

Protocol no 10
Steering Committee of
the Barents Euro-Arctic Transport Area
Date: December 9, 2004
Place: Tromsø, Norway

Members present: Kjell Rosanoff, Ministry of Transport and Communications in Norway; Kerstin Lokrantz, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications in Sweden; Petriina Punna, Ministry of Transport and Communications in Finland; Alexander Kurtov, Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation.

Other participants: Jane Baekken, Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications; Per Munkerud, Nordland County Council; Ingeborg Solberg, Troms County Council; Tom Mikalsen, Finnmark County Council; Bo-Erik Ekblom, Norrbotten County Administration; Petr Prints, Murmansk Oblast Administration; Victor Galakhov, Arkhangelsk Oblast Administration; Krister Palo, Swedish Road Administration; Olof Bergwall, STBR Secretariat; and Martti Miettinen, Secretary of BEATA Steering Committee.

§1 Opening of the Meeting

Mr Rosanoff opened the meeting and welcomed the participants to Tromsø and Norway.

The meeting agenda (Appendix 1) was adopted.

§2 Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of the Steering Committee (Protocol no 9)

The minutes of the ninth meeting of the Steering Committee in Kirkenes, Norway, April 26, 2004, were approved (Appendix 2).

§3 Programme of the Norwegian Chair for 2005

Mr Rosanoff presented the Programme of the Norwegian Chair for 2005 (Appendix 3). The Chair's Programme was approved.

§4 News from the EU Commission

The Commission (DG TREN) had invited the chairmen and secretaries of the pan-European transport corridors and areas to a meeting in Brussels on November 16 in order to provide

information about the recent transport developments in the enlarged EU, and to be informed about progress in each transport corridor and area. The BEATA chair gave the status report in the meeting.

In autumn 2004, the Commission had set up a High Level Group for helping it identify a limited number of priority axes, which connect the Union with its new neighbours. Additionally, the Group will compile a short list of projects on these axes by the second half of 2005.

A widely expressed concern is that the representatives of the existing corridors and areas have not been invited to the High Level Group, nor have the existing EU member states. In addition, Norway has declined participation on account, among others, that the Norwegian connections are already in the TENs through the EEA agreement. This underscores the importance of the positions that the Russian government will take in the High Level Group with respect to the BEATA region.

The Commission, however, intends to consult the chairs and secretaries of the transport corridors and areas as it concerns suitable ways of corridor and area development. Subsequent to the above meeting the Commission sent out a questionnaire to all the corridors and areas in which such information is requested.

It was felt that answering the questionnaire properly is important for BEATA, and the secretary was mandated to this task. As in the questionnaire country-specific information was requested, the secretary asked the participants for assistance. All additional information should be sent to him by December 23. After that time the secretary will prepare the final draft and circulate it for comments. The comments should be received by January 3, since the Commission expects to get the questionnaires back by January 5, 2005.

§5 Recent events in the BEATA countries

Finland:

Ms Petriina Punna noted that since the last Steering Committee meeting in April not much new can be told. She reiterated the work of the ministerial working group, which had prepared a national infrastructure plan 2004 – 2013. The plan includes two specific projects in northern Finland, which concern improvements of fairways to the Raahe and Tornio ports.

Norway:

National Transport Plan 2006-2015 was adopted by the Parliament in June 2004. The plan's financial frame for the 10-year period was increased by 2.7 billion EUR. The proposed state budget for 2005 allocates 78 million EUR to the trunk roads in the BEATA region. In addition, the Nordland railway line (Trondheim-Bodö) will receive 18 million EUR.

Sweden:

Ms Lokrantz mentioned that the National Road Plan and the National Railway Plan had been decided by the Government in February 2004. Recently the road plan has experienced some amendments due to heavier than expected needs in Trollhättan. Thirteen projects elsewhere had to be cancelled due to these changes. One of these projects concerns road E12. In addition, Sweden has a new bill on transport policy under preparation, which

includes the maritime issues. It is expected that the bill will be presented to the Parliament in May 2005.

Russia:

Mr Kurtov mentioned that the earlier two separate ministries of transport and railways were merged in 2004. In addition, the communications department was later separated so that the current ministry is now solely the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation. At present, the prominent issue in Russia concerns private financing of roads. A new concept of transport system 2010 has been drafted.

Mr Galakhov of Arkhangelsk pointed out that, in addition to the major administrative reforms in the Russian Federation, a new governor for the Arkhangelsk region was elected. The Arkhangelsk development plan 2004-2007 has been prepared and approved in the regional parliament. Freight transport has increased since 2002, when the export of oil started in the Arkhangelsk port. This has also necessitated improvements of the railroads, particularly their electrification. Condition of roads is deteriorating due to increasing traffic.

The Arkhangelsk Airlines have gone through changes when the company was acquired by Aeroflot in 2004. Now the focus is in the replacement of old aircraft in the period 2006-2007. Plans call for modernisation of the Arkhangelsk airport.

Mr Prints of Murmansk informed that a new scheme of the Murmansk traffic system had been prepared in June 2004. The scheme includes: (1) increasing the capacity of regional roads and border crossings, and (2) constructing a new port on the west shore of the Kola bay. The scheme has been sent to Ministry of Transport for approval.

Oil transport through Murmansk has increased quickly when a large tanker ship (360 000 DWT) had been anchored in the bay for providing intermediate storage. Freight volume is over 10 million tons per year. Railway capacity needs to be improved, and the investments in the Murmansk railways have been proposed for inclusion in the new Russian transport system modernisation program.

Additional information is as follows:

- A new railway by a private company will be built between Apatity and Olenogorsk in summer 2005.
- Attention is paid to maritime safety of oil transport along the Russian and Norwegian coasts.
- Murmansk has several joint projects with the County of Lapland, such as road safety and GSM service at borders and roads of Lotta, Salla and Borisoglebsk. A GSM service seminar is planned for spring 2005.
- The runway of the Murmansk airport will be improved (light and sound systems)

Murmansk has a special problem with the roads to Lotta and Salla border crossings. In both places some 40 km of asphalt pavement is still missing, but the regional administration does not have funds for reconstructing the roads.

Common events:

Krister Palo reported about the road directors meeting of the northern districts of the BEATA countries, which was held in Luleå, December 9-10. The intention of such meetings is to make transport across the borders easier by harmonising maintenance and guidance systems as well as eliminating obstacles to crossing of the borders. In addition, the intent is to learn from each other, which can be achieved by working together and discussing large projects, especially those on the main international corridors. The road directors plan to meet again in 2005.

§6 Status reports of the Interreg project STBR

Mr Bo-Erik Ekblom, the STBR project leader, gave the status report of the STBR project (Sustainable Transport in the Barents Region). The STBR project consists of four Work Packages. Work Package 1 was launched in autumn 2003 with freight and passenger flow studies covering the whole Barents area. In spring 2004, some parts of the Work Packages 2 and 3 were started with pre-studies, which focused on regional aviation and logistics development.

The first results of STBR were now available as the passenger and freight flow study had been completed earlier this autumn. The study gives for the first time a comprehensive view of transport flows in the entire Barents region.

The STBR projects underway consist of the Road Transport Corridors in the Barents Region project, which is composed of three sub-studies: (1) Tourism Roads in Barents Region, (2) Heavy traffic: traffic safety and transports of dangerous goods, and (3) Terminal Study in Barents Region. Parallel to this, a study on evaluation methods of cross border transport projects is also underway.

The following studies and activities are under preparation:

- Barents Railroad, for which a consultant was selected in the STBR Management Committee meeting just prior to the BEATA Steering Committee.
- Regional Aviation, which will include also a component for Russia
- Logistics system, which will be carried out as academic research projects in the next phase
- Barents Forum for Seaport Cooperation

§7 Next meetings

The Norwegian Chair will arrange two meetings in 2005.

The first meeting will take place in Northern Norway, May 23 – 24, 2005.

The second meeting is proposed to Oslo, October 10-11, 2005.

§11 Closing of the meeting

Chairman closed the meeting.

Martti Miettinen

Kjell Rosanoff

APPENDICES:

1. Agenda no. 10
2. Protocol no. 9
3. Programme of the Norwegian Chairmanship in 2005