Fifth Meeting of the
CAREC Railway Working Group
12 and 13 December 2019
Bangkok, Thailand

Strengthening international railway transport
in the ESCAP region

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Outline

How is ESCAP working to strengthening international railway transport in the region

Why electronic exchange of information is key to enhance efficiency of railway border crossings

What could be way forward

TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY NETWORK

Track Gauges

	1,676 mm
	1,520 mm
	1,435 mm
	1,067 mm
	1,000 mm
	1,000/1,435 mm

TAR LINK - PLANNED/UNDER CONSTRUCTION

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Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network entered in to force in 2009 currently has 24 (20) states as party

Resolution 71/7 on Adoption of Regional Cooperation Framework for Facilitation of International Railway Transport

Identify four fundamental issues and eleven areas for cooperation among member states to foster railway transport in the region

Regional Cooperation Framework for Facilitation of International Railway Transport

Fundamental issues in facilitation of international railway transport

Standardisation of Railway infrastructure and rolling stock

Break –of –gauge

Different legal regimes for railway transport contracts

Coordination of regulatory controls

Regional Cooperation Framework for Facilitation of International Railway Transport

Potential areas for cooperation

1. Participate in international railway organizations

2. Formulate bilateral/subregional agreements

3. Collaborate to standardize cross border railway operations

4. Use advance cargo information systems

5. Arrangement for exchange of wagons

6. Use new technologies in train operations and in container tracking

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Regional Cooperation Framework for Facilitation of International Railway Transport

7. Develop human resources for cross border railway operations

8. Establish dry ports/logistics centers and maintenance hubs near border interchange stations

9. Simplify intermodal interfaces of railway with other modes

10. Promote and encourage corridor approach to facilitation of international railway transport

11. Work towards paperless freight

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✓ Following on the resolution ESCAP developed jointly with OSJD framework to enhance efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway Network

✓ Identify among other electronic exchange of information and harmonization of customs transit formalities
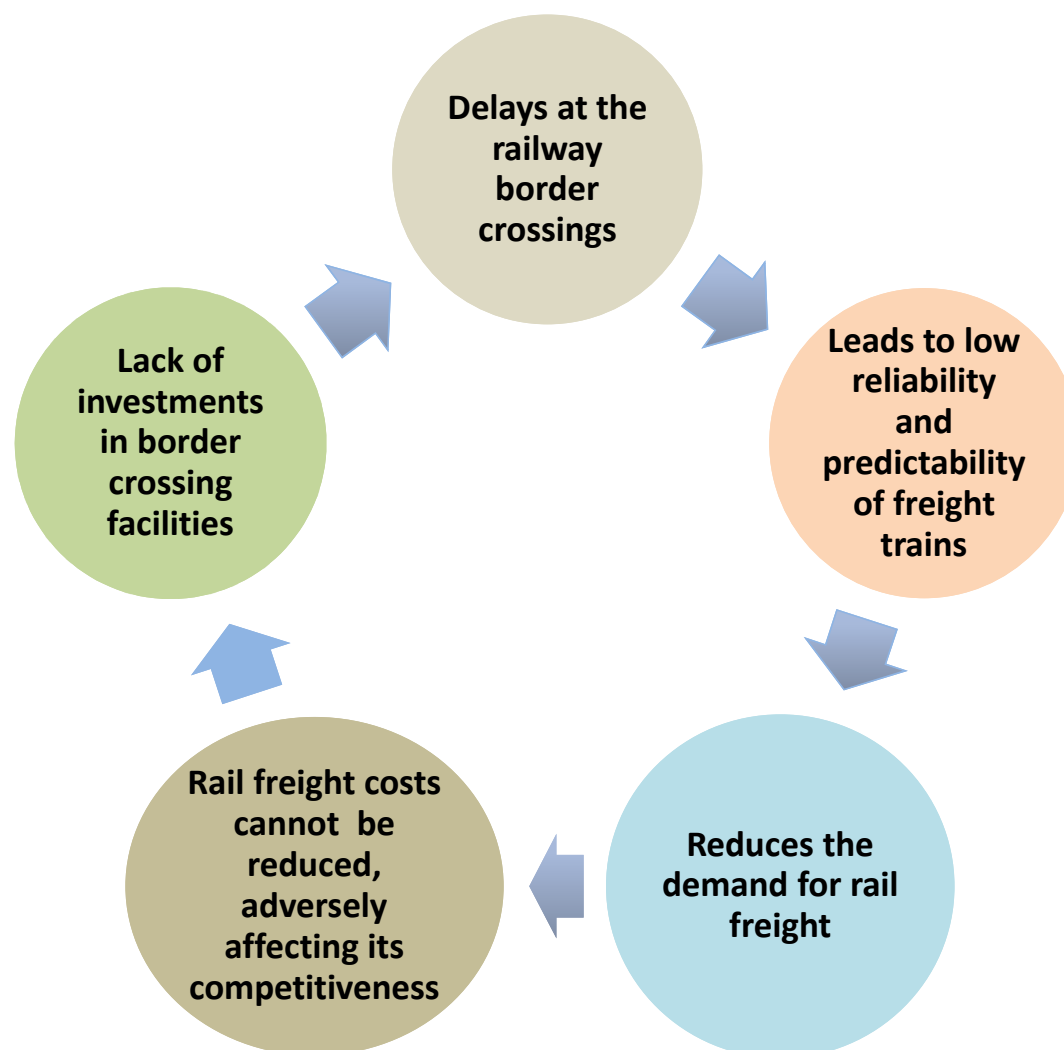
✓ MOUs with UIC, OSJD and OTIF

Why electronic exchange of information is key to enhance efficiency of railway border crossings

1. *Electronic information exchange* between railways and among railways and control agencies

2. *Harmonizing customs formalities* for transit by rail through appropriate arrangement among the member countries

3. *Dealing efficiently with the break of gauge* for different possible situations

4. Developing comprehensive indicator(s) to *measure the performance of railway border crossings* and using a standardized methodology to identify challenges and recommend solutions
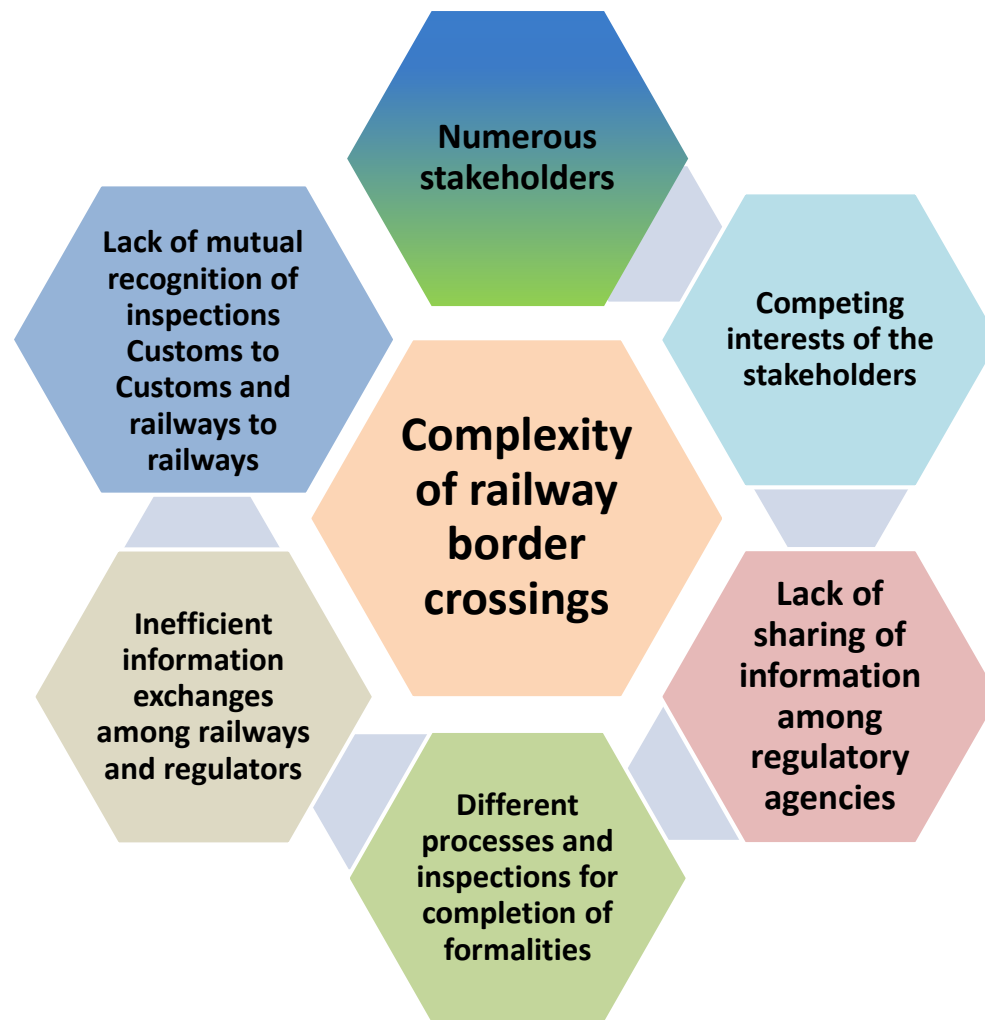

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Vicious cycle created by delays at railway border crossing

- Delays at the railway border crossings
- Leads to low reliability and predictability of freight trains
- Reduces the demand for rail freight
- Rail freight costs cannot be reduced, adversely affecting its competitiveness
- Lack of investments in border crossing facilities

Complex environment of railway border crossing

Numerous stakeholders

Lack of mutual recognition of inspections Customs to Customs and railways to railways

Competing interests of the stakeholders

Complexity of railway border crossings

Inefficient information exchanges among railways and regulators

Lack of sharing of information among regulatory agencies

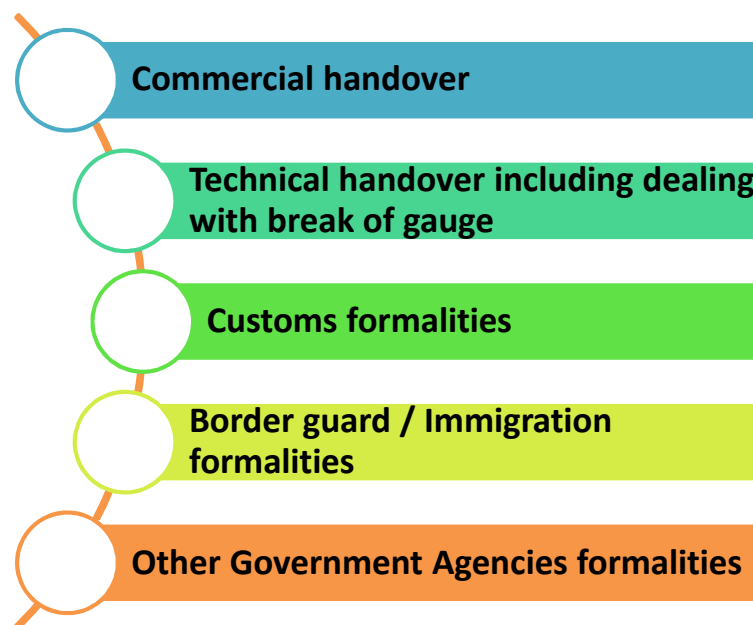**Different processes and inspections for completion of formalities**

Key issues at the railway border crossings

Electronic information exchange among the railways

The main processes undertaken at the railway border crossing can be grouped as follows:

- Commercial handover
- Technical handover including dealing with break of gauge
- Customs formalities
- Border guard / Immigration formalities
- Other Government Agencies formalities

Initiation and completion of these processed require information.
The flow of this information has a crucial impact on the efficiency of border crossing processes

Railway to railway electronic exchange of information

✓ Electronic exchange of information among railways could further enhance efficiency.

✓ Some countries in the region already have advance systems

✓ Railway organizations such as OSJD through their leaflets provide details on various aspects of electronic information exchange among railways; there is TAF-TSI that is used in the railways of EU countries; CIS CRT MESPLAN system

✓ Many countries are developing their international railway transport are not members of any railway organization.

✓ To harmonize such initiatives across the ESCAP region it is suggested that countries work on a framework arrangement on electronic information exchange systems for facilitation of international railway transport

2. Customs and other government agencies formalities

Customs and other government agencies formalities differ among the countries and is among main reason for delays at the border crossings

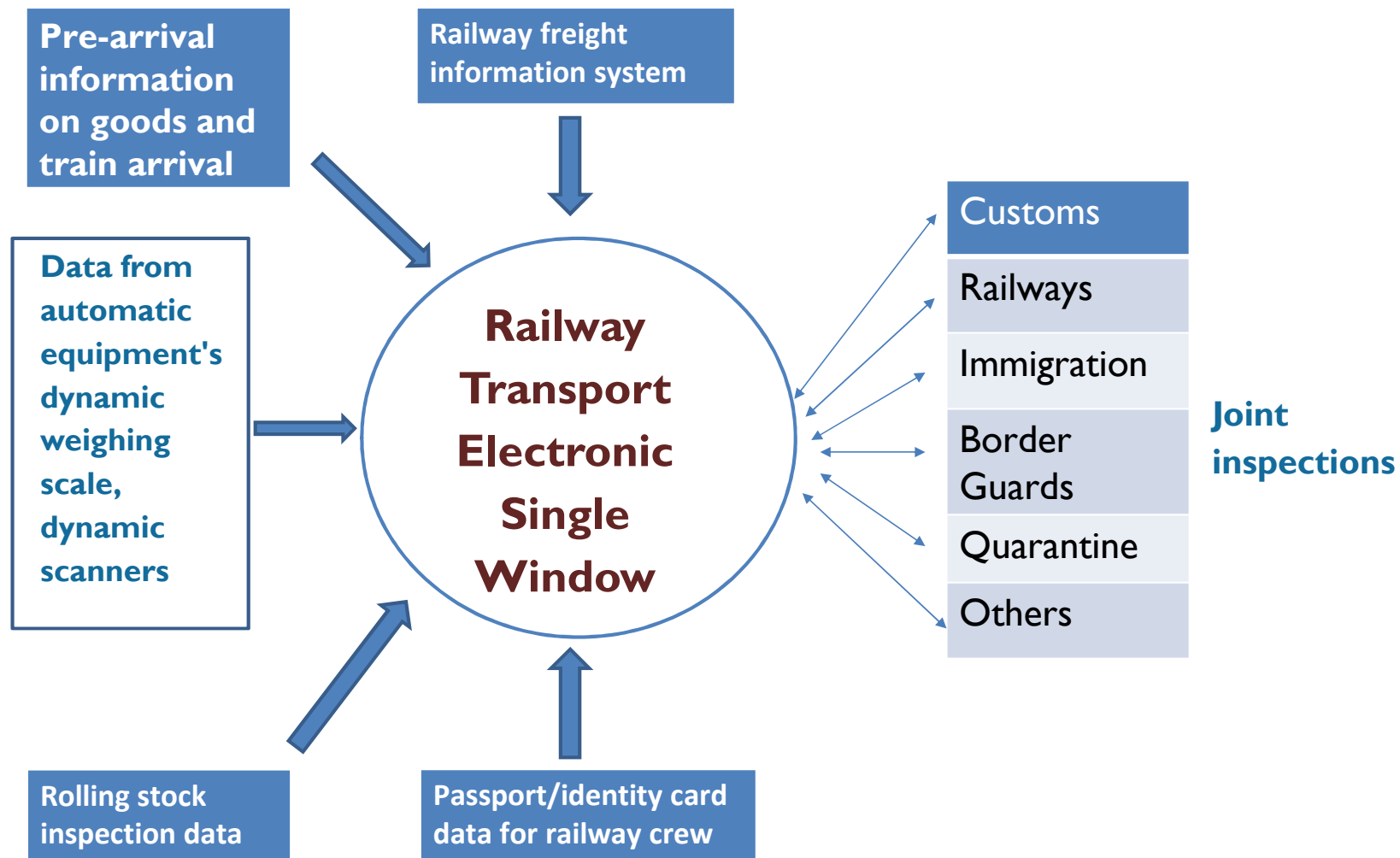### *Railway electronic transit transport system*

- Pre-arrival information on goods in electronic form
- Harmonization of message exchanges for transit by railways
- Reduced guarantees for transit by railway
- Recognition of *railway consignment note as customs declaration*

- *Single window facility* for railway transport at the railway border crossings
- *Use of new technologies* such as dynamic scanners and non intrusive inspections
- Selective *joint controls* based on risk assessment
- *Standardization and harmonization documents* for customs transit formalities

Target
To harmonize customs formalities for transit by rail through an appropriate arrangement

Customs and Other Government Agencies formalities
Railway Transport Single Window for completion of formalities

Pre-arrival information on goods and train arrival

Railway freight information system

Data from automatic equipment's dynamic weighing scale, dynamic scanners

Railway Transport Electronic Single Window

Rolling stock inspection data

Passport/identity card data for railway crew

Customs

Railways

Immigration

Border Guards

Quarantine

Others

Joint inspections

3. Break of gauge

- Break of gauge is reality along the Trans-Asian Railway Network but this should not become reason for excessive delays

- Trains anyway stop at the border crossings for completion of regulatory and operational controls

- Advance information, well designed facilities and streamlined operational procedures organized in parallel can make it possible to deal with break of gauge efficiently

Target
To frame standard operating procedures to efficiently deal with the break of gauge

4. Measurement of the performance of railway border crossings

- Each railway border crossing is unique in terms of challenges and specific issues that need to be addressed

- Such a complex and demanding analysis needs a systematic approach and a methodology to do is provided

- Comprehensive indicators to assess and compare the performance of railway border crossings periodically

Target
To develop a comprehensive indicator(s) to measure the performance of railway border crossings
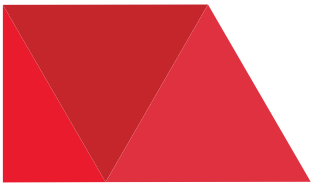
ESCAP studies on harmonization of rules and regulations for facilitation of international railway transport

1. Border crossing practices in railway transport
(https://www.unescap.org/resources/study-border-crossing-practices-international-railway-transport)

2. Enhancing interoperability to facilitate international railway transport
(https://www.unescap.org/resources/enhancing-interoperability-facilitation-international-railway-transport)

3. Electronic information exchange systems for international railway transport
(https://www.unescap.org/resources/electronic-information-exchange-systems-rail-freight-transport)

Way forward

Most railways in the region rely on paper-based workflow and processes and information is exchanged by telephone, faxes, emails. Lack of pre-arrival information does not allow for any preparation before the arrival of a train

Use of electronic information exchange among various stakeholders can significantly enhance the efficiency of international railway transport operations. Harmonized electronic messages would lead to smooth flow of information

Moreover, electronic exchange of information between railways, regulators and other stakeholders would lead to streamlined processes, reduced documentation and time required to complete the required formalities

Further, linkages between the electronic information systems of railways and control authorities would provide for efficient sharing of information and the use of new technologies in completing control measures

Way forward

Electronic information exchange among railways driven by scattered initiatives can potentially lead to the development of diverse ways of exchanging information electronically. Such multiplicity and divergence could undermine the seamless flow of information, adversely affecting the competitiveness of railway transport.

Many countries of the Asian and Pacific region are expanding their international railway transport operations and need guidance. Also, international railway traffic, particularly along the China-Europe route, is increasing rapidly, calling for urgent measures to ensure reliability and punctuality of freight trains

Accordingly, to provide harmonization to such initiatives in the region, through an appropriate modality on electronic information exchange for the facilitation of international railway transport should be considered a priority by the railways of the region

Way forward

Framework arrangement on harmonization of electronic information exchange between railways for facilitation of international railway transport ?

Framework arrangement on harmonization of electronic information exchange between railways and between railways and Customs for facilitation of international railway transport ?

Stand alone or Annex to TAR agreement ?

Thank you
for
your attention

http://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport