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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
(Forty-seventh session, 12-15 September 2005)

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION**

Addendum 2

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

Roadside checks

Note by the secretariat

Members of WP.1 will find below the text on roadside checks (based on TRANS/WP.1/2004/14/Rev.1), as amended by the Working Party at its forty-seventh session (see TRANS/WP.1/100, paras.12-16).

The content of this text will be incorporated in Consolidated Resolution R.E.1, which WP.1 is in the process of reworking completely.

Roadside checks

Introduction

Experience shows clearly that regulatory measures are all the more efficient when their implementation is closely monitored, in other words, when a very strong probability exists that offenders will be identified and punished.

Role of checks

A high level of monitoring both enables drivers whose behaviour is dangerous to be identified and punished and has a positive influence on the behaviour of all road users. It also makes it possible to evaluate the extent to which users comply with the regulations for each type of regulation checked.

The role of the checks is both to punish and to prevent. They may also be used to educate, for example, when drivers are shown the offences they have just committed on videos recorded on board police vehicles. This type of check allows offending drivers to be immediately aware of their own behaviour and of the risk they incur as well as the risk to others.

The number and frequency of checks also contributes to measuring their efficiency over time and to compiling useful information for establishing plans for such checks.

It should, however, be noted that very frequently the improved behaviour resulting from monitoring only lasts as long as drivers perceive that there is a high risk of being caught. The frequency of checks is therefore an important deterrent. Since permanent monitoring of every driver anywhere at any moment is unrealistic, however, it would seem essential to improve the impact of checks by combining two types of monitoring - a clearly visible version which is given very wide publicity, and another more discreet version. It is important that road users should have the impression that they may be monitored anywhere and at any time, since this will induce them to be more vigilant and constantly observe the rules.

Roadside checks policy

Bearing in mind the limited resources generally available to the police, it is important to focus the checks on the main causes of deaths and serious injuries on the roads (in particular, non-observance of speed limits, driving under the influence of alcohol, or failure to use restraint devices or protective helmets) without, however, ignoring other causes such as the poor state of vehicles. In order to do so, use should be made, when possible, of automated systems which enable drivers to be monitored continuously, while random checks and large-scale operations should also be put into effect.

The plans drawn up for roadside checks - assessed at regular intervals and adapted if necessary in accordance with the information compiled by making use of the results of previous checks - means that these can be used to best advantage. This requires the plans to be prepared in particular on the basis of indicators of local accident patterns:

- in time, so as to identify the time periods which should be the object of priority efforts;

- in space, so that the roads or areas most likely to be the scene of accidents can be identified and made more specifically the object of checks.

In non-priority areas random checks will be given more importance.

Roadside check operations should be combined with information campaigns to increase the awareness of road users of the importance for safety of complying with the rule that is the object of the check and its validity. Such operations should also make it clear to road users that they may be checked anywhere at any time.

It is also important to recall that checks are all the more efficient and acceptable if they are credible; this means that traffic rules and signs and signals must be consistent with the road environment.

Role of penalties and other additional restrictive measures

The goal of the system of penalties is not only to punish offenders and, where necessary, remove them from traffic, but also to educate road users in correct behaviour on the public highway and in respect for the rules of the road. Penalties should therefore be adapted so as to provide a lesson, for example, by reducing the time between the offence committed and the pronouncement of punishment, by adapting the severity of the punishment to the seriousness of the offence and/or by developing measures as an alternative or in addition to penalties.

Rehabilitation programmes for habitual offenders would also help to make those who break the rules aware of the risks they incur and the risks to others.

Technical appliances to facilitate observance of the rules

Lastly, although they are not strictly roadside checks as carried out by the police, the gendarmerie or other authorities, mention may be made of the technical appliances that, at various levels, help drivers to observe the rules. These may include:

- devices on board the vehicle (for example, a seatbelt indicator light, an anti-start system in the event of a positive blood alcohol level, or an adjustable speed limitation device, etc.);
- devices that are part of the road infrastructure (for example, road markings and/or lighting devices at regular intervals in tunnels to help drivers to keep an adequate safe distance between vehicles ...); or
- devices installed on the roadside, for example, to indicate whether or not the driver keeps to the permitted speed limit.

These and other devices, which could be described as driving aids, merit particular attention on the part of the competent authorities.

In addition, it is important that road signs and signals (vertical or marked on the ground) and other road installations must be strictly in keeping with the technical requirements prescribed by the regulations and maintained in good condition.

Recommendations

With reference to the principles defined above, it is recommended that the following measures should be implemented:

1. Drafting of plans for roadside checks aimed at determining the best strategies and implementing them. Roadside checks should be carried out in sufficient numbers using appropriate means and appliances and should be widely publicized. This is to ensure a preventive role and give all road users the impression that they can be permanently monitored.

2. Among the rules which should be the subject of checks, special attention should be paid to:

- exceeding maximum permitted speeds;
- using restraint devices or protective helmets;
- driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs;
- maintaining insufficient distance between vehicles;
- failing to comply with legislation governing driving and rest times for professional drivers.

2.1 With reference to speed checks:

- Increased use of fixed and portable automatic devices;
- As a priority, carrying out of checks not only at points where the risk of accidents is greatest but also where their consequences are most serious (in the vicinity of schools, in tunnels, near roadworks);
- Prohibition of the installation and use of radar detectors and equipment of the police with devices for locating them.

2.2 With reference to restraint devices or protective helmets:

- Ensuring of permanent monitoring of the failure to use them;
- Systematic organization several times a year over a sufficiently long period (at least several days) of targeted checks possibly in conjunction with other actions.

2.3 With reference to alcohol and drugs:

- Intensification of the number of checks at the most critical places and times, particularly at night and during the weekend;
- Authorization and development of random checks.

- 2.4 Regular checks of the distance between vehicles, particularly on motorways and in tunnels.
 - 2.5 Effective and frequent checks of driving and rest times set out in the relevant international and domestic regulations applicable to professional drivers of vehicles intended for the carriage of passengers and goods, both on the roadside and on company premises, using in particular the data recorded by the monitoring device, or tachograph, with which these vehicles are equipped.
3. Ensuring of greater safety in tunnels by using a variety of methods for roadside or automatic checks of heavy vehicles (for example, X-raying loads, using devices to detect overloading, using devices to detect the overheating of heavy vehicles, particularly of engines or brakes), installed in front of the entrance to long tunnels with a long steep approach, etc.
 4. Use of monitoring appliances approved and periodically checked by the competent services in order to avoid any disputes as to the evidential force of the data or values recorded.
 5. Ensuring of training for all persons authorized to carry out checks.
 6. As regards penalties:
 - Ensuring that the offences observed are systematically and rapidly penalized, in proportion to the seriousness of the offence, so that the punishment applied will be a genuine deterrent;
 - Ensuring that the driver at fault has no opportunity to evade prosecution;
 - Development of international cooperation relating to exchange of information between States on offences committed by drivers who are not resident in the country where the offence was committed so that the driver is effectively penalized.
 7. Introduction or development of road safety awareness courses intended to produce a long-lasting modification of behaviour, particularly in respect of drivers sanctioned for drink-driving, offenders who repeatedly exceed the speed limit or those who have committed other serious offences entailing the cancellation or invalidation of their driving permit. These courses must be adapted to the nature of the offence repeatedly committed by the offenders and be designed in such a way as to make them aware of the collective aspect of risk, and lessen the probability of any repetition of their dangerous behaviour. They may also provide an opportunity to address the issue of aggressive driving, an alarming phenomenon which is tending to spread considerably.
 8. Development and encouragement of technical means of assisting drivers to comply with the highway code.
