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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

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Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda

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

**Advertising and road safety**

**Note by the secretariat**

Members of WP.1 will find below a draft recommendation on advertising and road safety revised by the secretariat on the basis of the decisions taken by WP.1 at its fifty-second session. It will be the new chapter 15 of consolidation resolution R.E.1.

## R.E.1

*Amendments to document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/20 appear in bold.*

### **Chapter 15 Advertising and road safety**

Advertising can have a strong impact on the public at large. When advertisements are liable to affect drivers' behaviour, special attention should be paid not only to the messages conveyed in them, but also to their location by the roadside. This chapter lists the different means that may be used to ensure that advertisements do not convey messages at variance with road safety and that they do not undermine road safety regulations.

#### **15.1 Recommendations for advertisements**

Some advertisements (in the press, on television, on the Internet, in cinemas, on billboards or on the radio), especially those which for example tout a car's performance or advocate fast or aggressive driving or which encourage racing, speeding or leaving seatbelts unfastened, can lead to behaviour that is unsafe. Other advertisements that are not directly related to driving, such as those for alcoholic beverages, may also have an adverse effect on safety.

The authorities should therefore take measures to ensure that advertising content is in keeping with road safety regulations. Such measures may include:

- (a) Defining ethical rules with the advertising profession;
- (b) Setting up a monitoring system, possibly through the establishment of a specialized body. This body should enjoy a certain degree of independence. Its funding may be provided through members' contributions. As for its powers, such a body may:
  - Be competent to certify, prior to publication or dissemination of an advertisement by an advertising agency or an advertiser, that specific legal and ethical rules have been observed;
  - Intervene with advertisers in the event of non-observance of specific rules to request that they alter the advertisement, halt its dissemination or withdraw it.

#### **15.2 Recommendations for advertising in the road environment**

Because roadside advertisements and billboards are liable to distract drivers or limit the visibility of road markings, the authorities should take measures to ensure that such advertising and billboards do not reduce the visibility or effectiveness of regulation signs, do not dazzle road users and do not attract their attention in conditions jeopardizing road safety. Article 4 (d) (ii) of the Convention on Road Traffic of 1968 obliges the contracting parties to take measures in this regard, but it gives no indications about what measures to take. The present recommendations are therefore aimed at setting out rules that may be adopted by the authorities.

### 15.2.1 General recommendations

To provide for some level of oversight, the posting of advertisements **in the road environment** should be subject to an administrative authorization issued by the competent authorities [...]. The authorities should set out the [...] formalities required to obtain [...] such authorizations. Standards should also be established for design, erection and maintenance of advertisements, including for their supporting structures.

In addition, the regulations may:

- Prescribe special standards for the architectural look and design of advertisements in specified places;
- Establish the form and the content of the authorization, and of a possible authorization plate to be posted on the supporting structure.

### 15.2.2 Specific recommendations

#### 15.2.2.1 Content of advertisements

In the interest of road safety [...], it is recommended to prohibit advertising **in any form**:

- (a) Containing directions for a locality that include either an arrow or an indication of distance;
- (b) Containing a reproduction of a regulation road sign or **symbol** or an advance warning symbol;
- (c) Using shapes, colours, words, symbols or dimensions that are liable to be confused with road signs.

#### 15.2.2.2 Illuminated advertisements

The authorities should regulate the conditions and standards applicable to illuminated or reflective advertisements visible **in the road environment**, as they may dazzle road users or distract them, thus presenting a hazard. In particular, maximum levels of brightness should be established. Such levels may vary depending on the illuminated surface of the advertisement and its location (areas with intense lighting, well-lit commercial roads, other roads with lighting, roads without lighting).

Furthermore, illuminated advertisements with high-intensity light beams directed at road users, in particular with fixed or mobile spotlights whose beams are permanently or temporarily aimed in a direction more or less parallel to the road, should be prohibited.

### 15.2.2.3 Siting of advertisements

The location of advertisements should be regulated on the basis of the following principles:

#### (A) General rules

Advertisements should be prohibited on **roads, including above the carriageway**. Dispensations **may**, however, be made:

- In built-up areas, for advertising signs; **subject to the provisions given in (B) (i) and (iii) hereafter**;
- In parking and service areas of roads [...].

#### (B) Rules depending on the nature of the infrastructure

##### (i) *Motorways and similar roads*

- Outside **urban** areas, advertisements and advertising signs should, **preferably**, be prohibited on either side of motorways **or similar roads as set out in article 25, paragraph 4, of the Convention on Road Traffic of 1968 if they are visible to drivers, or failing this, be prohibited for a width of at least 200 meters (or a width defined by national legislation) measured from the outside edge of each roadway.**
- In **urban areas**, **this minimum width should be defined by national legislation and should be as large as possible taking into account the rules defined in the preceding indent.**

##### (ii) *Other roads*

Outside urban **areas**, advertisements and advertising signs [...] should be prohibited on either side **of the road** in a band with a minimum width **that should be defined by the national legislation** and measured from the outside edge of the roadway.

[...]

##### (iii) *Pavements (in and outside built-up areas)*

**The competent authorities should ensure that advertising installations on pavements (sidewalks) do not reduce the visibility of pedestrians who are approaching a pedestrian crossing and that they do not obstruct either the flow of pedestrians or persons in wheelchairs.**

**15.2.2.4** Dimensions of billboards and distance between them

The authorities should also regulate the maximum dimensions of advertisements in accordance with their distance from the roadside [...].

**15.2.2.5** Monitoring and penalties

**In order to ensure observance of the rules for advertising in the road environment as they are established in the national legislation, the authorities should monitor implementation, and a failure to observe these rules should give rise to penalties. The latter, which should be adapted according to the seriousness of the offence, may be a simple warning calling for corrective action, a fine and/or administrative penalties, including the withdrawal of an authorization that has been issued.**

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