion of its network

Define tools to monitor the application of COTIF

Assist dangerous goods safety advisers in monitoring compliance with RID

Extend and develop the application of COTIF

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

4. Include regional factors in OTIF law
5. Promote and assist in the accession process

ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

Develop, in coordination with the EU, a strategy to adapt OTIF's legal framework for the accession of other regional organisations

Create a page on accession on the OTIF website

Organise at least one seminar a year to promote accession

Promote safe technical interoperability

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

6. Promote and assist with the safe interoperability of trains
7. Support the digitalisation of railways
8. Promote network access

ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

Propose to the General Assembly a new Appendix H to COTIF concerning the safe operation of trains in international traffic

Develop infrastructure-related provisions

Promote and support, with assistance from our partners, the implementation of the UTP TAF

Promote and support use of the e.consignment note

Start discussion on network access conditions



Promote the safe transport of dangerous goods

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

9. Keep the dangerous goods regulations up to date, taking into account technical and scientific progress

10. Simplification of digital access to promote and improve application of the provisions of RID

ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

Revise the dangerous goods provisions for all three land modes

Promote extension of the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting's remit to cover SMGS Annex 2

Help make RID available in a digital form

Learning and sharing

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE

11. Innovate to promote our know-how while continuing the social dialogue

12. Strengthen the communication strategy and broaden dissemination networks

ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

Improve training programme for our Member States

Create professional networks with our partners for OTIF staff

Strengthen public and press relations

Produce audio-visual media

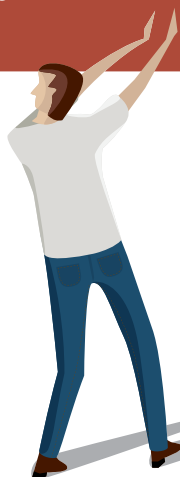


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1

OTIF: A FORUM FOR UNIFORM RAILWAY LAW

OTIF's legal regime supports a modern and constantly developing international rail transport system. The guiding principle of OTIF as a forum for uniform railway law is to achieve consistency in international law.

SYMPOSIUM ON THE “20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE VILNIUS PROTOCOL: OTIF’S ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS”

The Vilnius Protocol was adopted by OTIF's 5th General Assembly in 1999 and was a major turning point for OTIF and the development of international railway law. Twenty years after the Protocol was adopted, OTIF and stakeholders celebrated this anniversary and started discussions on the new challenges to be faced in terms of railway regulations.

WORKING GROUP OF LEGAL EXPERTS

The Working Group of Legal Experts (hereinafter Working Group) established by the Secretary General at the end of 2018 started its work in 2019 in a spirit of dialogue and determination. The Working Group held two sessions in 2019 on 26 March (Bern) and on 30 October (Vilnius).

The Working Group has a purely advisory role in the legal area. It is there to assist all OTIF's other organs that submit legal questions to it. It is also responsible for ensuring effective management of the Convention and, in particular, monitoring and assessing the application of its implementation. It may also prepare draft amendments to COTIF and submit them to the competent organs. The Working Group thus acts as a forum and think-tank for its members.

At its first session, the Working Group (Bern, 26 March 2019) adopted its Rules of Procedure and elected Belgium as Chair and Germany as Vice-Chair for a period of three years. The Working Group adopted its work programme covering a wide range of subjects from institutional questions under international public law to railway transport law. This work programme is sufficiently flexible and can be updated at each session, if necessary.

A crucial milestone of 2019 was the consideration of OTIF's monitoring and assessment policy concerning the implementation and application of OTIF's legal system. With the aim of ensuring a fair, equitable and transparent process for the election of the Secretary General, the Working Group started considering regulations on this subject.



Aleksandr KUZMENKO
Head of Legal
Department

OBJECTIVE 1 SET UP A STANDING WORKING GROUP OF LEGAL EXPERTS

I DEVELOPING COOPERATION

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION

The ad hoc Committee on Cooperation (hereinafter ad hoc Committee) established by the General Assembly at its 13th session started its work in 2019 in a spirit of dialogue and determination. The ad hoc Committee held two sessions in 2019 on 27 March (Bern) and on 29 October (Vilnius).

The task of the ad hoc Committee on Cooperation is to take decisions concerning cooperation with other international organisations and associations. It may also take decisions on establishing and dissolving consultative contact groups with other international organisations and associations and on monitoring the functioning of these contact groups.

At its first session, (Bern, 27 March 2019) the ad hoc Committee adopted its Rules of Procedure and elected Belgium as Chair and Poland as Vice-Chair for a period of three years.

In 2019, the ad hoc Committee concentrated, in particular, on:

- enhancing cooperation with the OSJD,
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of international associations with regard to the implementation and application of OTIF's legal regime,
- cooperation with the UPU on developing the transport of postal items by rail.

COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

OSJD

Cooperation with the Organisation the Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) is based on the common position adopted on 12 February 2003. Regular contacts at management level in the two organisations ensure that strategic questions of joint interest, as well as any differences of opinion, can be discussed openly and in good time. Genuine partnership has been achieved, which is manifested by the participation of experts from OTIF in OSJD working groups.

Due to unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, the annual meeting between the management of the OSJD Committee and the OTIF Secretariat planned in 2019 had to be postponed to 2020.

CIT

The partnership with CIT is of particular importance for the following reasons:

- it is important to be able to rely on railway undertakings' operational expertise to resolve practical cases and to substantiate the legal concept of texts with a sound appreciation of the constraints in the sector;
- although CIT's task is to defend its members' interests, it occupies a privileged position with regard to the CIM/CIV Uniform Rules, as it prepares supporting documents, such as the CIM consignment note and tickets for CIV passengers, which are recognised throughout Europe and beyond.

OBJECTIVE 2

BECOME AN OPEN, PARTNERSHIP-BASED CENTRE OF EXPERTISE

In 2019, the OTIF Secretariat participated as an observer in relevant CIT meetings.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

In 2019, OTIF continued its cooperation with other international organisations and associations, in particular:

- GCC, particularly with regard to the GCC railway project and GCC Member States' accession to COTIF;
- UNECE, particularly with regard to the transport of dangerous goods and the UNECE project on unified railway law;
- UNESCAP, particularly with regard to promoting OTIF law in the Asia and Pacific region;
- WCO, particularly with regard to the possibility of harmonising the data set required for customs transit procedures and consignment notes;
- UPU, particularly with regard to developing the transport of postal items by rail. On 24 January 2018, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Universal Postal Union for this purpose.



THE APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

Keeping a watch on the application of all the rules and recommendations established within the Organisation is one of the aims defined by COTIF (Article 2 COTIF).

Monitoring implementation and application of the Organisation's legal instruments will provide evidence concerning their usage. Based on the monitoring outcomes, assessment of the Organisation's legal instruments will determine their relevance and whether it is necessary to revise them.

At its second session, the Working Group of Legal Experts, among other matters, endorsed the proposal for a decision on the monitoring and assessment of legal instruments (draft decisions). Adoption of the policy is in the competence of the General Assembly. In the meantime, the Working Group recommended that the organs of OTIF provisionally apply the draft decision and decided to disseminate it to the stakeholders. The next ordinary session of the General Assembly will take place in September 2021.

OBJECTIVE 3
EVALUATE THE APPLICATION AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF COTIF



2

EXTEND AND DEVELOP THE APPLICATION OF COTIF

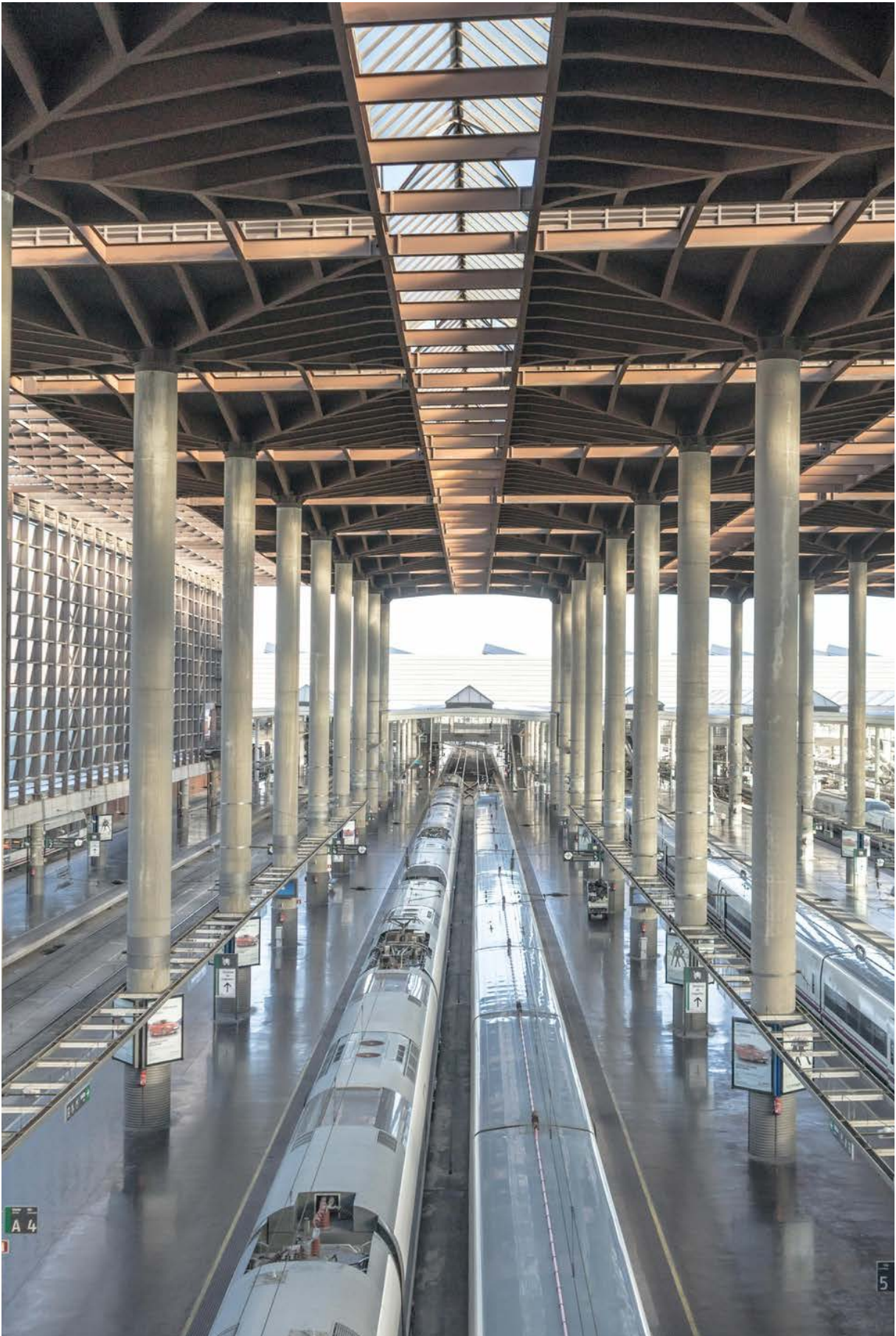
50 States and one regional economic integration organisation are members of OTIF. 46 states are active, full Member States of OTIF and contracting parties to COTIF 1999. The membership of Iraq, Lebanon and Syria is suspended. Jordan is an associate member of OTIF and is not a contracting party to COTIF. Accession to COTIF is open to any state on whose territory railway infrastructure is operated and to regional economic integration organisations of which at least one member is an OTIF Member State. Extending the geographical scope of COTIF is a priority of the OTIF Secretariat, which provides any assistance necessary with regard to accession.

In 2019 the OTIF Secretariat received some requests concerning the accession procedure, both for full membership and associate membership, and concerning OTIF's legal systems. In particular, a great deal of work was carried out with GCC, which is aiming to construct an integrated regional railway network in its Member States: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar.

On 7 November 2018, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan deposited an application for accession to COTIF and its Appendices. This accession took effect on 1 May 2019.

In order to explain the accession procedure and differences between full membership and associate membership, a new page on OTIF's website dedicated to accession was introduced in 2019.

OBJECTIVE 5
PROMOTE AND ASSIST IN THE
ACCESSION PROCESS



3

IMPROVING AND PROMOTING INTEROPERABILITY AND SAFETY

In 2019, digitalisation was an important theme in many sectors, including the railways. Although OTIF may not directly be leading innovative digital developments, the rules of COTIF should be stable enough to give the rail sector legal certainty, and at the same time sufficiently flexible to allow the rail sector to innovate and digitalise without being hindered by undue legal constraints. For some particular innovations, coordination at international level may be required, e.g. for the digital information exchange in the UTP TAF, the common specifications for vehicle registers and, in the near future, the coordinated development and roll-out of digital automatic couplers for freight wagons.

2019 was also a year in which major changes took place in the European Union, with the gradual implementation of the 4th Railway Package and the forthcoming Brexit. Although these changes formally have few legal implications for OTIF, they may have profound effects for the OTIF Member States which are directly or indirectly affected by these changes.

This dynamic context illustrates the importance of COTIF as a solid legal basis for the use of vehicles in international traffic, irrespective of the OTIF Member State that admits these vehicles to international operation.



Bas LEERMAKERS
Head of Technical
Interoperability Department

OBJECTIVE 7
SUPPORT THE DIGITALISATION
OF RAILWAYS

COORDINATION OF DEVELOPMENTS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

From their inception, all the technical provisions of COTIF have been based upon provisions developed in the EU. The adoption of the 4th Railway Package in the EU has led to changes in the EU's interoperability and safety framework, including a new process for vehicle authorisation and the safety certification of railway undertakings, which has made it necessary to modify the technical specifications for interoperability (TSIs).

As a consequence of the adoption of the 4th Railway Package in the European Union, the EU Member States are in the process of creating a single European railway area (SERA). EU networks are gradually being integrated with a view to allowing seamless domestic and international traffic. Apart from harmonisation and integration in terms of interoperability and safety, the EU Agency for Railways (ERA) has become a central authority with defined competences for all EU Member States. In addition, the EU is implementing new centralised IT tools to facilitate administration and make railway operations more efficient. ERA was also designated as the Competent Authority in the meaning of Article 5 of ATMF for the Contracting States which are also Member States of the EU.

In particular, discussions at the Committee of Technical Experts (CTE) and its working group (WG TECH) revealed that it is important to achieve a common interpretation as to how the SERA legal framework correlates with the rights and obligations of all OTIF Member States under COTIF.

COMMITTEE OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS

The Committee of Technical Experts (CTE) held its 12th session on 12 and 13 June 2019 in Bern. 29 OTIF Contracting States were represented. There were delegations representing the European Union, UIC, OSJD, NB Rail, CER and UNIFE.

Within its area of responsibilities, CTE discussed the adoption of two proposals for modifications: one concerning the National Vehicle Register (NVR) specifications and one concerning the Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Telematic Applications for Freight (UTP TAF). For procedural reasons, the European Union was not in a position to vote at the session on behalf of its Member States. As a consequence, voting on both proposals had to take place using the written procedure in the second half of 2019. Both votes had a favourable outcome.

CTE discussed the consequences of the development within the European Union of a centralised vehicle register (EVR), particularly with regard to access, connectivity and data exchange with vehicle registers of non-EU countries. It mandated WG TECH to carry out further analyses and to make proposals for the future of vehicle registers.

Article 12 of the APTU UR stipulates that Contracting States have an obligation to notify their National Technical Requirements (NTRs). CTE reviewed the analysis carried out by WG TECH on how to deal with and notify national technical requirements in relation to UTPs and on the need for further action. The conclusions showed that NTRs and specific cases continue to be necessary and should be made more transparent. CTE approved the analytical report and recommended that it be published as an explanatory document on OTIF's website.

CTE discussed and agreed the priorities for the following two years and the need to revise the UTPs and other provisions under the scope of the APTU, ATMF and EST Uniform Rules.

OBJECTIVE 8

PROMOTE NETWORK ACCESS

Some UTPs had already recently been updated in order to align them with the latest provisions applicable in the EU. For the UTPs still to be updated, CTE decided that priority in the process of revising the UTPs should be given to provisions relevant to freight wagons and their use in international traffic, including provisions concerning the certification of entities in charge of maintenance (ECM). The rationale for this was that the vast majority of international rail traffic is freight traffic.

In order to accommodate the time the European Union needs to analyse proposals for legislation in COTIF which require a vote, CTE agreed to make such proposals available sixteen weeks prior to sessions of CTE, instead of two months as specified in its Rules of Procedure of 2009. Non-legislative documents will have to be available 8 weeks before the meeting. CTE updated its Rules of Procedure to reflect the new deadlines and asked WG TECH to prepare a proposal for adoption at the 2020 session. As a consequence, a new meeting calendar for WG TECH had to be agreed, with the result that the usual February meeting of WG TECH will in future take place in June, directly after the CTE.

I WORKING GROUP TECHNOLOGY

In 2019 the standing working group WG TECH held three meetings:

- 37th meeting on 5 and 6 February in Bern
- 38th meeting on 11 and 12 September 2019 in Bern
- 39th meeting on 19 and 20 November 2019 in Brussels.

Delegations from the following seven Member States took part in the meetings: Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Italy, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The European Commission, ERA, OSJD, GCC and the international non-governmental organisations CER, NB-Rail, UIC, UIP and UNIFE were also represented.

The 37th meeting focussed on preparing the 12th session of CTE, whose discussions and results are summarised above. The 38th and 39th meetings prepared the documents to be proposed for adoption in 2020 at the 13th session of CTE, which in particular included:

- Changes to the UTP Noise, to align it with the EU provisions (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/774). The changes are aimed mainly at limiting the use of older wagons which are noisy because they have cast iron brake blocks acting on the wheel tread. In order to limit noise nuisance by curbing the use of noisy wagons, the concept of “quieter routes” has been introduced in the EU. Quieter routes are lines on which noisy wagons would no longer be allowed to be used. The proposals for the UTP Noise also include the concept of “quieter routes” and would leave it up to Contracting States whether or not they designate quieter routes on their networks.
- Changes to the UTP for freight wagons, to align it with the EU provisions (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/776). Changes include new requirements concerning automatic variable gauge running gear, provisions concerning the handling and maintenance of safety critical components, a reference to route compatibility checks and updated references to standards and other legal texts.
- Revised specifications for vehicle registers, following the EU’s decision on establishing a centralised European Vehicle Register (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/1614). From 16 June 2021, the standard NVR software and the central

search engine (ECVVR) referred to in OTIF's current NVR Specification will become obsolete. New vehicle register specifications will therefore have to be adopted under COTIF in order to allow the continued exchange of vehicle data.

- Changes to the ECM regulation (Annex A to ATMF) to align it with the latest EU provisions (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/779), by extending the scope from the certification of freight wagon ECMs to the certification of ECMs of all types of vehicles. Furthermore, the proposal will include the possibility of certifying outsourced maintenance functions and requirements concerning the management of safety critical components.

In addition to the preparation of documents, the working group was also a forum to exchange experience and discuss further development and interpretation of the rules.

The United Kingdom prepared a working document aimed at clarifying the scope of OTIF/EU mutual recognition of ECM certification in accordance with ATMF and in accordance with EU law.

The European Commission presented the principles, objectives and procedure of future TSI revisions.

Switzerland presented its experience concerning the ECM certification process.

Lastly, in line with the mandate from CTE 12, WG TECH drafted modifications to the Rules of Procedure of the CTE (see part on CTE). The modifications would harmonise the substance of the rules with the Rules of Procedure of other OTIF bodies. i.e. General Assembly, Revision Committee and RID Committee of Experts.

MEETINGS IN 2019

WG TECH 37
5-6 FEBRUARY, BERN

JCGE
6-8 FEBRUARY, BERN
CTE 12,
12-13 JUNE, BERN

JCGE
9-11 SEPTEMBER, BERN

WG TECH 38
11-12 FEBRUARY, BERN

WG TECH 39
19-20 NOVEMBER, BRUSSELS

JOINT COORDINATING GROUP OF EXPERTS (JCGE)

Cooperation between RID experts and experts in railway law to improve interoperability and safety

Meeting dates: 6-7 February and 9-11 September

The aim of the Joint Coordinating Group of Experts (JCGE) is to help ensure that legislative developments in RID and railway law concerning interoperability and safety are consistent and harmonised for vehicles used in the carriage of dangerous goods by rail and the associated operations.

The group brings together experts in the transport of dangerous goods and railway experts from the Member States, representatives of the European Commission and ERA, as well as representatives from the relevant industry stakeholders, such as CEFIC, CER, UIC, UIP, UNIFE and UIRR.

JCGE is unique, as its secretariat is jointly provided by the OTIF Secretariat and the European Commission. In February 2019, JCGE held its first (preparatory) meeting where it discussed its Rules of Procedure, which define the group's remit and working methods. It held a second meeting in September.

The main result of the JCGE meetings in February and later in September was the identification and prioritisation of a list of items that need to be dealt with in the short, medium and long term. For each item, a rapporteur or co-rapporteurs were designated and tasked to report on the latest developments, studies or results of other dedicated working groups.

For example, an important topic concerning the design and construction of vehicles used for the carriage of dangerous goods was the comparison between requirements for RID tank-wagons and those for the carrying wagons for extra-large tank-containers. Before being discussed at the JCGE meeting, this topical issue had to be assessed by the relevant stakeholders, academia and experts from the RID Committee of Experts' working group on tank and vehicle technology.

Following the conclusions of the RID working group on derailment detection devices (DDD), JCGE requested the European Commission and ERA to include provisions for DDD in the revision of the EU Technical Specification for Interoperability relating to the subsystem 'rolling stock – freight wagons' of the rail system in the European Union (WAG TSI).

4

RID COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS AND RID/ADR/ADN JOINT MEETING – THE SAFE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS

The main focus of the RID department's work in 2019 was to conclude the revision of the dangerous goods regulations that is carried out every two years. Various decisions that were still to be taken at the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting in March 2020 had to be postponed owing to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) and can only be taken into account for the 2023 edition of RID.

I RID/ADR/ADN JOINT MEETING

The RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting develops harmonised European dangerous goods provisions for carriage by rail, road and inland waterways. The RID department of OTIF provides the Secretariat for the Joint Meeting, together with the Secretariat of the UNECE Transport Division. In 2019, the Joint Meeting held a one-week and a two-week session.

Work in connection with harmonising RID, ADR and ADN with the 21st revised edition of the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods was the main focus. The aim of harmonisation with the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods is to simplify intermodal dangerous goods transport in European land transport. Among the numerous amendments that resulted from this process, the following should be highlighted. They do not provide an exhaustive overview of the RID department's activities in connection with the Joint Meeting, but summarise the most important technological developments that have the biggest impact on the regulations. This makes clear the extent to which the provisions have a direct link to dynamic technological developments in the sector.



Jochen CONRAD
Head of Dangerous Goods
Department

OBJECTIVE 9

KEEP THE DANGEROUS GOODS
REGULATIONS UP TO DATE, TAKING
INTO ACCOUNT TECHNICAL AND
SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

EXEMPTION FOR CARGO TRACKING UNITS AND DATA LOGGERS

Cargo tracking units can locate the position of a load at a specific point in time. Simple devices only contain the container identification number, which can be picked out and then linked to the position of the scanner. More sophisticated devices can track the position constantly and may have additional sensors that can detect, for example, whether the doors have been opened. The electrical energy supply for many cargo tracking units is provided by lithium batteries or fuel cells. These devices are used in individual packages, overpacks or in wagons and containers, irrespective of whether dangerous goods or normal freight items are being carried in these means of containment.

In order to avoid having to assign cargo tracking units operated by lithium batteries to UN number 3091 Lithium metal batteries contained in equipment or 3481 Lithium ion batteries contained in equipment, a general exemption will be included in RID. Minimum requirements that have to be complied with in this case will be set out in Chapter 5.5, which already contains special provisions for dangerous goods transport units carrying goods which are not necessarily dangerous. Among other things, these minimum requirements stipulate that this equipment is used or intended for use during carriage and that the dangerous goods contained in the equipment (such as lithium batteries, fuel cells) meet the construction and testing provisions of RID.

CLASSIFICATION AND PACKAGING FOR MEDICAL WASTE

The need for new classification and packing instructions for medical waste containing infectious substances of Category A arose in 2014 following the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. Infectious substances of Category A are substances that, when exposure to them occurs, are capable of causing permanent disability, life-threatening or fatal disease in otherwise healthy humans or animals. This subject is also very important at present, following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Packagings approved for infectious substances of Class 6.2 in accordance with packing instruction P 620 are only designed for small quantities of infectious substances of Category A, such as cultures or specimens or small quantities of clinical waste and are not therefore suitable for large quantities of contaminated waste containing, among other things, personal protective equipment worn by medical staff (gloves, protective masks, aprons), various types of absorbent materials, bedding or patients' clothing.

For solid waste generated from the medical treatment of humans or the veterinary treatment of animals infected by infectious substances of Category A, a new globally applicable UN number (UN 3549) is being introduced. This UN number may not be used for waste from biological research or for liquid waste.

In addition, two new packing instructions for the carriage of this type of waste will be included, based on common dangerous goods packagings in accordance with Chapter 6.1 and large packagings in accordance with Chapter 6.6, as these are quickly available in crisis situations. Both packing instructions prescribe a triple packaging consisting of an inner, an intermediate and an outer packaging. In contrast to the 9 m drop height in the drop test for packagings for infectious substances of Category A, as prescribed in Chapter 6.3, a drop height of 1.8 m (minimum drop height for dangerous goods of packing group I) is sufficient according to the new packing instructions. For inner packagings containing sharp or pointed articles, such as glass shards or needles, puncture resistance

is required. Flexible packagings, such as plastics bags, will be permitted for the inner and intermediate packagings. Although only solids are permitted for carriage in such packagings, it might be that these substances contain small quantities of liquids (e.g. bodily fluids, excrement). For this reason, all three packaging components must be liquid-tight. In addition, a sufficient amount of absorbent or solidifying material must be added.

INCLUSION OF OTHER NEW UN NUMBERS

Electric detonators for blasting are assigned to UN numbers 0030, 0255 and 0456. Blasting is triggered by electric current. Alongside these detonators, detonators non-electric (UN numbers 0029, 0267 and 0455) and detonator assemblies, non-electric, for blasting (UN numbers 0360, 0361 and 0500) also exist in the dangerous goods regulations.

More recently, “electronic” detonators have also been used in practice. These contain micro-processors that can be programmed to determine the trigger time. The advantage of such detonators is that the individual stages of ignition can be specified precisely and better blasting results can be achieved, for example in quarries.

Another advantage is that they are secure against electromagnetic influences, stray currents and unauthorised use, as they cannot simply be initiated by an electric current.

Since, for the reasons described, they could not reasonably be assigned to UN numbers 0030, 0255 and 0456, where electric current provides the trigger, it was decided to include the new UN numbers 0511, 0512 and 0513 and a definition of “Detonators, electronic, programmable”.

TRANSPORT OF WASTE GAS CARTRIDGES

For some years, RID has contained provisions for waste gas cartridges that enable them to be carried for reprocessing or disposal under less stringent conditions. Gas cartridges are aerosol sprays, also known as propellant gas sprays, which, among other things, are used for cosmetic products, household products (e.g. cleaning, impregnation agents and care products) or for paints and varnishes. Simplified conditions are, for example, carriage under UN number 1950 that applies to new gas cartridges. They need not be protected against movement and inadvertent discharge, provided that measures to prevent dangerous build-up of pressure and dangerous atmospheres are addressed. The packagings must also contain absorbent material capable of retaining any free liquid that might escape. Packagings must be sufficiently ventilated in order to prevent the creation of flammable atmosphere and the build-up of pressure.



At present, there are no similar rules for UN 2037 Receptacles, small, containing gas (gas cartridges) without a release device, non-refillable. As gas cartridges look very similar to aerosols (see picture), it can be assumed that the layman is not in a position to distinguish one from the other and disposes of both aerosols and gas cartridges in the same collection containers at public recycling centres.

For the carriage of waste gas cartridges of UN number 2037, the same relaxations as for waste aerosols are now available. However, waste gas cartridges that have contained non-flammable and non-toxic gases and have been pierced are not subject to the regulations, as they no longer pose a hazard.

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF AN ELECTRONIC TRANSPORT DOCUMENT

RID/ADR/ADN 5.4.0.2 permits the use of electronic data interchange to comply with the documentation requirements of Chapter 5.4, provided that the procedures used for the capture, storage and processing of electronic data meet the legal requirements as regards the evidential value and availability of data during transport in a manner at least equivalent to that of paper documentation.

The RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting's working group on telematics had developed guidelines setting out how this equivalence can be achieved. The guidelines can be used on a voluntary basis and can be applied separately for each mode of transport. However, if a Contracting State decides to follow the guidelines, it must apply them in their entirety in order to ensure international availability of the data in dangerous goods inspections and incidents. The guidelines have been published on OTIF's website.

OBJECTIVE 10
SIMPLIFICATION OF DIGITAL
ACCESS TO PROMOTE AND IMPROVE
APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS
OF RID

MULTIPLE MARKING OF PACKAGINGS, IBCS AND LARGE PACKAGINGS

When applying the concept of design type approvals on the basis of design criteria and testing requirements, it is possible that certain packaging design types and constructions meet the provisions for design types of other categories of packagings, IBCs and large packagings at the same time.

Various packers already use packagings with more than one approval, which simultaneously fulfil the design criteria and performance test provisions of different design types. Such packagings have the advantage of being used flexibly. For example, these might be packagings that are approved for both liquids and solids, or IBCs that are simultaneously approved as boxes.

Having established that the competent authorities have different views on whether such multi-approved packagings are permissible, the possibility of multiple marking was included in the dangerous goods regulations.

PORTABLE TANKS WITH EXPIRED INSPECTION DATES

In some cases, portable tanks that can be used anywhere in the world are initially tested and approved for the carriage of dangerous goods, but are then used for the carriage of non-dangerous goods without the intermediate inspections required under the dangerous goods regulations being carried out during use for the latter purpose. It is also sometimes the case that the deadlines for the periodic inspections are exceeded for portable tanks that are always used to carry dangerous goods.

It was made clear in the dangerous goods provisions that for portable tanks that have exceeded the timeframe for their planned periodic 5 year or 2.5 year inspection, they can only be filled and handed over for carriage if a new periodic 5 year inspection is carried out that includes an internal and external inspection and a hydraulic pressure test.

RID COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS AND ITS STANDING WORKING GROUP

The RID Committee of Experts is one of the most important organs of OTIF, as the provisions for the international carriage of dangerous goods by rail are continuously amended, which leads every two years to a completely new edition of RID. As the provisions of RID must also be applied to domestic transport in the EU Member States in accordance with Directive 2008/68/EC on the inland transport of dangerous goods, amendments to RID automatically lead to changes in national law. In this respect, OTIF plays a leading role.

The technical discussion takes place in the RID Committee of Experts' standing working group, which meets once a year. As a rule, the RID Committee of Experts only meets every two years in order to adopt the decisions prepared by the standing working group.

In 2019, the RID Committee of Experts' standing working group held a one-week meeting in Vienna (Austria). The results of this working group still have to be approved at the meeting of the RID Committee of Experts in May 2020.

This meeting focused on adopting the amendments adopted by the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting in 2018 and 2019. The following subjects were also discussed:

CHECKLISTS FOR THE FILLING AND EMPTYING OF TANK-WAGONS

The 2013 edition of RID contained the first reference to checklists for the filling and emptying of tank-wagons for liquids that had been developed by several associations in Germany. One of the aims of these checklists is to avoid drip leaks during transport, as these can trigger an emergency response by the fire brigade and lead to line closures.

The 2019 edition of RID then contained references to checklists for the filling and emptying of gas tank-wagons. These checklists were drafted on the basis of the checklists for liquids. In contrast to the checklists for liquids, the checklists for gas tank-wagons covered even more of the filler's and unloader's obligations in accordance with 1.4.3.3 and 1.4.3.7.

An informal working group was entrusted with completing the checklists for tank-wagons for the carriage of liquids on the basis

of the newly drafted checklists for gas tank-wagons. RID 2021 will henceforth make reference to revised checklists for the filling and emptying of tank-wagons for liquids, which cover all the filler's and unloader's obligations. In connection with this, the checklists for the filling and emptying of gas tank-wagons were also slightly adapted. The aim of these checklists is to avoid mistakes when filling and emptying tank-wagons and to improve safety during transport.

EXTRA-LARGE TANK-CONTAINERS

The standing working group was informed of the discussion in the RID Committee of Experts' working group on tank and vehicle technology, which held a two-day meeting in October 2019. The working group dealt mainly with the extra-large tank-containers being used by a German chemical company, which have a capacity of up to 73,500 litres and a payload of up to 66 tonnes. These extra-large tank-containers, whose load capacity is equivalent to two conventional tank-containers or one bogie tank-wagon, are carried on innovative container carrying wagons which, most notably, are equipped with reinforced spigots, long-stroke buffers and, in some instances, disk brakes.

The Technical University of Berlin, which the German chemical company (the above mentioned) commissioned to carry out a risk assessment, presented the following conclusions of the risk assessment:

- On straight track, curves and hump shunting, the running stability of innovative container carrying wagons loaded with extra-large tank-containers is comparable to the running stability of tank-wagons and conventional, loaded container carrying wagons.
- No dangerous surge movements were noted in the tests that were carried out, so the provision in RID 4.3.2.2.4 (filling the tank-container to not less than 80% or not more than 20% of its capacity) is not relevant to tank-containers in rail transport.
- No damage to the reinforced spigots was ascertained either during the long-term tests, which also included hump shunting runs, or after the crash tests, so the reinforced spigots are suitable for all carrying wagons.
- After the hump shunting tests, no damage to other construction elements was noted, so the loaded innovative container carrying wagons are suitable for hump shunting.
- In the event of a side impact in which such a wagon is hit sideways by a tank-wagon, extra-large tank-containers loaded onto container carrying wagons with external solebars offer greater safety, because the energy in the lower third is transferred through the external solebars, thus also reducing the force effect on the shell. The lower leverage forces that result also mean there is less risk of overturning. Consequently, the safety level of carriage in tank-wagons without external solebars is even exceeded.
- In frontal collisions, the minimum wall thicknesses investigated in the risk assessment had no effect on safety, so it is not necessary to amend the provisions for the minimum wall thickness.
- The minimum distance between the headstock plane and the most protruding point at the shell extremity on tank-wagons, as required in RID 6.8.2.1.29, is of no benefit in terms of safety compared with the extra-large tank-containers, so this provision is not necessary either for conventional tank-containers or for extra-large tank-containers.

- The protective aim of the special provisions for equipment TE 22 (energy absorption elements) and TE 25 (device to protect against the overriding of buffers) could be achieved by significantly increasing the distance between the buffers and the end of the tank.

As not all the documents necessary for national representatives to make a safety assessment were available on time, the discussion in the working group on tank and vehicle technology will have to be continued.

The standing working group concluded two issues where discussions at the working group on tank and vehicle technology had revealed differences in the provisions for tank-containers and in the provisions for tank-wagons: the first of these concerned the fixing of welded elements and the second concerned the pressure resistance of closures. At present, neither of these two requirements apply to tank-containers.

However, as both these requirements are already also taken into account for new build conventional tank-containers, a proposal will be submitted to the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting to clear up the differing regulatory situation for tank-containers and tank-wagons.

HARMONISATION OF OTIF'S RID AND OSJD'S SMGS ANNEX 2

For a number of years, the Secretariat of OTIF has been making successful efforts to press ahead with the harmonisation of RID and SMGS Annex 2, which is applied in the Member States of OSJD (Organisation for Cooperation between Railways). In addition to some European states, many states in Asia are Member States of OSJD. The result of intense efforts by the OTIF Secretariat and other actors involved is that the 2019 edition of SMGS Annex 2, which is harmonised with RID, entered into force on 1 July 2019 following a two-year absence of harmonised rules.

In the context of harmonisation, in 2019 the standing working group was informed, among other things, about the status of the work on a new Chapter 6.20 for SMGS Annex 2 that has been carried out within OSJD. All the provisions for 1520 mm gauge tank-wagons are to be carried over into this new Chapter from the current Chapter 6.8 of SMGS Annex 2. This could completely harmonise Chapter 6.8 of SMGS with Chapter 6.8 of RID so that it would apply to 1435 mm gauge tank-wagons and to tank-containers.

In this context, some issues that arose in the above-mentioned work were discussed which are also of interest in terms of standard gauge tank-wagons.

In October 2019, the 2019 Russian edition of RID was published on OTIF's website. As SMGS Annex 2 has so far only been published in Russian and Chinese, the Russian translation of RID will considerably simplify the harmonisation work.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATIONS

The RID department took part as an observer in both sessions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. The decisions adopted at these sessions will be reflected in the 22nd revised edition of the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (UN Model Regulations) and will be included in the 2023 edition of RID in the context of harmonisation.

The RID department also attended the two sessions of the Working Party on the transport of dangerous goods (WP.15), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's (UNECE) decision-making body for amendments to the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR). The main purpose of attending these meetings is to make sure that the RID and ADR regulations are parallel and thus to ensure that there is a smooth transition between the modes in multimodal transport.

MEETINGS IN 2019

**PREPARATORY MEETING OF THE NEW
JOINT COORDINATING GROUP OF
EXPERTS (JCGE)**

6-8 FEBRUARY, BERN

RID/ADR/ADN JOINT MEETING

18-22 MARCH, BERN

**AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON
HARMONISING RID/ADR/ADN
WITH THE 21ST EDITION OF THE UN
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE TRANSPORT
OF DANGEROUS GOODS**

24-26 APRIL, GENEVA

**JOINT COORDINATING GROUP OF
EXPERTS (JCGE)**

9-10 SEPTEMBER, BERN

RID/ADR/ADN JOINT MEETING

17-26 SEPTEMBER, GENEVA

**RID COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS' WORKING
GROUP ON TANK AND VEHICLE
TECHNOLOGY**

14-15 OCTOBER, LUDWIGSHAFEN

**11TH SESSION OF THE RID COMMITTEE OF
EXPERTS' STANDING WORKING GROUP**

25-28 NOVEMBER, VIENNA

5 | THE OTIF SECRETARIAT

| ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

In addition to controlling expenditure and the stability of Member States' contributions, which are ongoing objectives, for the 2018-2019 period the administration and finance department had set itself the operational objective of pursuing innovation "to promote our know-how while continuing the social dialogue".

The department was also involved in other projects, such as the relocation of OTIF's headquarters and the Luxembourg Protocol on Matters specific to Railway Rolling Stock to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment.

The staff of the administration and finance department also worked hard to ensure the success of the extraordinary General Assembly and the three sessions of the Administrative Committee held in 2019.



Lunesterline
ANDRIAMAHATAHITRY
Head of Administration
and Finance Department

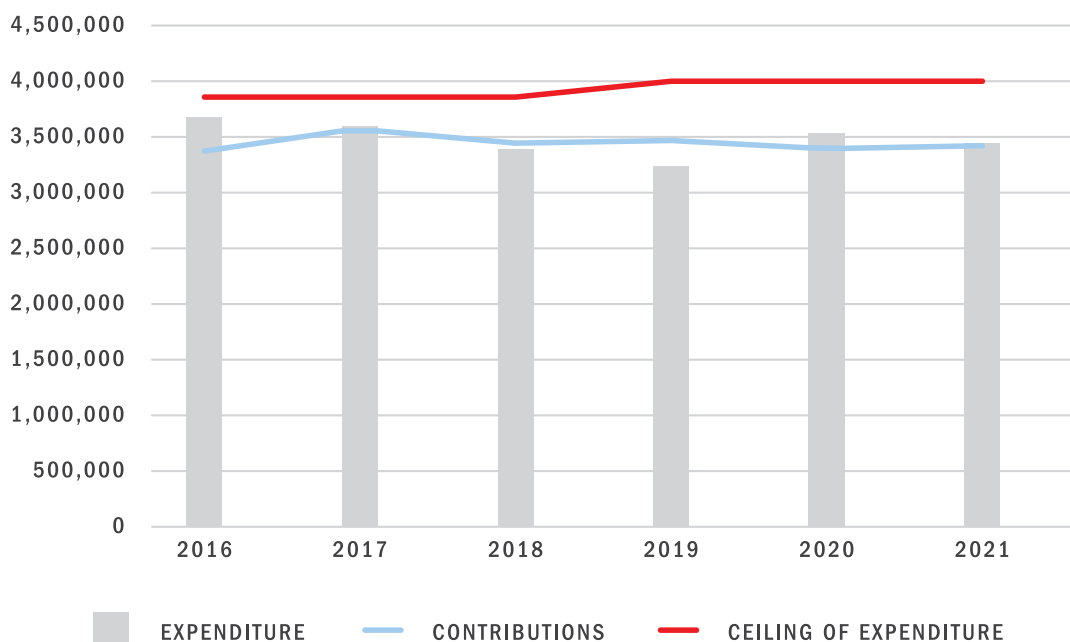
MAINTAIN CONTROL OF EXPENDITURE AND STABILITY OF CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2019, the Organisation's expenditure of around 3,219,000 CHF was still less than the ceiling set by the 13th General Assembly (4 million CHF for the period from 2019-2024).

The Member States' contributions, which form the main and more or less only source of income for the Organisation to cover expenditure, have stabilised at between 3.4 and 3.5 million CHF.

It is also worth highlighting the good management of the accounts emphasised by the Swiss Confederation's Federal Audit Office during the 2018 and 2019 accounts.

The chart below shows how the Organisation's expenditure has changed since 2016.



INNOVATE TO PROMOTE OUR KNOW-HOW WHILE CONTINUING THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE

The 2018-2019 Work Programme anticipated the development of internal skills on the basis of training aimed at the Organisation's "core activities", particularly training relating to international rail transport law.

It has only been possible to achieve this objective in part. This is because the lower number of staff in 2019, combined with the increased workload, had an impact on the time available for training. Although 100% of staff were able to undertake at least one form of training in the 2018-2019 period, this training covered subjects other than international transport law.

Social dialogue continued with the Staff Association, which, among other matters, was consulted in connection with the terms of reference of the study on social benefits.

With regard to the translators' teleworking, the draft guidelines were amended to take account of the recommendation expressed by the Administrative Committee.

Lastly, the provisional guidelines on teleworking that apply only to the translators were submitted to the 132nd session of the Administrative Committee and will be assessed at the end of December 2020 for the purpose of adapting or improving them, or to discuss applying them to staff other than the translators.

OTHER PROJECT – THE LUXEMBOURG PROTOCOL

The Luxembourg Protocol is the part of the Cape Town Convention that deals with securities relating to railway rolling stock and creates a system for recognising and prioritising securities held by creditors for railway equipment.

In order to develop international rail transport, the Luxembourg Protocol provides for the setting up of an international register and a Supervisory Authority for this register. OTIF will be its secretariat.

Pending the entry into force of the Protocol, resolution No. 1 of the diplomatic conference set up a Preparatory Commission invested with the powers of the Supervisory Authority. In this context, in 2019 the Secretariat of OTIF continued its detailed talks with the Preparatory Commission in order to consolidate the draft texts, firstly for the Supervisory Authority's rules of procedure and secondly, for the Authority's statutes.

The final versions of these two texts were submitted to the Administrative Committee in June 2019 and were approved. At the same session, the Administrative Committee approved the selection criteria that will apply to the designation of three Member States to represent OTIF on the Supervisory Authority and to the preconditions for issuing the certificate attesting that the international register is fully operational.

OBJECTIVE 11

INNOVATE TO PROMOTE OUR KNOW-HOW WHILE CONTINUING THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE

TRANSLATION, INTERPRETING AND TERMINOLOGY

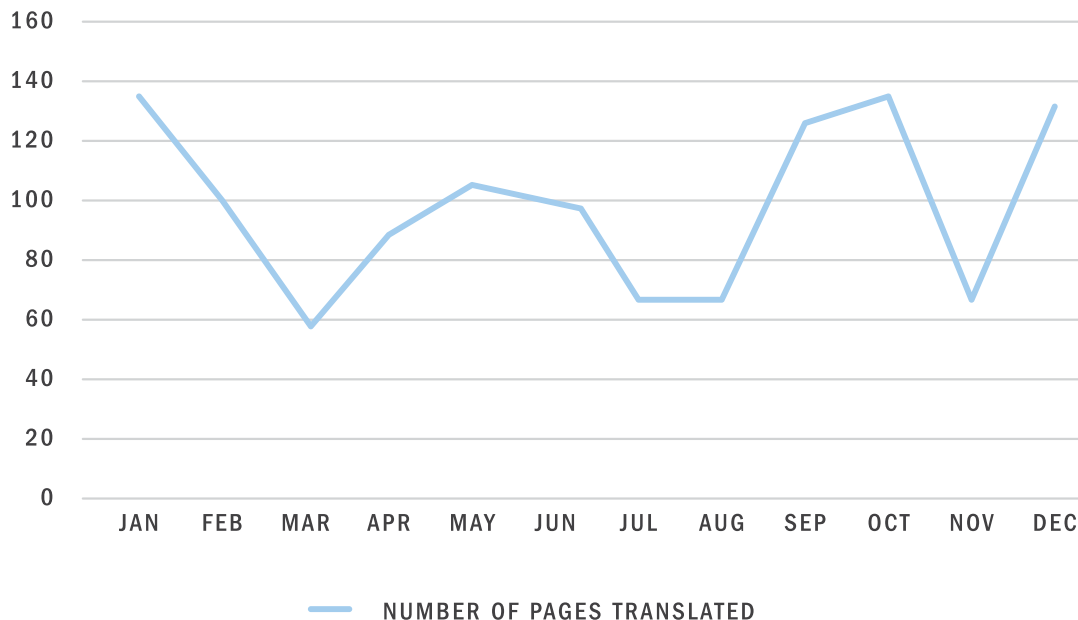
As usual, the translation department's workload in 2019, looked at overall, was greater in the first half of the year than in the second half. However, it is noticeable that the dip in activity between the first and second half of the year was less marked than in previous years. This was possibly due to the substantial amount of work that was required to prepare the Vilnius Symposium in October 2019.

Compared with the previous year, there was a small reduction in the overall number of pages (around 1,300 pages in 2018 compared with around 1,170 in 2019). This was due to the fact that the work on preparing the extraordinary sessions of the General Assembly and Administrative Committee was done in the last quarter of 2018.

Looking at the data on a monthly basis, the four months with the biggest workload were January, September, October and December. In contrast, March, July, August and November were the quietest months in terms of translation work.



Joana MEENKEN
Head of Translation
Department

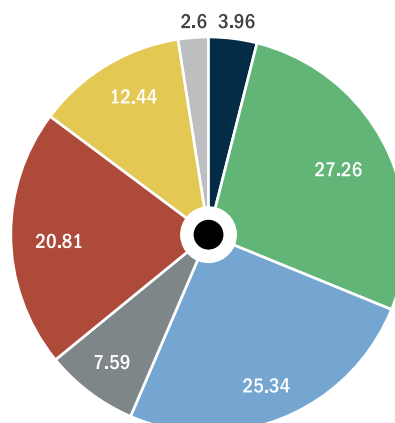


* This shows the average number of pages per language.

In addition to the number of pages, it is interesting to note how the work is spread between OTIF's various areas of activity. The following picture emerges.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION

- GENERAL ASSEMBLY
- ADMINISTRATION
- LAW
- TECHNOLOGY
- RID
- COMMUNICATION
- OTHER



“Administration” appears in first position here, not just because the Administrative Committee is included here, but also because internal administration, such as internal guidelines etc., are part of this area of work. In addition, work that came under the heading of administration in 2019 also included translation of the comprehensive study by Ernst & Young.

The fact that “Other” has moved from first to last place compared with the previous year is due to the new way the work is categorised. The workload is no longer assessed by organ/working group, but primarily by department. “Other” now only includes any work that cannot be categorised elsewhere.

In 2019, “Law” and “RID” came second and third in terms of the workload. This is not surprising, as two meetings each of the Working Group of Legal Experts and the ad hoc Committee on Cooperation had to be prepared. As these included the first sessions of each group, a large number of new documents had to be produced.

With regard to “RID”, most of the translation work concerned preparation of the Joint Meetings in March and September and the RID Committee of Experts’ standing working group in November. As is the case every year, the dangerous goods department again provided active support in 2019 in terms of translations into German, as the timeframe is such that preparation of the Joint Meeting always takes place in months when the translation department has a particularly heavy workload.

The unusually small amount of translation in the “Technical” area was due to the fact that adoption of many of the technical provisions to be developed or revised was postponed to the 13th session of the Committee of Technical Experts (CTE) in June 2020. As the Working Group Technology, which prepares the CTE, only works in English, the texts for CTE itself must always be translated into German and French first. Substantially more work is expected in this area in 2020.

TERMINOLOGY AND INTERPRETING

In addition to the actual translation work, there was also of course a great deal of work to be done in connection with terminology. Where this was not carried out during the translation process itself, this work had to be carried out in the less busy periods of the year. With regard to terminology and the harmonisation of texts, it was decided in 2019 to carry out two major new projects; the development of a common terminology database for the OTIF Secretariat and internal editorial guidelines for OTIF (see the 2020-2021 work programme approved by the Administrative Committee in December 2019).

The following figures show the number of days of interpretation in 2019:

ENGLISH 22	GERMAN 16	FRENCH 16
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ADMINISTRATION

With regard to how the work is organised, two members of the team worked on site at OTIF’s premises and one member of the team worked remotely from abroad, as was already the case at the end of 2018.

I GREATER EXPOSURE

In the first half of 2019, the OTIF Secretariat's communication department functioned with fewer staff. However, it was still possible to ensure that publications were published frequently, the Organisation's website was updated and projects were developed.

THE BULLETIN OF INTERNATIONAL CARRIAGE BY RAIL

In 2019, the Secretariat of OTIF published four Bulletins of International Carriage by Rail in March, June, September and December, as usual.

The Bulletin is edited internally and is shared between the communication department and the operational departments.

The content of the Bulletin has changed with the appearance of a new sub-section entitled "Depositary notifications" so as to help satisfy the Bulletin's initial purpose, which, according to COTIF, is to contain "official communications as well as others necessary or useful with respect to the application of the Convention".

The readership of this publication increased again in 2019 and more than 800 contacts received it.

"OTIF-NEWS" PRESS RELEASES

In 2019, 16 press releases were published, some of which were relayed in the press.

As far as possible, press releases were issued in conjunction with the event described in the text, thanks in great part to the translation department's responsiveness.

THE WEBSITE

The working principle with regard to the website is to react quickly. Consequently, requests for uploads or updates were dealt with on the same day or within 24 hours of being received. The aim is to satisfy users of the site, whether in terms of news, reference texts or working documents. In total, more than 600 updates and document uploads were made.

Access to the working documents was modified to make working documents for the current year more visible.

In 2019, there were 600 visitors more per month to OTIF's website compared with 2018, all language versions included. Overall, more than 37,000 people consulted the website in the course of 2019. More than 58.5% of people consulted the English version of OTIF's website.

The pages visited most frequently by language:

FRENCH

Homepage
RID 2019
COTIF 1999
Dangerous goods
RID 2017
OTIF
Latest documents
Secretariat
Reference texts
Members

GERMAN

Homepage
RID 2019
Dangerous goods
Latest documents
OTIF
2019 working documents*
Reports*
COTIF 1999
Secretariat
RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting

ENGLISH

Homepage
RID 2019
Dangerous goods
COTIF 1999
Members
RID 2017
Convention
OTIF
Working at OTIF
Latest documents



Sarah PUJOL
Communication Officer

OBJECTIVE 12
STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNICATION
STRATEGY AND BROADEN
DISSEMINATION NETWORKS

*(RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting)

SOCIAL NETWORKS

The Organisation had a presence on the LinkedIn and Twitter networks. A number of “post” publications generated interactions (“like”, “share”).

The number of people following the Organisation’s news continued to increase throughout 2019. In addition, OTIF was referred to in a number of “post” publications posted by stakeholders and partners.

The Organisation’s active presence of course improved the awareness of OTIF.

VIDEO

A video entitled “COTIF – What for?” was produced and widely disseminated in 2019: website, social networks, events, presentation. It was designed internally on a collaborative basis. With regard to the graphic design, the Secretariat directed the external work carried out by a graphic animation designer.

“COTIF – What for?” is the Organisation’s first video, which has opened the way towards developing audio-visual tools.

THE SYMPOSIUM ON THE “20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE VILNIUS PROTOCOL: OTIF’S ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS”

On 28 and 29 October 2019, OTIF, together with the Lithuanian Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Lithuanian Railways, jointly organised a seminar in Vilnius on the “20th Anniversary of the Vilnius Protocol: OTIF’s achievements and prospects”.

OTIF’s Member States, stakeholders and partners took up the call and participated in the various events that were organised.

- A visit to the border railway station at Kena,
- A day of insights and discussions spread over three sessions and round tables in the presence of Lithuania’s Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications, Mr Gytis Mažeika,
- An official dinner.



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Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires
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