

**GRSG – Informal Group  
Accessibility**

**Tuesday 20 September & Wednesday 21 September 2005, London**

**Minutes (Confirmed)**

Attending

Donald Macdonald (DM)(Chair)	DfT (United Kingdom)
Thomas Gold (TG)	Evobus GmbH (Germany)
Harry Jongenelen (HJ)	RDW (Netherlands)
Bohuslav Kovanda (BK)	TUV (Czech Republic)
Asbjørn Hagerupsen (AH)	Public Roads Administration (Norway)
Len Stanway (LS)	Ford (United Kingdom)
Alan Davis (AD)	Irisbus (France)
Jerzy Kownacki (JK)	ITS (Poland)
Bob Cakebread (BC)	SAVE Transport Consultancy (UK)
Jim Hand (JH)	DfT (United Kingdom)

Apologies

Christian Pichon	UTAC (France)
Louise Turner	DfT (United Kingdom)
Giulio Mendogni	Iveco (Italy)
Jan Petzal	SNRA (Sweden)
Colin Copelin	CPT (United Kingdom)
Miquel Armengol (MA)	IDIADA (Spain)
Allan McKenzie (AM)	SMMT (United Kingdom)

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

1.1 The Chairman welcomed the group to the Department for Transport's London Office and invited comments on the proposed agenda<sup>(1)</sup> and on the un-confirmed minutes<sup>(2)</sup>.

1.2 The agenda was agreed and it was noted that there were 3 additional papers from Evobus<sup>(3,4,5)</sup>, 1 from Irisbus<sup>(6)</sup>, 1 from ITS<sup>(7)</sup> and 1 from The SMMT<sup>(8)</sup> to consider during the group's discussions.

1.3 There were several comments provided in respect to the previous minutes in advance of this meeting by the experts from both Irisbus and the SMMT. These have been incorporated into the confirmed minutes along with additional comments received verbally at this meeting.

## **2. Actions from previous minutes**

2.1 The informal group secretary confirmed that following the request of the group members at the last meeting, the document referencing system had been amended to relate documents to the session number at which they had been first tabled. This had been agreed by the GRSG Secretariat which would begin to add the group's documents to the appropriate place on the GRSG website.

2.2 The expert from Irisbus confirmed that he had spoken further with the French Type Approval Authority and that the space for an assistance dog was still an issue. Following a detailed discussion in which the view of the group members varied, it was agreed that the text of the document would remain unchanged, recognising that Contracting Parties would be free to take enforcement action against operators if they chose to.

2.3 Following an action placed upon the secretary at Para 3.25.2 of the previous minutes regarding Para 3.4.1, the matter had been raised with the UK Vehicle & Operator Services Agency. VOSA confirmed that this had caused no difficulties. Whilst there were incidents of gaps in handrails, Certifying Officers worked on the basis of identifying a series of compliant handrails/handholds between the required points and ignoring anything additional to the mandatory requirements.

2.4 The expert from Poland suggested at the last meeting that slip-resistance should be defined and group members were asked to consider this issue for further discussion at this meeting. The expert from Poland submitted a copy of FMVSS 403<sup>(7)</sup> which covers platform lift systems and contains specific requirements for anti-slip surfaces. The group openly discussed the requirements and whilst there was no specific opposition to such a requirement, it was considered outside the scope of this informal group.

2.5 The expert from Evobus advised the group that following the action detailed at Para 3.44 of the previous minutes, he had discussed the 900mm requirement specified in Para 3.9.1.2. of the working document and confirmed that 900mm was considered sufficient.

2.6 The expert from the SMMT submitted a paper<sup>(8)</sup> as actioned at Para 3.44.2 of the previous minutes amending Para 7.6.4.2 of Annex 3. Whilst agreeing the text as presented, the group agreed that the text should be expanded to include emergency exits also. The group also agreed that this was beyond their remit and the expert from the SMMT would be asked to amend the proposal accordingly and submit directly to GRSG for consideration.

**Action : AM (SMMT)**

2.7 The expert from Evobus confirmed that having discussed with colleagues, they were now content for Para 3.11.2.4.2. to be deleted.

2.8 The Chairman confirmed, that following an action accepted at Para 3.46.3 of the previous minutes, the vehicle developed for National Express comprises a wheelchair lift mounted in the front doorway, which raises the wheelchair and wheelchair user to the high floor level, where the wheelchair space is positioned above the wheel arch on the near-side. National Express has confirmed that they intend to operate the lift with the driver adjacent to the equipment, but positioned inside the vehicle.

2.9 Finally, the expert from Irisbus submitted a proposal<sup>(6)</sup> for a ramp test procedure as actioned at Para 4.2 of the previous minutes.

### **3. Development of informal group working document**

3.1. The latest version of the informal group's working document, GRSG-ig-access-05-05 was used as the basis for the following discussions. Agreement had been reached at the previous meeting to those amendments referring to Annex 3 and those contained within Annex 8 up to paragraph 3.11.4 - 'Ramps'. Only some minor amendments had been subsequently proposed to these paragraphs in the Evobus proposal<sup>(3)</sup>. Those amendments previously agreed and those agreed at this meeting have been adopted into a formal proposal to GRSG which has been given the informal group reference GRSG-ig-access-06-08.

#### **Annex 3**

3.2 Para 7.7.7.4.

3.2.1. The proposal submitted by the expert from Evobus<sup>(3)</sup> was agreed with minor amendment.

3.3. Para 7.11.1.5.

3.3.1. The proposal submitted by the expert from Evobus<sup>(3)</sup> was agreed with minor amendment.

## Annex 4

### 3.2 Figure 23

3.2.1. The words "paragraph 3.4.", amended to read "paragraphs 3.2.8. and 3.6.6."

### 3.3 Figure 29

3.3.1. The group agreed that a new figure 9 should be inserted which provided details of the backrest specified in Annex 8, Para 3.8.5. The Figure should contain no handrails or stanchions, only spatial information relating to the backrest.

## Annex 6

3.4 The proposal submitted by the expert from Irisbus, to include guidelines for measuring reactive forces of power-operated ramps<sup>(6)</sup>, was accepted with some minor amendment.

## Annex 8

### 3.5. Para 3.11.4.1.3

3.5.1. The expert from Evobus believed that the proposal was too design restrictive and that there was a potential conflict between the angles specified for the gradient to the ground and that to a 150mm kerb.

3.5.2. The expert from SAVE advised that the conflict suggested was only true if it were assumed that all of the gradient allowance had been used up in obtaining the kerbside requirement - otherwise the requirement was valid.

3.5.3. The Chairman believed that these requirements were necessary as we know that vertical obstructions are the greatest hindrance to wheelchair users accessing vehicles and we needed to be sure that a ramp would reach to the ground when there was no kerb available.

3.5.4. However, the group agreed that much progress had been made but that imposing such a requirement might be beyond the scope of the Informal Group.

3.5.5. A compromise was reached and it was agreed that a proposal be put forward requiring the ramp surface to be at least 800mm wide, with a slope of 12% to a kerb and 36% to the ground, but that there would be no mention of transition sections, thereby allowing short transition sections to exceed those requirements.

### 3.6. Para 3.11.4.1.6.

3.6.1. This paragraph was agreed as contained in the earlier working document, but amended as per the Evobus proposal<sup>(3)</sup> to include the word 'visually'.

### 3.7. Para 3.11.4.1.7.5 (renumbered in proposal as 3.11.4.1.7.)

3.7.1. The paragraph was accepted as detailed in the earlier working document.

3.8 Para 3.11.4.2.1, 3.11.4.3.1. & 3.11.4.3.2.

3.8.1 The term 'extension and retraction' is replaced by 'deployment and stowage' recognising the different methods of operation for sliding and book leaf type ramps.

3.9 Para 3.11.4.3.3.

3.9.1. The paragraph was amended in line with the proposal submitted by the expert from Irisbus<sup>(6)</sup> but with some minor amendment.

Annex 11

3.10 Paras 7.4.3.3.2.1. & 7.4.3.3.2.2.

3.10.1 The earlier proposal submitted by the expert from Irisbus<sup>(9)</sup> was accepted with minor amendment.

**4. Any Other Business**

4.1. The Chairman asked the group whether, in their opinion or experience, the addition of 200-300Kg of accessibility equipment to coaches was causing difficulties in complying with authorised weight regulations.

4.2 The expert from Evobus advised that whilst the additional equipment will add weight, this is off-set to a degree but the loss in seating capacity. The same can be said for the trend to fit more luxurious and heavier seats which is off-set by increased foot space and therefore a drop in seating capacity once again. They have also found vehicles operating in Germany, which have been discovered operating over the approved maximum weight, but have been carrying a lot of needless items and equipment.

4.3 The Chairman asked whether there was a likely problem with rear axle weight or total weight. The experts from Evobus and Ford confirmed that both might create difficulties.

**6. General**

6.1. It was agreed that a further meeting would not be required but that subsequent comments on the group's formal proposal to GRSG would be handled by way of e-mail correspondence.

6.2. There being no other points, the Chairman thanked everyone for their participation in each of the group's six sessions and closed the meeting.

## References:

- (1) Proposed agenda for the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the Informal Group on Accessibility - reference GRSG-ig-access-06-01
- (2) Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> session of the Informal Group on Accessibility - reference GRSG-ig-access-05-04
- (3) Proposal submitted by Evobus to align wording concerning contrasting colours - reference GRSG-ig-access-06-05
- (4) Proposal submitted by Evobus regarding the correct use of pictograms - reference GRSG-ig-access-06-06
- (5) Proposal submitted by Evobus for amendments to TRANS/WP.29/GRSG/2005/8 - reference GRSG-ig-access-06-07
- (6) Proposal submitted by Irisbus for a ramp test method - reference GRSG-ig-access-06-02
- (7) Proposal submitted by Poland for a definition of 'slip resistant' surface - reference GRSG-ig-access-06-03
- (8) Proposal submitted by SMMT to amend Para 7.6.4.2. of Reg107.01 - reference GRSG-ig-access-06-04
- (9) Proposal submitted by Irisbus to amend Annex 3, Annex 8 and Annex 11 of Reg107.01 - reference GRSG-ig-access-04-13