

**Scope and stringency of global technical regulations (GTRs)  
under the 1998 Global Agreement**

**Prepared by GRE Chairman**

GRE recognizes the fact that the format of GTRs and the GTR development procedure are still being considered by WP.29. They are paramount for further work of Working Parties in the area of Global Agreement. Nevertheless, GRE believes that early decision regarding the scope of the technical provisions of GTRs should help all Working Parties to develop meaningful and timely global regulations.

Several Working Parties under the ECE-WP.29 have already started to work on GTRs pertaining to their area of responsibilities. GRE - Working Party on lighting and light signalling devices - is in the process of developing of its first GTR regarding installation prescriptions for road vehicle lighting and light-signalling devices. This regulation was chosen since the installation of lighting devices was identified by GRE as a principal element to all vehicle lighting regulations. As this GTR would influence all others to come, great attention was paid to the identification of harmonization problems and possible solutions.

During the discussions, it was made clear that a consensus on the technical content of several provisions would be reached only if all parties had the same understanding of the 1998 Global Agreement. Consequently, the GRE Chair decided to adopt the following approach towards the technical content of GTRs.

1. Currently achievable, *initial* GTR

1.1. At present time, we are faced with very diverse vehicle industry. Political and social climates, local economies, laws, ethnicity and geographic locations largely influence the pace and direction of industry development. Perceived sovereignty issues, which are so close to the heart of some nations, have to be also considered.

1.2. It appears that this diversity was taken into account during the establishment of the 1998 Agreement. In fact, the process set out in the Agreement allows for a gradual development of *ideal* global regulations (see para. 2.). As GRE understands it, the incremental-stringency process will minimize the adverse economic effect of a GTR on countries that allow the manufacturing and importation of vehicles built to a different or lesser degree of safety, like those found in some emerging countries.

1.3. Nevertheless, at the onset of GTR development, all effort should be made to reach a broad consensus among Contracting Parties to ensure that GTRs reflect the highest practicable level of safety. GTRs should include the highest achievable safety requirements and the most adequate test procedures expressed in or intended for the current national and sub-national Regulations of Contracting Parties.

1.4. Failing to reach a consensus on the best achievable safety level or a common provision, Contracting Parties wishing to preserve their present, national safety standards must have the opportunity to do so. Such option is given in the 98 Agreement. Stringency levels may be created to reflect present or intended national requirements. Similarly, in the areas where safety stringency levels are not tangible, GTR should be able to contain options reflecting current requirements of individual Contracting Parties. However, Working Parties should make an effort to keep the number of options and levels as low as practicable, since, in each case the goal would be to reach a single provision reflecting the safest level achievable.

1.5. As GRE envisage it; the different options described in 1.4 would be contained in an annex to the GTR (annex of options). Each option would contain alternative requirement, stringency level, test procedure or provision. The process would have to be established to identify which option is applied by each of the Contracting Parties. Perhaps a "status document" similar to 1958 Agreement's document TRANS/WP.29/343/rev.x would have to be created.

1.6. Contracting Parties wishing to further develop their own national Regulations in a way that would contradict or add upon an established GTR should, according to 1998 Agreement, inform the Secretary General of their intention. An amendment of the GTR would be then considered so that the new level of stringency, test procedure or provision is added to the GTR's annex of options.

1.7. The *initial* GTR and its annex of options would reflect the requirements equal or encompassing the requirements currently in force in the jurisdictions of each Contracting Party. Therefore, at the onset of application of the GTR, most Contracting Parties would be able to maintain their existing, parallel Regulation.

1.8. Each Contracting Party would be able to accept in its jurisdiction a vehicle or vehicle component built in conformance with GTR requirements, since GTR's requirements would be better or equivalent to this Country's own regulatory provisions. Also, a vehicle manufacturer would have the choice to comply with the options adopted by a Contracting Party or with the requirements of a higher safety level expressed in the GTR. This alternative could be worthy of note to Contracting Parties who wish to increase the stringency of their national Regulations in the future, but prefer to maintain their requirements for the time being in order to keep the existing consumer choice, product affordability, and also to minimize financial burden on its motor vehicle industry.

## 2. The ideal GTR

2.1. The ultimate goal of the Working Party should be the creation of a technical document containing performance requirements that would result in the highest practicable level of safety, would reflect the best achievable engineering practices for the design of vehicles, and would employ the best practicable methods of testing to verify conformity to those requirements.

2.2. A vehicle conforming to the prescriptions of an *ideal* GTR would have the advantage that it would be "tested once and accepted everywhere". This would allow vehicle and vehicle component manufacturers to access all markets of the Contracting Parties to the 1998 Agreement. Furthermore, this would reduce the vehicle and vehicle component makers' design and testing effort and their manufacturing cost as the vehicle and the vehicle component performance would have to conform to one set of provisions instead of myriad of regional requirements that are stipulated by current national and sub-national Regulations.

2.3. After the establishment of an *ideal* GTR, any changes to its provisions, desired by a Contracting Party, should be reviewed by AC.3 and an appropriate Working Party. If agreed, an amendment could be made to the GTR. Keeping in mind that global harmonization should be maintained, Contracting Parties should refrain from creating trade barriers by developing their own national Regulations that would contain provisions contradicting or adding upon an established GTRs.

2.4. GRE realizes that the described above *ideal* GTR is a rather long-term objective for the Working Parties.

---