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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

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Comments about agenda items 4, 6 and 7 (a)

Submitted by Spain

4. National road traffic casualty reduction targets to be achieved by 2020

Spanish Road Safety Policy Guidelines 2011-2020

In Spain the Council of Ministers has approved the Road Safety Policy Guidelines 2011-2020, in accordance with the goals and actions in the Road Safety Strategy for the same period, with the aim of setting priorities, objectives, follow-up indicators, and courses of action. In 2015, however, goals and measures will be reviewed and updated for the years 2016-2020. The ultimate goal is to contribute to the EC recommendation to reduce by half the total number of casualties on EU roads by 2020.

The Road Safety Strategic Plan 2005-2008, identifying the relevant action to be taken by each Ministry in order to reduce the number of traffic deaths by 40% by 2008, gave a new boost to road safety policies and led to 50% fewer deaths in road accidents in six years.

Strategy

Betting on policy continuity, in its plenary session on November 23, 2010, the Road Safety Council approved the Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 submitted by the First Vice-President of the Government. This Strategy comprises all the actions that will be taken to keep improving our road safety policies with the aim of lowering the number of fatally or seriously injured road users in compliance with EC criteria.

The following indicators are to be taken into account for the accomplishment of this goal: 37 casualties/1,000,000 inhabitants rate (the current rate is 59/1,000,000), 0 children dead in crashes without child restraint systems; 30% fewer victims run over by vehicles going off the road in motorways or in work-related road accidents; 25% fewer drivers aged 18 to 24 killed or seriously injured in weekend crashes; 20% fewer killed or seriously injured motorcycle riders; 10% fewer victims aged 64+; 1% fewer drivers with positive blood alcohol concentration in random checkpoints; 50% fewer light vehicles running at more than 20 km/h; and 1,000,000 more cyclists in frequent trips with no increased mortality rate.

All indicators will be reviewed in 2015, alongside the measures to be taken.

Basic guidelines

These are the courses of action in line with the Road Safety Policy Guidelines 2011-2020:

1. Road user training and education;
2. Communication to raise awareness;
3. Regulations and enforcement;
4. Health and road safety: identification of risk factors like alcohol or drugs;
5. Vehicle safety: new active and passive security systems;
6. Infrastructure for well-designed and maintained roads;

7. City areas;
8. Professional transport and companies;
9. Assistance to victims: protection of and support to victims and their families;
10. Research and accurate knowledge management in causes of accidents and effectiveness of measures taken;
11. Participation and coordination of all Government agencies with relevant competencies, consolidating effective and active coordination mechanisms based on the commitment of all the actors involved –a major challenge in the new Strategy.

The Ministries involved –Interior (Directorate-General for Traffic, Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Emergencies); Health, Social Policy, and Equality; Education; Justice; Labour and Immigration; Environment, Agriculture, and Fisheries; Development; Industry, Trade, and Tourism; Presidency– shall take the necessary measures for the development and implementation of the Strategy, adjusting its funding to credit availability in the General State Budget.

Special Road Safety Measures

The Council of Ministers has approved an Agreement comprising a series of priority road safety measures for 2011. The Agreement is expected to strengthen the road safety policies implemented in the past few years, which led to a steady fall in the number of crashes and crash victims from 2004 to 2010 and helped us attain the European target to reduce the number of people killed by 50% in the last decade.

Thus, the Agreement approved by the Council of Ministers today, which is in line with the road safety policies' multidisciplinary and cross-sectional approach, adds up to the Road Safety Policy Guidelines 2011-2020.

The Agreement envisages a series of special road safety measures to be taken throughout the year by the Directorate-General for Traffic and the Ministries of Industry, Trade, and Tourism; Economy and the Treasury; Justice; Development; Environment, Agriculture, and Fisheries; Labour and Immigration; and Health, Social Policy, and Equality.

Targets

Eight different targets are to be met by means of the following action:

Improving driver training and education: Studying driving regulations with someone of proven experience in the field as an alternative to the practical lessons required before sitting for the practical exam to be granted a driving licence; writing, promoting, and disseminating the “Guide for Safe Journey to School,” based on studies for safer journeys.

Paying more attention to speeding as a risk factor: Carrying out speed surveillance and control campaigns that stress the role of speeding as a risk factor; setting up 100 new checkpoints on Spanish roads; carrying out information campaigns on the proper use and advantages of speed limiters in vehicles.

Improving the knowledge of the vehicle population and safety of vehicles: Expanding on the data in the Vehicle Register to have more and more reliable information through the substitution of digital Vehicle Technical Inspection certificates for traditional ones in print; developing a vehicle safety barometer; making vehicle records available and encouraging the use of reflective tape strips in heavy goods vehicles.

Improving road infrastructure safety: Implementing Directive 2008/96/EC of 19 November 2008, introducing a comprehensive system of road infrastructure safety management, into Spanish law; developing the instructions for horizontal safety distance signs and implementing them selectively; encouraging the development of technical criteria to avoid or reduce the risk of frontal crash in motorways and their implementation in pilot sections.

Improving safety in city journeys: Disseminating the Green Paper on urban mobility and the EU Action Plan on urban mobility; reforming the General Traffic Regulations to guide bike trips in cities; publishing a Guide for the establishment of speed limit zones appropriate to urban areas; publishing a Guide of best practices for safe motorcycle trips in cities; fostering initiatives to improve road safety in cities (Cities and Road Safety).

Bringing the road safety culture to companies: Including road accident prevention in occupational risk prevention training programmes for workers and company managers; encouraging the development of road safety plans in companies and implementing good road safety practices in Spanish companies for improved road safety in work-related trips.

Improving assistance to road accident victims: Considering a new compensation scale for road accident victims; encouraging the sharing of best medical assistance practices in road accidents.

Improving information on road accidents: Regulating road accident records and data transfer procedures.



6. Variable Message Signs

The Work of the VMS Unit concerning the WP.1 mandate is advancing.

We should note the extraordinary importance of the mandate in order to understand what is going on, though. The group has devoted some meetings to increase agreement and share a perspective in terms of the scope of the task. A meeting was held in Barcelona (December 1, 2010) and another one in Bonn (February 1, 2011) in order to picture out the general scope of the task, the available resources and the potential sources of cooperation (e.g., with Easyway's ESG4-Mare Nostrum, currently integrating 14 UE countries). Some internal consensus has been reached and now all the members are ready for the more technical work. The next meeting is being held next 5th April in Paris.

7a) Multidisciplinary crash investigation

The WP2 of the DaCoTA (Road Safety Data Collection, Transfer, and Analysis) in the EU framework project will be used to standardise in-depth accident investigation protocols, and identify and train in-depth investigation teams at the European level to conduct investigations following the standardised protocols.

So far we have contacted Government agencies in charge of designing road safety policies and manufacturer or user associations to identify the main sources of information in the development of such policies, as well as the existing gaps, priorities, and information needs. We have also identified the main obstacles to the creation and maintenance of an in-depth crash investigation database. Among the obstacles we should consider, above all, the funding of investigation activities, as well as the development of an investigation network, the judicial obstacles, the access to medical information, the protection of personal data, and the access to accident scenes.

As many as 23 countries are interested in carrying out in-depth investigation and being part of a European network collecting and sharing information in a European in-depth crash investigation database. These countries are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Island, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom.

By the end of 2011, training courses will be offered to the investigation teams of those countries interested in being part of the network. Course contents and methods (e.g. traditional vs. online) are now being discussed. No course fees will be charged but, in the case of traditional classes, the travel expenses shall be paid by attendees.

As to the in-depth investigation database, its structure will be similar to that of the database being developed in Sweden, with the necessary adjustments following the WP2-based decision on variables and data collection protocols. Depending on the progress made with scheduled activities, the decision will be made by the end of October 2011, which means it will be possible to carry out the first in-depth crash investigation activities in January 2012.