

## **BULLETIN I/2010**

### **Editorial**

*Political efforts to limit the amount of traffic in order to "protect the environment" continue unabated, even if they are now being increasingly pursued under the new heading of saving the climate. As before, heavy goods traffic is the main target.*

*Calls for a reduction of fine particles in the ambient air no longer seem to be at the top of the agenda at the moment – perhaps because it has never been possible to prove a causal link to road haulage volumes. NOx (nitrogen oxide) emissions have become the prime environmental concern instead.*

*The definition of Green Zones and the resulting selective traffic bans continue to impede deliveries of ordinary consumer goods to the city centres. Furthermore, the designation of a Green Zone in a*

*city often encourages neighbouring districts to do the same, because the communities concerned want to keep out the detour traffic.*

*At the same time, the composition of the vehicle fleet is rapidly changing, as companies are phasing out the trucks with high emission levels. It is therefore time to decide how to deal with the proliferation of traffic bans that are imposed on "ecological grounds", when only trucks with clean or electronically-powered engines are on the roads. A "sunset clause" for such regulations is overdue.*

*Dr. Rainer Füeg  
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### **March 2010**

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## ***Annual report 2009***

### **Main topics**

The Executive Board of the UECC held two meetings in 2009, i.e. in Strasbourg (F) and St. Pölten (A), and the working group also met twice, in Thun (CH) and Mulhouse (F). On these occasions, the UECC members debated current issues of transport policy, prepared position papers and resolutions, drew up a list of topics to be treated in 2009 and 2010 and discussed possible cooperations with other associations. At the General Assembly in Strasbourg, the UECC amended its statutes, stipulating that the president shall henceforth be elected by the General Assembly and not by the Executive Board, as has been the case hitherto.

The Working Group and the Committee adopted two resolutions and three position papers in 2009. One resolution called for the creation of an efficient railway link between the Rhine/Main region and the ports on the western Mediterranean. The other resolution demanded that the Rhine-Saône link be reinserted into the plans for a European transport network.

### ***New developments in European transport policy***

At the UECC's General Assembly in Brussels at the beginning of March, guest speaker Dirk van Vreckem, Consultant in the GD MOVE at the European Commission, described the issues that are currently at the top of the Commission's agenda. With the coming into effect of the new EU treaty, the division of GD TREN

### ***Freight corridors in Europe***

The relevant institutions in Brussels are currently discussing the EU's proposal for a regulation concerning a European rail network for competitive freight (COM)2008)852 final). The European Parliament is expected to examine the text at a second reading in June. In the UECC's view it is of crucial importance that all major European corridors are defined and established as quickly as possible, that reservations for slots for time sensitive transports are reliably guaranteed, and that passenger traffic

In its position papers, the UECC commented on the EU's new White Paper on transport policy for the next 20-40 years, the Green Paper "TEN-V: Policy Review" and the action plan on urban traffic.

### **Personnel**

After two and a half years, Dr. Hans-Jürgen Reichardt (Chamber of Commerce of Stuttgart) resigned from his function as chairman of the working group. He was replaced by Dr. Michael Grubmann (Austrian Chamber of Commerce). Mathias Tromp was elected to represent the UECC in the Advisory Board of the planned Interreg project "Rotterdam-Genua Railway Axis". Walter Keilbart is the UECC's representative in the newly formed monitoring group for additional studies on the upgrading of the Danube waterway between Straubing and Vilshofen.

into two new general directorates and the election of a new commissioner for transport, EU transport policy has indeed opened a new chapter. One of the major topics on the agenda of the new Commission will be "decarbonisation", an issue which is likely to have manifold consequences for the transport industry.

is not given priority during peak hours, as is the case at present. Reliability and punctuality is essential if railfreight services are to have a real chance of competing successfully in the European market.

It is also important to make sure that individual operators can only reserve those train paths which they effectively use, and that a trade of such train paths between third parties is ruled out from the start.

## Rotterdam-Switzerland-Genoa railway axis (Project Code 24)

The project was given the best evaluation of a set of 32 projects submitted to the European Commission. The relevant selection committee also praised it as a "strategic project for Europe". The project was presented to the public at a meeting in Mannheim on March 24, 2010.

The actual opening conference will be held on May 7, 2010, also in Mannheim, under the title of "European Corridor Conference Rotterdam-Genoa". The conference is open to the public.

Further information on the conference programme and registration forms can be downloaded from the internet at the websites [www.code-24.eu](http://www.code-24.eu) or [www.karlsruhe.ihk.de](http://www.karlsruhe.ihk.de).

## Rail 2030: the Wisenberg Tunnel is put on hold

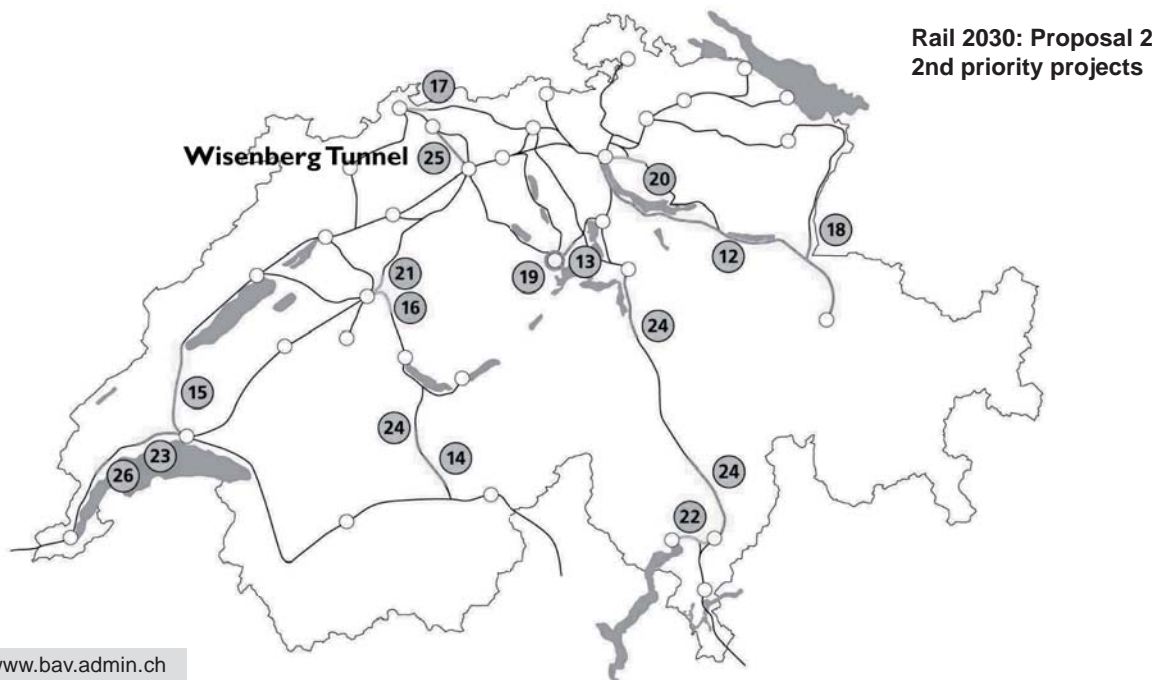
On March 23, 2010, the Swiss Federal Railways and the Swiss Ministry for Transport presented two different proposals for the medium and long term expansion of public transport infrastructures.

The less expensive alternative (CHF 12 billion) contains no major construction projects. The funds shall be mainly used for more trains, longer platforms and a few additional rail tracks. The more expensive proposal (CHF 21 billion), on the other hand, allows for major projects, including the Wisenberg Tunnel, but, even in this proposal, the plans for a third tunnel through the Jura mountains between Liestal and Olten are listed among the "2nd priority infrastructure measures".

The Swiss Transport Ministry believes that capacities on this axis will be sufficient beyond the year 2030 even without the new tunnel.

Considering the already large volumes of traffic on the existing tracks, this view seems over optimistic. Furthermore, Switzerland runs the risk of breaching an agreement it made with Germany in 1996 on the upgrading of the access routes to the Gotthard Tunnel. The extension of the Karlsruhe – Basel line is well underway. Apart from the already completed new line between Olten and Bern and the planned second railway bridge over the Rhine near Basel, the Swiss minister for Transport also made a commitment regarding the construction of a new line from the Basel area through the Jura mountains.

The Swiss Cantons now have time to comment upon the two proposals. In February 2011 "Rail 2030" will be submitted to both chambers of the federal parliament for review.



## **Feedback on UECC resolutions**

### **UECC calls for an upgrade of the railway link between the Rhine-Main Area and the ports on the western Mediterranean**

Dominique Bussereau, the French secretary of state in charge of transport, assured the UECC that he will pursue the project with all necessary attention.

## **Platina**

The PLATINA project was launched in 2006, as a package of measures to implement the NAIADES programme. Platina contains five specific policy areas which are funded by the 7th framework programme for research and development. The policy area "Markets" includes measures to establish benchmark systems as well as to create an internet site for inland navigation ([www.naiades.info](http://www.naiades.info)).

Under the heading "Fleet and Innovations" a database will be set up to register information on vessel certification which is now available throughout Europe. A platform for the ex-

## **Urban mobility**

The European Commission's action plan contains various proposals that are likely to affect urban traffic flows, as for example the plans to extend the "green zones" by the end of 2010. The existing areas already form a patchwork that is causing an increasing amount of problems for transport and logistics companies.

## **Rhein-Saône waterway**

The Voies Navigables de France (VNF) thanked the UECC for its support. VNF has been commissioned by the French government to conduct studies on the construction of a link between the Saône and the Moselle prior to a public debate on the issue which shall be launched in 2012.

In this debate, the option of a link between Saône und Rhin will also be discussed. Additional studies on this project are planned as well.

change of information on ship building is also planned. In the policy area "Jobs and Skills" networks were formed between the various inland navigation schools and a new recruitment campaign was launched throughout Europe.

Under the heading "Infrastructure", PLATINA drew up a list of bottlenecks on the European waterways and prepared forecasts for future freight volumes.

Under the heading "Communication and Image" efforts will be made to build up a joint communications platform to promote the strengths and potentials of inland navigation in Europe.

Of particular concern is the fact that the criteria for the road tax discs which permit access to these zones differ greatly from one EU member State to the next. The UECC calls for a reciprocal recognition of these criteria.

## **Calendar 2010**

### **Executive Committee**

30 June 2010

1 October 2010

Nuremberg (D)

venue to be determined