

URBAN FREIGHT FOR LIVABLE CITIES:

-HOW TO DEAL WITH COLLABORATION AND TRADE-OFFS.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SYMPOSIUM /ARNE WITTLÖV

1. Introduction, background.

In a world with ongoing, rapidly increasing urbanization, urban transport has come high on the agenda for policy makers, city planners and other practitioners as well as for parts of the research community. By path dependency, urban transport has to large extent dealt with the transport and mobility of people.

Due to their high populations and extensive commercial activities, urban areas require the delivery and collection of large quantities of goods and provision of services for commercial and domestic use, resulting in considerable freight activity.

However, despite its importance, relatively little attention has been paid to urban freight by policy makers and researchers until relatively recently.

Freight transport has generally been left by policy makers to the private sector which supplies and demands freight transport services.

In Europe, with its historic city centers and dense living areas, the nuisance of freight traffic has been addressed to as problem for quite some time on a local level.

On a national level, governments have mainly had an indirect impact on urban freight transport through actions such as transport infrastructure expenditure, guidance concerning transport and land use policies, promotion of environmentally friendly transport modes and to some extent support of research activities.

In the EU White Paper on Transport published as late as in 2001 little or no reference was made to urban freight transport.

Increasing concern resulted in initiatives and in 2003 the OECD published a report on urban freight transport with the title "Delivering the Goods, 21st Century Challenges to Urban Goods Transport (OECD, 2003)". On the European level corresponding steps were taken through "EU-action 321 Urban Goods Transport" also in 2003.

Since then several initiatives and projects have been initiated around the world.

2. Freight logistics

Freight logistics have been studied and developed by the commercial sector over a very long time. In most commercial activities logistics is nowadays of crucial importance for competitiveness. The relocation of manufacturing, outsourcing, increased demand for deliveries on time, at the right quality and at desired price has forced industry of all kinds to continuously push the efficiency of logistics.. Economies of scale have been successfully exploited, especially the long haul transport component. Business models based upon creative use of advanced logistic management have been developed and performance is measured by instant systematic data collection and processing.

Although freight transport in cities constitutes a very small proportion of the total freight transport length, it invokes a high proportion of the transport cost. According to the Council of Logistics Management this "last mile" in the transport chain accounts for 28 percent of the total transport cost.

Freight transport in cities tends to respond very effectively to the requirements and development of modern urban economies. At the same time, it is also a major contributor to social and environmental impacts, particularly to congestion, local air quality and noise. It is estimated that 10 – 18 percent of all city road traffic and 40 percent of air pollution and noise emissions is directly related to commercial transport in the city environment.

3. Urban freight transport

Until recently policy makers have tended to view urban freight transport as a problem rather than as an essential part of the urban development. As a consequence, policy measures implemented by urban planners have sought to restrict rather than assist goods vehicle operations. Commonly adopted urban freight transport policy measures include:

- Vehicle time regulations
- Vehicle weight and size regulations
- Lorry routes – advisory or mandatory routes for goods vehicles

However, policy makers are now beginning to shift their views about urban freight transport for several reasons:

- Its importance in supporting the urban economy and helping it to grow and be economically competitive,
- The role it plays in ensuring that those living and working in cities obtain the goods and services they require on time, at the right quality, and at the desired price,

But also:

- The negative social and environmental impacts that freight transport places on the urban environment, and the health of those living and working there.

Increasingly policy makers and urban planners are now considering how they can help improve the efficiency of goods vehicle operations in urban areas, and thereby reduce the impacts imposed by those operations. This has resulted in several policy efforts.

Some examples which have had some success are:

- provision of dedicated on-street space for goods vehicle loading and unloading (i.e. loading bays).
- supporting urban consolidation centres
- helping to develop and then trial in night delivery operations
- installing shared lanes for lorries (such as shared bus and lorry lanes examples of which exist in London and Newcastle)
- encouraging the use of information systems and telematic applications
- provision of lorry maps in paper form and online .
- provision of information about prevailing traffic conditions and relevant facilities
- encouraging the use of environmentally-friendly goods vehicles

Other, more recent policy measures being used for urban freight transport, as well as other motorized vehicles, include:

- Road pricing systems and
- Low Emission Zones/Environmental Zones

4. Let me also address the specific problem of Data

For efficient and long term decision making as well as the development of necessary theoretical framework to support decision making, relevant data is of fundamental importance. The vast amount of data collected and models studied over a very long time has been the necessary base of knowledge in the development of mobility and transport of people – and not least in the development of public transport.

Equally, because of the crucial importance of logistics for competitiveness, advanced logistic management have been measured, modelled and developed. Performance is measured by instant systematic data collection and processing. Adjustments can be swiftly implemented

In sharp contrast, quantitative information in urban freight transport is not widely available. Figures are scarce, as are methods of analyzing the interaction between goods and passenger transport in the urban situation.

This creates a major problem in identifying relevant indicators and in the formulation of objectives for policies or actions.

5. Summary

Urban freight activities result in conflicts between economic and social/environmental issues. Addressing such conflicts and trade-offs in urban freight transport requires change and innovation in the public and private sectors.

While there are technological and organisational opportunities to improve the efficiency of urban freight operations, to exploit them fully needs collaboration between companies and also between the public and private sector. Those responsible for urban policies and planning need to work with companies to identify appropriate and transferable solutions. In some cases this will require a major shift in attitude away from seeing freight in cities as just a problem. Companies need to change as well – industry and organisations such as universities need to combine efforts to help policy-makers and the wider public understand urban logistics better.

This Symposium has been organised to consider the challenges and opportunities that currently face urban freight transport, as well as the desired outcomes and targets for those in the public and private sector. The agents of change that are likely to be instrumental in forming, implementing and disseminating new ideas, methods, business models or technology will be of central concern.

In our discussions in IPC several routes have been explored. A frequently asked question in urban transport is “what is generic and what is context specific?”. We find the urban freight transport issue to be highly context specific and multifaceted.

Therefore, it is now necessary for policy makers to address the demand for urban freight transport through a joint effort at the local, regional and national levels of government. Integrated and holistic solutions are needed!

Efforts in the last few years to establish working relationships between the public and private sector to address urban freight issues have proved relatively successful, which is encouraging.

That is how we identified the generic main themes for this Symposium, themes that are of central importance to the future development of urban freight transport.

The main theme is:

Urban Freight for Livable Cities - How to deal with collaboration and trade-offs.

- This afternoon we will have a plenary session, focused on Partnerships and leadership
- Tomorrow we will have two parallel sessions on
 - Sharing the urban space

- Multi-level interaction and trade-offs
- Wednesday morning we will be back in plenary sessions, starting with conclusions from these sessions followed by a Forward looking Panel Discussion and an Open Dialogue, in order to give ample time for you to share thoughts from the Symposium.

I wish you all a very interactive and productive Symposium!

Thank you for your attention!

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Introduction of the first session, Plenary Session on Partnership and Leadership

We will now move on into the first session, a plenary session on Partnership and Leadership in Urban Freight Transport.

Questions to be dealt with in this session are:

- Who are the stakeholders in urban freight?
- Leadership and trusting partnership (voluntary, non-contractual, non-top-down).
- Should urban freight be on the agenda of politics?
- How can cities facilitate the change process, through policy, legislation,, regulation, incentives, land-use planning?
- Transparency and accountability in urban freight partnership processes and urban governance.

We will start with two distinguished speakers, Peter Hendy and Michel Savy followed by a panel discussion lead by Dinesh Mohan.

Let me also inform you that we Friday morning last week were reached by the very sad news of the sudden and tragic death of Peter Sonnabend. Peter had accepted our invitation to participate in this panel, but unfortunately, he will not be with us.

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Peter Hendy:

Michel Savy:

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