



GREEK TUNNELLING SOCIETY (GTS)

Member Nation of the
INTERNATIONAL TUNNELLING AND UNDERGROUND SPACE ASSOCIATION
196 Ippokratous Str., 11472, Athens, Greece.
e-mail: eesy.e.gr@gmail.com / www.eesy.e.gr

To the Kind Attention of

- a. **Mrs Jinxiu (Jenny) Yan**, President of ITA Executive Council
- b. **Mr. Olivier Vion**, Executive Director of ITA Secretariat
- c. **Executive Council Members of ITA**
- d. **ITA Member Nations**

c.c. **Advisory Committee Members of the GTS bid to host WTC2023 in Athens**

Athens, 11th January 2021
Prot. No. : εξ138

Subject: 1st Comments note on the first Draft for the new WTC Rules

Ref: See Appendix A.

Dear All

Please accept our warmest wishes for the new year, during which we do hope that last year's extraordinary situation will not persist and we will be able - very soon – to see the light at the end of the tunnel!

Following an initial review, within the holidays season, of the first draft of the new rules of WTC organization delivered to the MNs on the 18th of December (see Ref.a), GTS understands that a total re-structuring of the WTC's host selection, organization and execution processes is proposed to be adopted.

GTS encourages all efforts of ITA towards the optimization of the “premier” event of our industry, however we strongly believe that the new beginning requires a maturing / transition period and should be based on sound and tested steps. Transition period measures are always provided in serious status changes of procedures and processes as they securely provide for the smooth conveyance from the previous situation to a modified very different one. Therefore, GTS highlights that rush decisions for new By-Laws abrupt provisions should be avoided and suggests to leave more maturing time to EXCO and Member Nations for opinions and options sharing on such a very important topic.

GTS wishes to share with ITA the following concerns based on the initial review of the new rules carried out so far, in order to meet the assigned by ITA deadline of the 11th of January 2021, while our members will continue reviewing the draft version of the “new WTC rules” aiming to supplement, shortly, the present “1st comments note”.

**ITA-AITES
World Tunnel
Congress 2023**

Expanding underground
knowledge & passion to make
a positive impact on the world

www.athenswtc2023.gr



Support Athens Candidacy

Vote

#AthensWTC2023



GREEK
TUNNELLING
SOCIETY



GREEK TUNNELLING SOCIETY (GTS)

Member Nation of the
INTERNATIONAL TUNNELLING AND UNDERGROUND SPACE ASSOCIATION
196 Ippokratous Str., 11472, Athens, Greece.
e-mail: eesy.e.gr@gmail.com / www.eesy.e.gr

The present note is also forwarded to all ITA member Nations in order to accelerate the process of circulation / exchange of information. In parallel, we propose to ITA Secretariat to create a cloud based folder (i.e. dropbox or similar) accessible to all member nations where all relevant files / correspondence will be stored together with the minutes of meetings of the Task Force which has been working on the update of the ITA by-Laws during the last couple of months.

Some fundamental concerns of the GTS following the review of the proposed modifications are mentioned below:

- As the *White Paper* states “*In the last couple of years, interest in hosting WTCs has diminished, particularly the larger MNs with the more mature tunneling programs*”. Hence, it appears contradictory in what way the elimination of motives for a MN to run a WTC will change such a trend, since the total control of the congress, both in financial and organizational terms, will be executed by ITA. This might further discourage the MNs to dare to think about putting together an initiative. Further elaboration of the issue is needed.
- While GTS, as a result of its complete and competitive proposal, could accept any ranking procedure that may be set for the submitted candidacies for WTC2023 (see Athens Candidacy website: <https://athenswtc2023.gr/>), GTS questions the provision of ranking of candidacies by an “*Evaluation Committee*”. The WTC evaluation committee should only conclude on shortlisted candidacies (pass or fail classification) with no ranking. Any ranking could be very well interpreted as discrimination and this might potentially lead to tensions and objections – even in the ITA General Assembly – and grow further discouragement on behalf of MNs for undertaking such an initiative. The host member nation should be selected after secret voting during the G.A. among the shortlisted candidates. GTS suggests avoiding incorporating any procedure within the By – Laws (i.e. ranking processes etc) that may introduce skepticism for the transparency and fairness of the procedures adopted by ITA.
- As per par. 5.7.1 of the proposed modifications of By-Laws indicates “*a written agreement shall be established between ITA and the Host*”. Such a contract should be included as a new appendix in the By-Laws so that MNs are aware of their responsibilities in advance of an application for hosting a WTC.
- All financial arrangements between ITA and host Member Nation should be clearly defined well in advance. Par. 5.12.3 of the proposed modifications of By-Laws requires further elaboration so that a crystal clear meaning is provided (i.e. what is the meaning of a local sponsor within our industry’s globalization?). Furthermore, it would have been fair and compatible to the provisions of current valid By-Laws (see § 5.6.2) that a certain percentage of the total amount of revenues (without taxes) plus a lump sum to be given to the host MN both as compensation for its contribution to the congress organization and as a motive to MNs to apply for future congresses.
- The collaboration of ITA with a PCO which will last for a minimum of three years (as par. 5.5.2 of proposed By-Laws modifications indicates) necessitates, due to the expected amount of the contract, the execution of an international Tender following the preparation of a detailed RfP (Request for Proposal). Such ITA’s tender, the execution of which requires the consent of a G.A and some other intermediate approvals of certain clauses of the new contract with the PCO by the MNs, will last at minimum for 6 months, in the best case.

In conclusion, the modification of the WTC rules requires much further elaboration and should be carefully put together to ensure their effectiveness. The lack of any transitional provisions between current and new rules drastically affects WTC 2023 organization as well as even WTC 2024. Current uncertainty as a result



GREEK TUNNELLING SOCIETY (GTS)

Member Nation of the
INTERNATIONAL TUNNELLING AND UNDERGROUND SPACE ASSOCIATION
196 Ippokratous Str., 11472, Athens, Greece.
e-mail: eesy.e.gr@gmail.com / www.eesy.e.gr

of the main issues stated above may have a very negative effect on the decision of Member Nations to apply for WTC 2024 which has a Candidacy submission deadline for mid April 2021¹!

As far as WTC2023 is concerned, considering that time flies and since a number of new rules cannot in fact be directly applied, GTS suggests to untangle WTC 2023 (and probably even WTC2024) from any still unripe new arrangements and allow the successful candidate to proceed asap to the organization of WTC2023 and the relevant G.A. as per their agreed arrangements, commitments and current valid By-Laws.

We wish you and all the tunneling community good health.

Sincerely yours,



Ioannis Fikiris

Chair of the Organizing Committee bid for WTC2023 / ATHENS/<https://athenswtc2023.gr/>

President of the Greek Tunnelling Society

Support Athens Candidacy
#AthensWTC2023

Appendix A

List of Related Previous Correspondence.

- Ref:**
- The draft version of the new WTC rules delivered by ITA to member Nations on 18-12-2020
 - The ITA response letter dated 14-10-2020 on GTS request (letter with Prot. No. 135 / 6-10-2020)
 - The GTS request to ITA Secretariat to actively participate, together with Turkey, on ITA's working group for new WTC arrangements submitted on 6-10-2020 (Prot. No. 135)
 - ITA virtual General Assembly of 16-9-2020
 - The letter dated 7-9-2020 (Prot. No. 129) submitted to ITA Secretariat by the Greek Tunnelling Society
 - The letter of ITA Secretariat dated 1-9-2020 concerning a request for vote postponement for the 49th G.A. and WTC2023 during the virtual GA on 15-9-2020
 - The invitation letter for the 46th ITA General Assembly and the attached agenda (sent by ITA secretariat to MNs on 28-7-2020)
 - The ITA and IEM Joint Announcement for the execution of a virtual WTC 2020 (dated 13-7-2020)
 - The letter of ITA Secretariat concerning the postponement of WTC2020 (dated 26-2-2020)
 - The review submitted by GTS on 2-2-2020, on the proposal of the Task Force (see Encl_PI_2_Item 4 GA, § 4.1 f) iii) on new WTC guidelines as well as on the working version of modifications to the By Laws and its annex 1 (see also ref g. below)
 - The official submission of GTS Candidacy for the 49th GA and WTC2023 (dated 10-1-2020)
 - The invitation of ITA Secretariat (dated 17-12-2019) for the GA 2020 Kuala Lumpur including a request for a review of a draft version of the "WTC guidelines", as well as of a working version of modifications to the By Laws and its annex 1, concerning WTCs
 - The "WTC Planning Guide – Working Draft" delivered to the MNs during the 45th GA in Naples
 - ITA statutes and By-Laws (2019)

¹ Call for expression of interest by ITA for WTC2024 dated 29-10-2020