

Information note to business involved in trade with Russia on Russian measures affecting TIR movements as of 14 September 2013

In July Russian Customs announced they would introduce new customs measures on 14 August requesting additional guarantees for goods moved by road under cover of the TIR procedure. Commissioner Šemeta wrote to the Russian authorities on 24 July and expressed strong concerns. He also had a phone conversation with the Head of the Russian federal customs service in early August and stressed again the concerns of the EU about the measures envisaged. Following this reaction by the Commission (and from many Member States and countries that would be affected, the Russian authorities announced they would delay these measures from 14 August until 14 September.

"The TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) met in Geneva on 27 August 2013 with representatives of all parties involved to discuss this issue. The TIR Executive Board has specifically asked the Russians to abandon the measure, or, at least, to postpone it until the end of the year so that the parties involved could discuss and find a solution. For the first time it made its conclusions publicly available (<http://www.unece.org/tir/news/280813.html>).

The Commission expects the Russian customs authorities to find a solution to the issue they have raised that will be in line with the TIR convention and avoid any disruption of trade with Russia and other countries concerned by transit through Russian territory.

However, meanwhile the Russian Federal Customs service has terminated its agreement with the national guaranteeing association as of 1 December 2013. This step has further aggravated the situation as the TIR Convention cannot be applied in a territory which is not covered by a national guaranteeing association.

Commission experts continue meeting their counterparts in Moscow in order to assess how the situation might develop following the TIR Executive Board meeting.

As time is running short in respect of the deadline of 14 September, transport operators are strongly advised to prepare themselves for the scenario that additional guarantees will be required for TIR movements in Russia. Unfortunately, the Russian authorities have not published sufficient information yet on how the new measures would be applied in practice.