

## REFEREE'S REVIEW

<b>Program:</b>	Master in Management (MIM)
<b>Student:</b>	Melnikova Anna
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	Development of logistics business in railway companies: comparative study of JSC Russian Railways and Deutsche Bahn AG

<b>Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis.</b> Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.	5			
<b>Structure and logic of the text flow.</b> Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.		4		
<b>Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives.</b> Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.	5			
<b>Quality of data gathering and description.</b> Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.	5			
<b>Scientific aspect of the thesis.</b> Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.		4		
<b>Practical/applied nature of research.</b> Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.		4		
<b>Quality of thesis layout.</b> Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.		4		

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = the thesis meets all the requirements, 4 = the thesis meets almost all the requirements, 3 = a lot of the requirements are not met in the thesis, 2 = the thesis does not meet the requirements.

### Additional comments:

Master thesis of Anna Melnikova is devoted to the important and actively discussed topic – setting up of logistics business in railway companies. This type of transformation in the pure transport business logistics business can be used at JSC "Russian Railways", taking into account the experience of German, Chinese and Indian Railways.

The transformation of the railway company profile from transportation into logistics (more correctly, transportation-logistics) is a challenging process with many obstacles on the way. The author has set itself the difficult goal to develop proposals to improve the transformation of Railways in the transport and logistics company, by analogy with the Deutsche Bahn AG.

The purpose and objectives of the study clearly defined, consistent with the theme of the dissertation. The structure adequately reflects the logic of the study. The main stages of the study correspond to the main objectives of the study.

The author has demonstrated a good knowledge of theoretical concepts and research methods, where selected ones were clearly justified. The chosen research method – comparative case on the whole study is appropriate for achieving the main goal, as well as data collected through conducted interviews provides a good base for the answering to the research questions and developing solutions. However, it would be better to interview more representatives from Deutsche Bahn AG in order to have more detailed picture from this side. In addition, it is desirable to more detailed assessment of the specificity and the role of Russian railways in the country.

Presented results of the empirical research allowed the author to answer the main research questions, identify key issues to explore best practices and to propose the main directions of improving the logistics business in the Russian Railways. The absence of quantitative models in the study is the lack of work.

The disadvantages of the master's thesis are:

- In Figure 3.4 the companies' names indicated in Russian;
- Sources to the figures indicated in different styles;
- References to the articles taken from Internet sources provided in the not appropriate way.
- The last chapter numbered 3.6 instead of 3.4.

Master thesis of Melnikova Anna meets the requirements of the MIM program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a "*excellent (B)*" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

04.06.2016

Referee:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rybin Petr Kirillovich

Candidate of Technical Sciences, Associate Professor

Head of the Railway Stations and Junctions Department,

Vice-Rector for Students Affairs and Corporate Relations

Alexander I St.Petersburg State Transport University