



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

TRANS/WP.1/2002/17  
17 January 2002

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety  
(Thirty-eighth session, 19-22 March 2002,  
agenda item 4 (g))

**AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1968 CONVENTIONS  
ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS AND THE  
1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM**

**Proposal by the International Road Federation (IRF)  
for the harmonization of vertical road signs**

For the past 30 years, the development of conditions of mobility has very considerably modified and complicated demand for information on the part of road vehicle users. The diversification of road networks and how they are operated means providing users with a more effective system. In addition, increased frequency of travel over greater distances requires the system of signs and signals to be made more coherent and efficient.

The use of increasingly convenient infrastructures naturally leads users to be more demanding when it comes to their quality. This also applies to road signs and signals in respect of which there is growing demand for comprehensibility.

The main objective of the rules governing the deployment of road signs and signals is to establish a coherent system which will provide users with an efficient service. They aim at reconciling basic principles of quality and readability of information with the essential criteria of homogeneity and continuity.

At the European level, the definition of a homogeneous road-signing system means that a general consultation of all the parties concerned is required; since the beginnings of road transport, this has taken the form of the elaboration of international agreements and conventions. The basic objective is to make this system as homogeneous as possible so as to facilitate user comprehension in international traffic and thus improve road traffic safety.

IRF's presentation at the thirty-seventh session of WP.1 of the studies it has undertaken to reinforce the harmonization of vertical road signs aroused lively interest among the delegations present, all of whom expressed a desire to receive the two CD-ROMs containing the work. One contains a comparative base of road signs based on Annex 1 of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals and the 1971 European Agreement supplementing it. The other describes a simple electronic tool recommended by IRF to be used by the authorities to introduce a direction indication system common to all road networks on which there is international traffic. In Europe these are the "E" (AGR), TEM and TERN roads.

Since no adverse comments have been received in this regard, IRF proposes to continue its efforts with a view to further developing the regulations in accordance with current user needs.

In this context, IRF would like to have the support of WP.1 in order to expand the existing studies, with the dual aim of:

**highlighting new needs for harmonization so as to enhance existing agreements and conventions, particularly as regards road signs and signals;**

**establishing the general principles which will enable the authorities to research and deploy a common system of direction indications on all international trunk roads.**

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