

Progress Report on
the Barents Euro-Arctic Pan-European Transport Area
(BEATA)

Submitted by the Chairman of the BEATA Steering Committee
to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the European Commission

Steering Committee:

Mr. Vyacheslav Parfenov	Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation, Chairman
Mr. Boris Sitkov	Ministry of Railway Transport of the Russian Federation
Mrs. Rita Piirainen	Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland
Mr. Kjell Rosanoff	Ministry of Transport and Communications, Norway
Ms. Tomas Brolin	Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Sweden
Ms. Kristina Weichbrodt	European Commission, Directorate-General for Energy and Transport

The Barents Euro-Arctic Pan-European Transport Area (BEATA) is a multi-modal transport area established in the Pan-European Transport Conference in Helsinki in 1997. The BEATA covers the northern provinces of Finland, Sweden and Norway, as well as the northwest part of the Russian Federation; the Republic of Karelia, the Oblasts of Murmansk and Archangelsk, and the Nenets Autonomous Okrug.

Progress Report

This is the third Progress Report on the Barents Euro-Arctic Transport Area (BEATA) to be submitted to the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the European Commission.

The Ministers of Transport of the BEATA countries and the Transport Commissioner of the EU Commission signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Copenhagen in May 1998. In the MoU the Ministers also established a Steering Committee for BEATA co-operation. Norway was the first chairman of the Steering Committee in 1998. Finland assumed the BEATA chairmanship in March 1999, and Russia in March 2000. The current chairman is Sweden since March 2001.

The Finnish Ministry of Transport has established a permanent secretariat in Helsinki to assist the Steering Committee.

Earlier Accomplishments

The Steering Committee of BEATA has implemented the measures specified in the Action Programme of 1998, more specifically the following:

1. Creating the framework for co-operation in BEATA.
2. Defining the backbone network for transport in the Barents area.
3. Creation of the BEATA database and collection of network data.

The Swedish Chairmanship

Under the Swedish chairmanship in 2001 two Steering Committee meetings was held. The first in Haparanda, Sweden, September 26, 2001 and the second in Umeå, Sweden, February 6, 2002.

Exchange of information has continued between the parties involved in the Barents Euro-Arctic work and the following main milestones have been achieved:

- Further development of the BEATA GIS database. In 2001, the geographic (GIS) database has been brought to the Internet and the data is now freely available to all interested users.
- Identification of joint transport projects in Finland, Norway and Sweden that can be promoted through the BEATA framework has been completed under Swedish leadership. Similar work is underway in North-West Russia.
- Norway has drawn up a report on traffic forecasts in the area using a comparative analysis of existing transport studies. The report provides valuable information and direction for the future work of the Steering Committee.

Other developments

There are a number of other developments contributing to the improvement of east-west transport connections in the area. The main joint effort, which was led by the Communications Group of the Barents Regional Council, has been the preparation of the Barents Transport Project and its application to Interreg IIIB for financing. Unfortunately, the Interreg Management Committee rejected the

application in December due to technical reasons. The Communications Group will apply for Interreg IIIB financing in the next application round in March 2002.

Transport infrastructure improvements impacting more than one country include but are not limited to the following:

1. Testing of the railway gauge changing system at the Finnish – Swedish border (Tornio/Haparanda).
2. The road connection Nickel – Prirechnyi (Russia) has been upgraded by a joint Russian/Norwegian effort.
3. Construction of the Russian border post at Salla (Finland/Russia) has been completed with Tacis assistance. The road to the Salla border is also being upgraded in Russia.
4. Norwegian and Russian authorities have agreed on modernising and moving the Russian border station at Borisoglebsk/Storskog (Norwegian/Russian border). A feasibility study has been prepared.
5. Construction of the new railway Ledmozero – Kotchkoma (Karelia, Russia) has been completed at the end of 2001. Commercial traffic will start in 2002.
6. Co-operation between the northern customs districts of Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden is bringing results. Among others, better information between the customs officials and the clients through a web service on the BEATA site is now available.

Future Work

Due to the new rules of procedure Sweden will continue to hold the BEATA chairmanship also in 2002.

The BEATA steering committee is planned to be given the role as “Advisory Broad” in the planned INTERREG IIB project on transport conditions and needs for improvements in the Barents region.

Tomas Brolin
Chairman of
the BEATA Steering Committee
Stockholm, January 31, 2002

Martti Miettinen
Secretary of
the BEATA Steering Committee
Helsinki, January 31, 2002