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IRU POSITION ON TRACKING AND TRACING IN COMBINED TRANSPORT

IRU Position on tracking and tracing in combined transport - unanimously adopted by the IRU Group of Experts on Combined Transport on 27 February 2008.

I. ANALYSIS

In an ever increasing market of electronic devices for everyday use such as mobile phones, personal digital assistants, cameras, portable PCs or wristwatches you can find satellite navigation system receivers. Currently the United States with its Global Positioning System (GPS) and Russia with its GLONASS system dominate the market for those satellite based positioning systems. Both of these positioning systems are financed and controlled by the military and are currently not interoperable

In this context the European Commission first presented its plans for a European satellite positioning system on 10 February 1999 as a European alternative for satellite based navigation technology, called Galileo. Galileo would be the first European and public-private partnership satellite system solely designed for civil use and it would be interoperable according to an agreement signed between Galileo and GPS.

The European Commission considers road transport as a major potential market for Galileo telematic applications such as fleet management, road and rail traffic monitoring, route searching, speed control, guidance systems, mobilisation of emergency services, tracking of goods carried by multimodal transport, etc. Additional service applications that are foreseen at a later stage are advanced driving assistance systems (ADAS), road charging, fleet and supply chain management, electronic fee collection, insurance and dangerous goods transport.

These telematic applications can offer new opportunities for transport operators under the prerequisite that the application in the vehicles is user friendly. It enables them to follow and to monitor their truck, trailer or container electronically all over the world with real time information. As such it can improve as well the relationship between a transport company and customers, who can monitor the status of goods transported.

These opportunities of telematics can become challenges if the governments make certain applications mandatory and misuse the data for discriminatory and costly policy decisions. A recent example is the development in course of the tracking and tracing of dangerous goods. The current political intention is to monitor the flow of dangerous goods and then impose certain routes and transport modes on the operators as indicated in the harmonise Directive of Dangerous Goods.

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II. IRU POSITION

Harmonised and interoperable telematic applications such as tracking and tracing system can increase the quality and the value added services and can improve the effectiveness and reliability of transport as a whole.

However, this application must be on a voluntary basis and it is imperative that the consignor, carrier and consignee maintain **freedom of choice** for the means of transport and the tools they are using.

The IRU opposes tracking and tracing on a mandatory basis under the control of authorities, because it could lead to a major discrimination of goods transport by road.
