

Russian Federation Transport policy and strategy addressing waterborne transport for inland markets

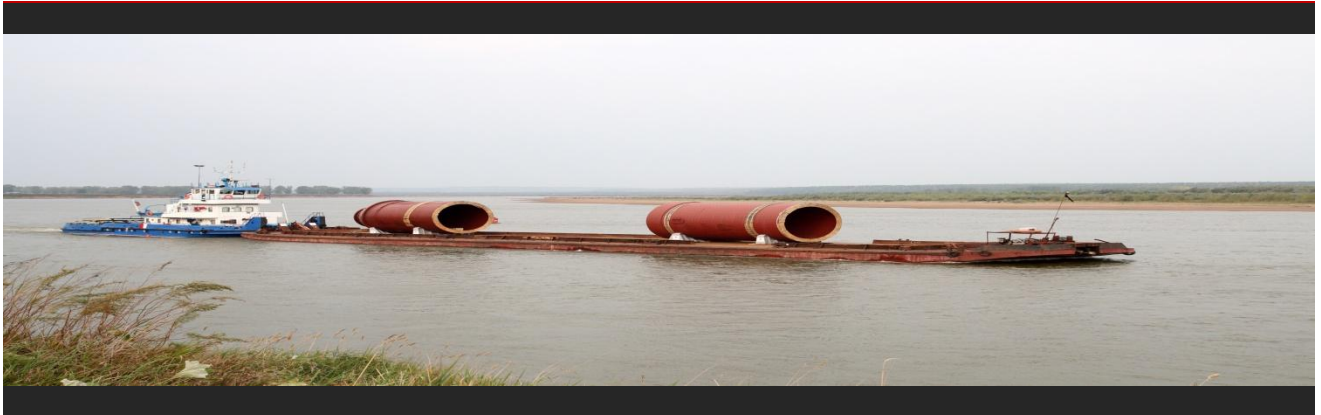
The development of the transport sector status is of high importance to the Russian Federation. The transport sector as a whole and its different segments are facing a growing future demand for transport services. In March 2005 the Transport Development Strategy of the Russian Federation was presented. The Transport Development Strategy, first phase to 2010 and an outlook to 2020, is the basis for a common understanding of the transport sector role and development by various executive and legislative authorities, business community, transport service users, and other segments of the society.

Federal roads, railway infrastructure, inland waterways and transport hubs (such as railway stations, sea and river ports, airports etc) are prioritised areas to avoid bottle necks in the future traffic and goods movement in the Russian Federation. To achieve a unified **baseline transport network** the focus has been set to eliminate the disproportion between the regions. The Russian Federation has in its possession the world biggest network of inland waterways. There is a unique functioning deep water system, consisting of large rivers, their tributaries and inter-basin junction in the European part of Russia. Designing and building new-generation nuclear ice-breakers, and liner and logistic

diesel/electric icebreakers to facilitate sea-based transport operations in the Arctic off-shore zone and along the Northern Shipping Route is emphasized to provide winter navigation.

Increased shipping fore-casted in the Russian Federation

The transport movements are estimated to increase until year 2010. The Ministry of Transport in the Russian Federation in its new strategy expects that the flow of goods through sea and river ports will rise up to 1, 9 times until 2010. The Russian ports are expected to increase their capacity to handle a higher flow of containers and until 2010 the ports should be able to handle up to 26, 5 million tons of goods in containers. The transit trade within the Russian territory is expected to reach 75-84 million tons per year compared to 44, 4 million tons in 2003. The movement of goods in Russian ports is expected to rise to 542, 2 million tons compared to 291, 3 million tons in 2003. The Transport Development Strategy emphasizes the need to handle the increasing volumes: *“Foreign trade remains partly dependent on foreign communication links and carriers, because a large share of the fleet controlled by Russian ship owners is registered with foreign ship registers; the port infrastructure capacity allows handling not more than 75% of foreign trade cargos; and the existing system of trunk pipelines is not fully consistent with the current and potential structure of the export freight traffic”*.



Further, the plans for the export transport infrastructure are in accordance with the Russian Federation's energy strategy to 2020 and their forecasts. This includes the improvements of port infrastructure, road and rail connections to the ports, as well as, the protection of the interests of Russian transport operators in international markets to ensure the maximum flow of transit cargo through Russian territory. In terms of the last priority, to ensure the maximum flow of or transit cargo through Russian territory, the emphasis is on the development of the international transport corridors North-South, Transsiberia, and the Northern Sea route. Inland waterway transport is one of the prioritized areas in the transport development strategy until 2010. New more cost-effective vessels, as well as vessels designed to operate in shallow areas, extend the use of high-tonnage vessels and creating a new generation of comfortable river class tourist vessels will increase the traffic movements on the inland waterways in the Russian Federation the next coming decade.

Increased capacity and infrastructure of the Inland Waterways

Increased length of inland waterways with guaranteed drafts, improved parameters of shipping passages and ensured safety of infrastructure operation are in focus for the inland waterways development areas. The length of inland waterways with guaranteed drafts will be increased by 160 km up to the total of 46200 km. This will enhance competition with transportation of goods by railways, development of multimode transport modes. This will also intensify goods transport to the North West region of the country and to activate exploitation of inland waterways for transit shipping. Examples of ongoing and future projects are the

construction of the low forced hydrostation on Volga river north of Nizhny Novgorod (settlement Bolshoe Kózino), combined with the bridge on the route Moscow – Kirov complex hydrostation, the second line of the lock of Kochetkovsky hydrostation, as well as some other establishments that will ensure the maintenance of Volgas integrity as a navigable (shipping) river and maintenance of the whole deep-water system as well. In order to increase the passage abilities of the inland waterways it is necessary to eliminate the bottlenecks, increase the effectiveness and safety of navigation on the whole united deep-water system of the European part of the country.

Focus set on the regional transport systems

The regional transport system plays one of the key roles in the development of Russia's export/import relations and transit traffic. The transport sector development priorities in the North-West Federal district, (which includes the establishment of the Russian segments of the North-South and the Northern Shipping Route, Eurasian transport corridors, as well as Pan-European transport corridors 1 and 9), have a regional significance. The North-South international transport corridor system would use the inland waterways, including the Volga-Baltic Canal, and river ports for direct water-based freight transportation to from Northern Europe to the Caspian region and to the Black Sea and further to the Danube using river/sea vessels. The priorities also include the modernization and construction of new port facilities at the Baltic, Black, White and Barents Seas and the development of railway, road and pipeline accesses thereto; and the establishment and sustainable operation of transport links between the Kaliningrad Oblast and other Russian regions.