

Czech government approved on its meeting on 14th March 2012 with scheme for development of inland navigation in Czech Republic. The main impulse to this development will be the construction of Děčín and Přelouč locks.

The main task of construction of **weir with Vlb navigation lock in Děčín** with hydroelectric power plant and two fish passes is to improve navigability of the worst section of the Elbe waterway in the Czech Republic.

Navigation lock Přelouč has to extend navigability of the Elbe waterway by 24 km to the new multimodal terminal in Pardubice, respectively by 33 km for recreational navigation to Kunětice. The project included more than three kilometers long canal and Va navigation lock.

Because the inland navigation isn't charged by fees (toll) unlike road and rail transport, the government expects a competitive price cuts. T

he result could be cheaper imports and exports from/to Czech Republic with the estimated annual savings of about 175 millions €.

Inland navigation operators are afraid that without realization of the Děčín weir the inland navigation in the Czech Republic will cease. *"It would be against a common sense to throw away potential of 260 km existing waterway infrastructure in our country, which value at current price is about 7 billion €,"* said Jiří Aster, president of Union of Chambers Elbe/Oder.

"Currently in the Czech Republic a devastation of Elbe fleet is happening, and if this sad situation will continue, it will lead to an irreversible step, when will be no economic power that would maintain a fleet of specialized vessels operable on the Elbe waterway. This could lead to the end of the Czech inland navigation transport," says Ministry of Transport in the government material.

Since the state doesn't provide adequate navigability of waterways, inland navigation operators wish to get pay annually 2,2 million € in compensation from the state. **Ministry of Transport cannot provide such amount of money, this year it should be provided at least 0,4 to 0,5**

million €.

The possibility of state financial support for inland navigation operators was approved by the European Commission already in 2005. The amount of financial support for next years will be further discussed by the government.



Czech Ministry of Transport will financially support also preservation of paddle tugboat Beskydy by subsidize its operation to the amount of 0,2 million € annually. According to the navigation conditions on the Elbe Beskydy helps to upstream navigation (i.e., towing cargo and passenger vessels) and extending an economically acceptable navigation on Elbe of about two months per year. Beskydy could also help to solve the traffic restrictions in the context of the planned construction of lock Děčín. At the same time it is also the only vessel in the Czech Republic with sufficient power to deal with major accidents and collisions on waterways.

The government also authorized Minister of Transport to prepare, in collaboration with the Ministers of Environment, Agriculture and Regional Development the complex transportation and environmental analysis of water corridor Danube-Oder-Elbe (feasibility study) by the end of 2013. In the implementation of this study should be taken into account the interests of the Czech Republic to develop appropriate competitive waterways.