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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
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agenda item 5 (i))

**REVISION OF THE CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTION
ON ROAD TRAFFIC (R.E.1)***

Daytime use of lights

Note by the secretariat

The members of WP.1 will find below a draft text amended following discussion at the forty-seventh session on the daytime use of lights. On the basis of the structure proposed in document TRANS/WP.1/2005/15/Rev.1 this text could be included in chapter 1, section 1.6. Changes to the text of document TRANS/WP.1/2005/17 appear in bold.

* The previous version of this document was circulated under the symbol TRANS/WP.1/2005/17.

R.E.1 Section concerning the daytime use of lights

Chapter 1. General rules concerning behaviour in traffic

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1.6 Daytime use of lights

According to the statistics, not having noticed “the other vehicle” is the cause - or at least the concomitant cause - of 50% of daytime collisions. This rate can even be 80% at junctions.

Numerous psychological studies reveal that switching on lights in the daytime improves perception, particularly peripheral perception (the manoeuvres of other road users within the driver's peripheral field of vision are more readily perceived). It also enables drivers to evaluate speeds and distances better. An analysis of 24 independent studies, made in 9 countries in Europe and North America, shows overall favourable results. The intensity of the effects of the measure varies, however, according to light conditions depending on the country's latitude, with more important effects in countries located in the North than in those located in the South. According to estimates, the number of fatal collisions could be cut by 25% if, theoretically, the rate of use of lights in daytime went from 0 to 100%.

According to these studies, daytime use of lights enables better protection to be provided to all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, who are not perceived any the less clearly, since [...] with a better view of approaching vehicles they can modify their behaviour accordingly. It is, however, acknowledged that daytime use of the passing beam entails an increase in petrol consumption of more or less 0.9%.

As a survey carried out by UNECE in 2002 has shown,¹ the obligation to drive with the passing beam switched on already exists in numerous countries, either on a permanent or a seasonal basis, and sometimes with a restriction in certain places (for example, on motorways), and has generally had positive effects on road safety. Several other countries are envisaging its introduction, more or less in the long term. Of these countries, some have opted for a progressive introduction by initially recommending that drivers of vehicles with four or more wheels should switch on their passing beam on a voluntary basis so that users will become more willing to accept it.

Other countries prefer to wait for the mandatory introduction on vehicles with four or more wheels of daytime lights that switch on automatically when the engine is turned on. The advantage of these lights is that they are less dazzling and consume less fuel than the passing beam. It is already possible to install them under Regulations Nos. 48 and 87 annexed to the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts. It is, however, for the countries to introduce appropriate legislation authorizing the use of these lights nationally or regionally. Countries should also encourage constructors to install them on vehicles.

¹ Available at the following address: http://www.unece.org/trans/roadsafe/quest_reply.html