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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations

Working Party on Passive Safety

Forty-fourth session
Geneva, 10-12 December 2008
Item 19(b) of the provisional agenda

BUSES AND COACHES

Restraining of children travelling in buses and coaches

Proposal for a new Regulation for the installation of child restraint systems on vehicle categories
M₂ and M₃

Submitted by the expert from Spain */

The text reproduced below was prepared by the expert from Spain in order to propose the development of a draft Regulation for the installation of child restraint systems on vehicle categories M₂ and M₃. It is based on a document without a symbol (informal document No. GRSP-43-08), distributed during the forty-third session of the Working Party on Passive Safety (GRSP) (see report ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRSP/43, para. 45).

*/ In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2006-2010 (ECE/TRANS/166/Add.1, programme activity 02.4), the World Forum will develop, harmonize and update Regulations in order to enhance performance of vehicles with respect to passive safety. The present document is submitted in conformity with that mandate.

A. PROPOSAL

The expert from Spain deems that the development of a Regulation aimed at guarantying the appropriate restraint of minors in vehicles of categories M₂ and M₃ is needed. For this reason, the expert from Spain proposes to GRSP to study the possibility of creating a new informal group to develop a draft Regulation for the installation of child restraint systems on vehicle categories M₂ and M₃.

B. JUSTIFICATION

The installation and use of seat belts in vehicles of categories M₂ and M₃ is mandatory in Europe (Directive 2003/20/EC).

Minors shall use safety belts provided that these are properly fitted to their age and weight. However, adult safety belts are not appropriate to restrain minors with a lower height than 135 cm and a lower weight than 36 Kg. Accordingly, the use of safety belts is not required.

For the time being, the only means to type approve child restraint systems is through Regulation No. 44, that is mainly aimed at type approving child restraints systems for vehicle category M₁.

Moreover, on December 2007, GRSP created an informal working group for the revision of Regulation No. 44 on child restraint systems. During the first meeting of the informal group concluded that the revised Regulation would only include vehicles of category M₁. Accordingly, child restraint systems designed for the installation vehicles categories M₂ and M₃ will loose their sole chance to be type approved.

In essence, child restraint systems that are installed today on M₂ and M₃ vehicles could not be type approved in the medium term, according to the new Regulation No. 44. Moreover, these systems that are currently homologated for these categories of vehicles must fulfil some requirements that neither suit the special configuration of this type of vehicles (2 seat belt anchorage points, limited distance between two consecutive seats, etc) nor the characteristics of accidents in which these vehicles are involved (frontal collision, rear impact in the seat, seat belt integrated, etc...).
