

## 2010 IRU Academy Seminar

### OPENING SPEECH JANUSZ LACNY IRU PRESIDENT

Brussels, Belgium  
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Ladies and gentlemen, Dear Members,  
Dear Mrs. President,

I have both the honour and the pleasure to extend, on behalf of the International Road Transport Union, and its educational arm, the IRU Academy, a warm welcome to both the speakers and the audience of this seminar.

I also would like to thank CIECA the International Commission for Driver Testing Authorities for their cooperation in this event in the beautiful and historical rich city of Brussels, heart of the European Union.

First, allow me to say a few words about the IRU Academy. As some of you may know, the IRU Academy was founded in 1999. This initiative was in response to a clear need of the industry represented by the IRU members.

Since its inception and with the introduction of the CPC programme for Transport Operators, the IRU Academy was able to rapidly expand its geographical scope, now having 40 ATIs in 33 countries, spanning 3 continents. Today 4 professional training programmes are made available to its Accredited Training Institutes.

Let's now focus on Driver Competence.

To start with, I would like to highlight the importance of having this seminar. This seminar, which brings together experts from all over the world, representing both the public and private sectors all working towards the same goal of success, is nothing short of exemplary.

Today, as mentioned before, we will find out and analyse the results of a study conducted in the European Union on the implementation of the Driver's Directive. Experts will give you an update on the latest developments regarding Professional Driver Training, with focalised topics ranging from 'financing driver development' to 'key aspects to consider when purchasing and operating a simulator'.

Whilst an important emphasis will be made on the recent implementation of the European Directive, driver competence is a *global* topic. This seminar and open dialogue aims to help improve road safety records, raise professionalism and improve the profession's image while respecting the environment through the adoption of rational driving techniques.

However, to achieve these global objectives we need more than ever to rely on experts and on well established training frameworks to shape, deliver and transfer the necessary competence to the professionals who are out on the road.

Indeed, professional competence is today a prerequisite to ensuring a competitive advantage to those active on local and international markets. However, transport companies seeking effective training solutions often face a regrettable lack of recognition for the efforts done, due to the lack of harmonisation and transparency in training standards.

The IRU Academy which is the only institution able to provide an international recognition of the diplomas and certificates issued by its Accredited Institutes will continue its efforts to drive the harmonisation of training standards, incorporate international best practices and verify – in an independent capacity - that these standards are in compliance with EU directives and regulations and other International instruments.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the road transport industry, we know that there is no greater asset for a business than an employee who can perform work with competence and takes pride in his professionalism. This is the key to attracting and retaining professional drivers.

From yesterday's discussions in the Seminar on "Image and Employment in Road Transport", we clearly understand that shaping an attractive profession relies on many elements. Internationally recognised Training and professional development as it is provided through the IRU Academy and all its Accredited Training Institutes is one essential component to achieve this goal. Not addressing this topic properly will jeopardise the underlying objectives to attract and retain in our great profession the staff, labour forces and drivers we need to continue to drive progress.

I wish all of us a fruitful seminar and I am very much looking forward to the interesting presentations and discussions that will follow.

Finally, I also would like to thank our partner Ingosstrakh, for their support in this event as well as the exhibitors for their active presence.

Thank you very much.