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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
(Thirty-sixth session, 3- 6 April 2001,
agenda item 3 (d))

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

**Proposed Amendment to Article 37 and Annexes 2 and 3 of
the Convention on Road Traffic with respect to the "Distinguishing Sign"**

Transmitted by the International Touring Alliance
and the International Automobile Federation (AIT/FIA)

Introduction

At its thirty-fifth session, the Working Party considered a proposal by the International Touring Alliance and the International Automobile Federation (AIT/FIA) to amend the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic by allowing the vehicle registration plate to incorporate the distinguishing sign.

The Working Party agreed with the proposal in principle but found that it should be less detailed and more flexible with regard to dimensions. It also proposed that the use of contrasting colours be considered as a means of making the incorporated distinguishing sign more visible.

The Working Party requested the AIT/FIA to submit a new simplified proposal to its thirty-sixth session. The new proposal appears below:

Proposal

Modify Article 37.1 and 37.2 as follows:

1. Every motor vehicle in international traffic shall display at the rear, in addition to its registration number, a distinguishing sign of the State in which it is registered. The distinguishing sign may be incorporated into the registration plate(s).
2. Every trailer coupled to a motor vehicle and required under article 36 of this Convention to display a registration number at the rear shall also display at the rear, either separately from its registration plate or incorporated into it, the distinguishing sign of the State where the registration number was assigned. The provisions of this paragraph shall be applicable even if the trailer is registered in a State other than the State of registration of the motor vehicle to which it is coupled; if the trailer is not registered, it shall display at the rear the distinguishing sign of the State of registration of the drawing vehicle except when it is travelling in that State.

Modify Annex 2 Heading and paragraphs, 2(1), and 2(4) as follows:

Annex 2

REGISTRATION NUMBER AND DISTINGUISHING SIGN OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

1. The registration number referred to in Articles 35 and 36 of this Convention shall be composed either of numerals or of numerals and letters. The numerals shall be Arabic numerals and the letters shall be in capital Latin characters. Other numerals or characters may, however, be used, but if so the registration number shall be repeated in Arabic numerals and in Latin characters. The distinguishing sign of the State in which the vehicle is registered may be incorporated into the registration plate.
4. Subject to the provisions of Article 32, paragraph 5, the background surface on which the registration number and the distinguishing sign of the State in which the vehicle is registered are displayed may be of a retro-reflective material.

Modify Annex 3 as follows:

1. The distinguishing sign referred to in Article 37 of this Convention shall consist of one to three letters in capital Latin characters. It can be displayed at the rear separately from the registration plate, or incorporated into it.
2. When the distinguishing sign is displayed separately from the registration plate, then:
 - 2.1. The letters shall have a height of at least 0.08m and their strokes a width of at least 0.01m. The letters shall be painted in black on a white background having the shape of an

ellipse with the mayor axis horizontal. The white background may be of a retro-reflective material.

2.2. When the distinguishing sign consists of only one letter, the mayor axis of the ellipse may be vertical.

2.3. The distinguishing sign shall not be affixed in such a way that it could be confused with the registration number or impair its legibility.

2.4. On motorcycles and their trailers, the dimensions of the axes of the ellipse shall be at least 0.175m and 0.115m. On other motor vehicles and their trailers, the dimensions of the axes of the ellipse shall be at least:

(a) 0.24m and 0.145m if the distinguishing sign comprises three letters.

(b) 0.175m and 0.115m if the distinguishing sign comprises less than three letters.

2.5. The provisions of Annex 2, paragraph 3, shall apply only when the distinguishing sign is displayed separately from the registration plate.

3. When the distinguishing sign is incorporated into the registration plate(s), then:

3.1. The letters shall have a height of at least 0.02m, taking as a reference a registration plate of 0.110m high.

3.2. The distinguishing sign may be supplemented by a national flag or emblem, or by the symbol of the regional economic integration organization which the country belongs to.

3.3. The distinguishing sign, the supplementary national flag or emblem and the symbol of the regional economic integration organization which the country belongs to shall be positioned, within the registration plate, and designed in such a way that they cannot be confused with the registration number or impair its legibility.

3.4. The distinguishing sign, the supplementary national flag or emblem and the symbol of the regional economic integration organization which the country belongs to shall be made of the same type of background material as the registration plate they are incorporated into.

3.5. For motorcycles and their trailers or for registration plates taking up two lines, the height of the letters of the distinguishing sign may be appropriately modified.

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