



PRESS RELEASE

CCNR to adopt River Information Services (RIS) strategy in spring 2012

Strasbourg, 9 December 2011 – At the autumn meeting of the Central Commission for Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), it was decided to adopt in spring 2012 the Commission's strategy for further development of RIS. Before adopting the plan, the Commission will first invite the shipping industry associations to take part in a hearing, with the aim of ensuring shipping industry participation in the strategy and to make certain that the plan meets the industry's needs to the greatest possible extent. The strategy will define how RIS is implemented on the Rhine in the longer term. It consequently marks a major milestone along the way to developing RIS, an initiative to which the CCNR gave decisive impetus ten years ago by adopting the Inland ECDIS Standard, thereby launching the process aimed at standardisation of RIS within Europe.

The RIS working group of the CCNR has prepared a draft RIS strategy in the course of the past year and a half. The strategy is based and builds on previous work by the CCNR and the EU in the area of RIS as well as the implementation of these services by the CCNR Member States. The plan lists those CCNR objectives that RIS will be able to support in future and describes measures suited to realising the objectives. The draft strategy was presented by the CCNR at the 4th RIS Workshop, held in Brussels on 18 October of this year, where it was subsequently discussed in detail with representatives of the shipping industry and manufacturers of equipment and applications, as well as logistics firms active in inland shipping. The shipping industry welcomed the opportunity to discuss the RIS strategy with the CCNR, and industry representatives provided specific details and suggestions for additions and improvements to the plan. The items pointed out by the industry included:

- In terms of implementing RIS, the CCNR has created a unique opportunity by adopting the strategy, potentially providing an important example for others to follow.
- While the draft represents a good first step, it needs to be supplemented, for example through the addition of rudimentary principles and vision statements.
- In view of the major differences currently existing among the various national authorities, especially in the area of traffic management, it is important for measures to be introduced simultaneously along the Rhine in a coordinated manner.

Shipping industry representatives also presented the industry's guidelines for implementing RIS as well as the most significant requested measures from the industry perspective.

Stakeholders thus responded very keenly and for the most positively to the CCNR's decision to adopt a medium-term strategy as the basis for future efforts towards implementing RIS. In view of this response and of the invaluable suggestions for completing the strategy, the CCNR has decided to invite a smaller group of representatives from the international shipping industry to participate in a supplementary hearing prior to adopting the strategy. The occasion will on the one hand provide the shipping industry with an additional opportunity to review the current draft in detail, in order to discuss industry proposals at length and prepare joint suggestions. The hearing will also help the CCNR to better understand the concerns and specific proposals of the shipping industry, integrating these suggestions in the strategy wherever possible.

The draft strategy is available, along with the slide presentations from the 4th RIS Workshop, on the CCNR website at www.ccr-zkr.org. The shipping industry hearing will take place during the first quarter of the new year, with the adoption of the strategy subsequently planned for 30 May 2012.