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**MODIFICATION OF THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 5 SECTION 5.3
SUB-SECTION 5.3.2.2.1**

Transmitted by the Government of Liechtenstein */

Introduction:

With regard to the definition under sub-section 5.3.2.2.1 concerning the orange-coloured plates, Europe-wide, the manufacturers of these plates and the controlling authorities as well as the transport companies have different opinions on these plates. There are endless discussions. Even among local or national controlling authorities, there are different opinions on the matter of interpretation, in particular the wording "not less than" and "not more than" in the first sentence, and the interpretation of "If the size and construction of the vehicle are such that". Liechtenstein is considering a more precise definition of sub-section 5.3.2.2.1 in order to avoid any further difficulties in future.

Proposal:

Existing text of paragraph 5.3.2.2.1:

"The (RID:) orange-coloured plates / (ADR:) reflectorized orange-coloured plates shall be of 40 cm base and not less than 30 cm high; they shall have a black border not more than 15 mm wide.

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(ADR:) If the size and construction of the vehicle are such that the available surface area is insufficient to affix these orange-coloured plates, their dimensions may be reduced to 300 mm for the base, 120 mm for the height and 10 mm for the black border."

New text proposed by Liechtenstein for paragraph 5.3.2.2.1:

"The (RID:) orange-coloured plates / (ADR:) reflectorized orange-coloured plates shall be of 40 cm base and 30 cm high; they shall have a black border of 15 mm.

(ADR:) For vehicles with a maximum permissible mass of not more 3.5 t, the dimensions of the orange-coloured plates may be reduced to 30 cm for the base, 12 cm for the height and 10 mm for the black border."

Justification

Wording "not less than" and "not more than"

From the point of view of Liechtenstein, the wording "not less than 30 cm" is not clear and always leaves room for discussion. For the user, it means that the plate must be at least 30 cm high but could also be higher. Everybody interprets the text to his own liking. The wording "not more than" poses a further problem. In this specific case, the control authorities in the various ADR member States handle and interpret very differently. Unfortunately, in the end it is the undertakings or drivers who suffer or lose out.

One example of many: "One transport unit was forbidden to continue the journey by the control authorities. The reason was that the black border (plastic plate) was of 6 mm instead of the required 15 mm. The controlling officer insisted that the border must be exactly 15 mm, no more and no less. After replacing the plates with new ones with a border of exactly 15 mm, the driver was allowed to continue his journey."

This was not an isolated case but only one of many. In order to clarify the situation on this matter, and in order to avoid any future problems and trouble for manufacturers of orange-coloured plates, undertakings and drivers, Liechtenstein asks for clarification of this matter.

Concerning orange-coloured plates with reduced dimensions of 30 x 12 cm

Liechtenstein also requests that urgent attention be given to this matter. For one thing, motor vehicles with a maximum permissible mass of 3.5 tonnes are categorized as small vehicles. Most of these vehicles have a roundish bonnet and a roundish bumper made of plastic. When fitting the standard plates 40 x 30 cm, various damage often occurs to the vehicle in the car wash. The huge brushes get caught in the bumpers and pull the bumper off the vehicle. Due to the special construction or design of these vehicles, these standard plates cannot be fitted properly. Due to these problems and based on the text in ADR sub-section 5.3.2.2.1, the orange-coloured plates with reduced dimensions of 30 x 12 cm are being fitted. Unfortunately in this case, various controlling authorities in Europe also have their own interpretations. What is clear for one officer is for another clearly a breach of regulations, and fines are therefore imposed. Also, in cases like these, the driver cannot continue his journey, because the vehicle has been fitted with plates with reduced dimensions.

In order to avoid future problems and differences among ADR member States, Liechtenstein remains convinced that the existing text must be urgently revised along the lines indicated above.
