

Outlook Opinion of the Committee of the Regions on the Safety of all modes of transport, including the issue of financing

(2006/C 115/17)

THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS,

Having regard to the letter of referral of 3 June 2005 from Commissioner Wallström to President Straub requesting the CoR's opinion on the 'safety of all modes of transport, including the issue of financing', under the first paragraph of Article 265 of the Treaty establishing the European Community;

Having regard to the White Paper on European Governance which the European Commission presented in 2001 and which urges the Committee of the Regions to 'play a more proactive role in examining policy, for example through the preparation of exploratory reports in advance of Commission proposals';

Having regard to the Protocol of Cooperation of September 2001 between the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions which encourages 'the Committee of the Regions to draw up strategic documents reviewing matters which the Commission regards as important; these "outlook reports" shall explore in greater depth problems in areas where the Committee of the Regions has the appropriate local information resources';

Having regard to the decision of its President of 25 July 2005 to instruct its Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy to draw up an opinion on this subject;

Having regard to its opinion on the Communications from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament Prevention, preparedness and response to terrorist attacks Prevention of and the fight against terrorist financing *through measures to improve the exchange of information, to strengthen transparency and enhance the traceability of financial transactions* Preparedness and consequence management in the fight against terrorism Critical infrastructure protection in the fight against terrorism COM(2004) 698 final — COM(2004) 700 final — COM(2004) 701 final — COM(2004) 702 final — CdR 465/2004 fin;

Having regard to its draft opinion (CdR 209/2005 rev. 1) adopted on 30 September 2005 by its Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy (rapporteur: **Mr Robert Neill**, Member of the London Assembly (UK, EPP)).

Whereas:

- 1) The safety of transport systems has always been a primary concern of transport operators and of key stakeholders such as public authorities and passengers. However, the recent terrorist outrages in London and Madrid provide a stark reminder of the need for an increased focus on the security of transport systems across the EU. The Committee of the Regions welcomes the intention of the European Commission to publish a Communication on this subject, including the issue of financing security measures, towards the end of 2005. Member States and their regional and local authorities should, as a priority, consider how to respond to this Communication when it is produced.
- 2) The CoR also welcomes the measures that are being taken or envisaged at EU and national level in the fields of aviation, maritime and freight security.
- 3) Advice from EU Member State governments is that the threat of terrorist attacks on civilian targets will be with us for the foreseeable future. This threat applies in particular to transport systems because this is where people are present in large numbers on a regular basis, often without the possibility of systematic security checks.
- 4) Given their responsibility for a range of transport matters, regional and local governments and associated public authorities have a key role to play in seeking to mitigate this threat and the consequences of any terrorist incident.

- 5) No transport system can ever be completely secure. There will always be a risk of terrorist attack so strategies must be developed and/or updated to reduce and manage that risk. Risk management expertise exists around the world, having been developed in response to terrorist attacks of the past decades as well as to the attacks of 9/11 and later. The challenge is how to make use of this expertise in complex networks like transport systems, which may involve many different public and private sector players, and how to fund the changes to existing practices which this implies.
- 6) Ease of access to efficient and reasonably priced transport infrastructure is an essential part of life in EU Member States. EU citizens may be frequent users of local transport systems, but also rely on a global transport and logistics network which provides not only employment and business opportunities but is essential for the supply of basic commodities, including food. Further measures must be taken to address the terrorist threat, but these must not result in disproportionate disruption to the transport network. Major ongoing disruption, which is what the terrorists are trying to cause, would have serious consequences for the economic and social life of the EU.
- 7) This report does not in any way attempt to cover the whole range of actions that would comprise a counter-terrorism strategy. It focuses on those issues that are within the competence of regional and local authorities and in particular those, which concern the operation of public transport services. More specifically, this report seeks to identify some of the issues that those authorities should focus on (and in many cases are already focussing on) and to identify what value can be added to these efforts through collaboration with other Member States at EU level.

unanimously adopted the following opinion at its 62nd plenary session, held on 16-17 November 2005 (meeting of 17 November).

The views of the Committee of the Regions

railway stations), they should be fully involved in security strategies.

Key issues to be addressed

1. Cooperation

1.1 Effective security on transport networks depends on the closest cooperation between all the agencies involved, ranging from staff on the ground operating transport services, their managers and the politicians (local, regional or national) to whom they are accountable, through to the police and intelligence services. This is essential to ensure that there is a consistent approach to deterrence and effective action in the case of an incident, for example to ensure that, in parallel, assistance can be given to passengers, evidence can be protected and services can be restored as soon as possible. The involvement of senior management in all agencies is essential.

1.2 Such collaboration must achieve a balance between confidentiality where necessary and sharing information between agencies, between Member States and with the public where possible. Where the private sector is present, for example as a provider of transport services, or of services that are provided in close proximity to transport hubs (e.g. cleaning services or retailers/other businesses occupying space on

1.3 This cooperation must also be extended between the regions of a Member State and across borders in the EU, so that best practice can spread, and so that all relevant agencies, from the emergency services to transport authorities, are immediately informed if there is an terrorist incident and can take the appropriate action.

1.4 In addition to looking at previous incidents in the EU, and in particular the Madrid train bombings in 2004, the EU should seek to learn from other countries around the world who have also experienced terrorist attacks, such as New York, Tokyo and Moscow ⁽¹⁾. In addition, efforts should be made to make use of experience in other sectors (e.g. to compare the responses of the airline and surface transport sectors).

1.5 The basic elements of European cooperation on transport security are already in place but these efforts should be enhanced. Transport operators collaborate through fora such as the UITP (The International Association of Public Transport) working group on security. Railway police forces and railway companies in Europe co-operate through COLPOFER (Collaboration des services de police ferroviaire et de sécurité) which is an associated body of the International Union of Railways

⁽¹⁾ See Annex 1 for a list of recent terrorist incidents.

(UIC) ^(?). Railway and subway police forces of the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Italy and the UK share information and best practice and seek areas for cooperation through RAILPOL. The Dutch police provide the chair and secretariat of RAILPOL, which receives some funding from the EU for its activities. A number of other Member States are eager to join this group and this process should be encouraged.

2. Training and planning

2.1 Transport and emergency services dealing with the recent attacks in London received praise for their well-organised response. It seems that this was due to appropriate training and contingency planning across different services. Using human resources effectively may involve building up teams of specialist staff, including dedicated policing of transport networks, or transport or police personnel specially trained to monitor CCTV images.

2.2 Regular training for transport staff, including exercises simulating terrorist incidents and involving all the relevant agencies, is invaluable, especially in dealing with the immediate aftermath of an attack.

2.3 Contingency planning might range from operational recovery following a specific incident to wider business continuity. These plans can be regularly rehearsed and updated as a result of day-to-day incidents such as equipment failures or third party events (e.g. burst water mains or serious road traffic accidents). Similarly, contingency planning should have a cross-border aspect, for example to allocate clear responsibilities in the event of an incident at or near a border crossing, or to make specialist help available to a Member State which may not have such assets.

2.4 Risk assessment is an essential part of planning and training. This encompasses monitoring of global threats, systematic analysis of past incidents in order to learn lessons and assessment of individual incidents (such as unattended luggage) as they occur in order to minimise unnecessary disruption.

2.5 Passengers using public transport services, and indeed business users of transport, also have a key role to play. However, they need clear and readily available information on, for example, how to avoid causing alerts, what to do if they observe suspicious behaviour and what to do in the event of an

attack. This information should be made available in summary on the transport system itself and in greater detail on relevant websites. In addition, strategies are needed to reassure passengers about the safety of the network, for example through visible staff/police presence or advertising campaigns ^(?).

2.6 It would be appropriate, in schools, other educational establishments and businesses, to provide courses and to hand out information sheets and other educational materials on possible terrorist attacks and how to act during such attacks. This would make people more vigilant and reduce the consequences of any panic that may occur.

3. Use of information technology

3.1 Effective closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems and monitoring have proved to be of critical importance both for deterrence and detection of crime. These systems need to be subject to certain standards and clear operational requirements to enable, for example, downloading of data while still allowing the system to carry out its monitoring function. In addition, companies in and around stations or part of the transport infrastructure may have their own CCTV systems. If properly briefed and trained, these resources can become additional 'eyes and ears' to enhance the security of the vicinity of transport systems with little additional impact on the normal operation of the businesses.

3.2 Resilient mobile phone networks are also vital. Although there might be a need in certain circumstances to disable mobile networks or reserve their use to emergency services, they will normally play a significant role in dealing with incidents. For example, transport staff on the ground in areas affected by an incident may need to use mobile phones to communicate with a control centre. Equally, passengers may need to communicate urgently with friends or relatives, something that may contribute to reducing concern and confusion in the event of an incident.

4. Design

4.1 It is important when providing or procuring public transport services and infrastructure, that full consideration is given to security obligations in the contract specifications. Flexibility to amend these obligations in light of a changing security situation, should also be considered.

^(?) See, for example, the joint declaration of UITP and UIC on public transport and anti-terrorism security: <http://www.uitp.com/media-room/june-2004/full-declaration-geneva-en.cfm>.

^(?) An example of this from the US is the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority campaign featuring their staff's role in maintaining safety. See *Public Transport International*, May 2004.

4.2 Transport authorities and other occupants of transport premises should be encouraged to consider the design of existing facilities, such as transport terminals and vehicles, in order to make it harder to hide bombs, to make evacuation easier and to reduce casualties and damage in the event of an explosion or other form of terrorist attack. As an example, the widespread use of glass and lightweight materials in recent building developments, particularly where a mix of operational and retail areas are involved, may no longer be considered appropriate. At the same time there is evidence that provision of good sight lines and elimination of hiding places has proved to be effective.

5. Financing and resources

5.1 Measures to improve the security of transport networks will require extra resources. In many cases these resources will be significant and/or long term, e.g. more sophisticated information technology, additional rail reversing points, more buses, more transport staff and dedicated policing, more training and more extensive information campaigns. Such new initiatives may well be over and above pre-existing investment plans focussing primarily on renewal of transport infrastructure and networks. Indeed, it is possible that in some cases the current financial processes for approving transport investment may not be well suited to obtaining funding for resilience measures.

5.2 While the operators of transport networks in the public and private sector, and other relevant agencies, must decide exactly what is the best response for them, it is essential that, once priorities are agreed, implementation is not delayed because of disagreement about financing. The Commission, Member States and regional and local authorities should play a role in ensuring that this key issue is properly addressed.

5.3 The question of financing must therefore be addressed at the start, in parallel with other issues. Further work must be done to assess the potential costs, but it is possible that the scale of the necessary response will make it impossible to pass on the entire cost of security measures to passengers without seriously damaging the attractiveness of public transport. Significant increases in fares must be avoided at a time when, for a range of policy reasons (environmental, health, economic), it is essential to encourage the use of public transport.

5.4 When undertaking this assessment of cost, Member States and public authorities should take into account the cost of *not* making every effort to reduce the threat and consequences of a terrorist attack. Apart from the direct costs of injuries and damage as a result of an attack, these costs may also include the loss of revenue from reduced tourism, travel, investment and other economic activity over a sustained period.

5.5 Potential consequences can be increased enormously by co-ordinated, possibly simultaneous, attacks on selected critical parts of one or more infrastructures with intention to maximise disruption and/or loss of life and panic. The reach and significance are clearly demonstrated in the table below.

Value Losses from Security Incidents

<u>Description</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Estimated cost on the entire supply chain of a weapon of mass destruction shipped via container	EUR 770 billion
Drop in the European markets (FTSE) immediately following the Madrid bombings	EUR 42 billion
Cost of cyber attacks against companies worldwide in 2003	EUR 9.6 billion
Cost of September 11 attacks on the two World Trade Centre buildings (direct and indirect)	EUR 64 billion

Source: Deloitte Research (figures converted EUR 1=\$1.3)

5.6 It should be noted, however, that there are potential benefits associated with improvements in the security of transport systems. Measures to deter terrorists also deter others intending to commit crimes of theft and vandalism as well as offences of aggression. Better designed and monitored transport terminals lead to increased user and passenger confidence, potentially leading to greater use of public transport overall. Improved contingency planning and exercises to practice response to large-scale incidents will also be of use in the case of non-terrorist emergencies.

The Committee of the Regions' Recommendations

1. The CoR calls on the Commission and all Member States to give the issue of transport safety the highest priority. The CoR believes that all levels of public authority — EU, national, regional and local — must have integrated and compatible strategies, according to their responsibilities, for addressing threats to security and mitigating incidents that do occur.

2. The CoR emphasises that while security strategies must be created or improved, it is essential to allow public transport systems to continue to operate efficiently, given the damaging social, economic and environmental consequences if they cannot.

3. The CoR calls on the EU and Member States to encourage public transport operators and all the responsible agencies to develop greater cooperation within and between Member States, building on the existing networks of transport operators and transport police forces.

4. The CoR believes such cooperation could focus on establishing information sharing principles in order to raise awareness of terrorism threats, enable carrying out of risk assessments and learning from previous incidents and best practice in a range of sectors.

5. The CoR congratulates the emergency services, the transport operators and the public for their response to recent terrorist atrocities. The CoR emphasises that this response was made possible not least because of good training, contingency planning and sharing of information and believes that, along with good design and use of appropriate information technology, these elements are an essential part of any transport security strategy.

6. The CoR calls on the Commission and Member States to work with mobile phone network providers and public trans-

port operators to encourage the development of more resilient mobile phone services in the case of serious incidents, for the benefit of the operators and of passengers. In addition, any EU proposals on electronic and telephony data storage for security purposes should not serve to weaken existing relevant Member State legislation.

7. The CoR reminds the EU and the Member States of the vulnerability of the road transport sector to terrorist attack, of the need to apply the above recommendations, where appropriate to this sector, and notes that it is the intention of EESC to address this area in detail in an opinion currently in preparation.

8. The CoR believes that, given the likely continuing terrorist threat, sufficient improvements to transport security strategies are unlikely to be possible without substantial extra resources. The CoR therefore calls on the Commission and Member States to consider this issue as a matter of urgency in order to ensure that essential improvements to security are not delayed due to lack of financial planning.

Brussels, 17 November 2005.

The President
of the Committee of the Regions
Peter STRAUB

Appendix 1

Recent examples of dramatic and high impact terrorist attacks in public transport systems include (excluding the latest attacks in London):

1986	Paris	RER line A, a device loaded inside a gym bag exploded after a rider hurled the bag off the train.
1994	Baku	Two bomb attacks in the metro led to 19 dead and 90 wounded
1995	Tokyo	Metro system experienced a sarin-gas attack that killed 12 people and injured 5 600 more.
	Paris	A bomb attack at the Saint Michel station caused 8 dead and 120 wounded passengers.
1996	Paris	An explosion in the Port-Royal station killed 4 persons and injured 91 others.
	Moscow	An explosion in a metro car killed 4 passengers and injured 12 others
2000	Moscow	An explosion in the pedestrian subway street near the metro station resulted in 11 dead and 60 injured persons
2003	Daegu	A milk container containing flammable liquid was set on fire in a carriage. The fire led to 120 dead and 100 wounded passengers.
2004	Moscow	A suicide bomb attack destroyed a metro train during the morning rush hour and resulted in 40 casualties and about 140 injured passengers.
2004	Madrid	10 bombs concealed in rucksacks exploded within a few minutes in commuter trains during the morning rush hours. The explosion killed 190 passengers and injured about 1 400. Three more bombs have been found and destroyed.