



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/20  
22 August 2006

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

---

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

Fiftieth session  
Geneva, 7-10 November 2006  
Item 4 (p) 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 prepared by the small group on restructuring made up of France and the secretariat. This text was drawn up in line with the structure of document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2005/15/Rev.3. It will be the new chapter 15 of consolidation resolution R.E.1.

## R.E.1

### 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 roadside advertising

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 particular by the roadside, should be subject to an administrative authorization issued by the competent authorities (except in specific cases, such as for the sale or lease of a building or a portion thereof). The authorities should set out the conditions and formalities required to obtain and renew 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, on open roads used by public traffic and on their roadsides, it is recommended to prohibit advertising, signs, advertising signs and advance signs:

- (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 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 from public roadways, 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 public roads. Dispensations may, however, be made:

- In built-up areas, for advertising signs;
- In parking and service areas of roads and motorways.

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

##### (i) Motorways and other 2+2-lane roads

- Outside built-up areas, advertisements and advertising signs should be prohibited in a band with a minimum width of 200 metres measured from the outside edge of each roadway on either side of motorways or other 2+2-lane roads;
- In built-up areas, the minimum width should be 40 metres. The enforcement authorities may, however, permit advertisements and advertising signs within the limits and under the conditions that they establish;
- The above provisions should not prevent signs from being put up to indicate, in conditions determined by road sign regulations, the presence of establishments providing services to users.

##### (ii) Other roads

Outside built-up areas, advertisements and advertising signs visible from roads other than motorways and 2+2-lane roads should be prohibited in a band with a minimum width of 20 metres measured from the outside edge of the roadway on either side of such roads.

Dispensations may be made in accordance with the nature of the road, provided they do not hamper users' views of signs or pose a danger to traffic.

The distances set out in (i) and (ii) above may be increased in areas with higher risks, such as school zones or pedestrian crossings, or on curves where reduced speeds are posted, or at intersections.

**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 and, when necessary, establish rules for spacing between billboards.

**15.2.2.5 Monitoring and penalties**

In order to ensure observance of the measures taken, they should be the subject of monitoring by the competent authorities, and should be enforced through the use of penalties. The latter may be progressive, ranging from a simple warning calling for corrective action to financial penalties (that can vary with the extent of the violation), including removal of the advertisement and the withdrawal of a previously issued administrative authorization.

-----