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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS FORTY-FOURTH SESSION**

(6-8 April 2004)

ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) held its forty-fourth session in Geneva from 6 to 8 April 2004, chaired by Mr. Bernard Périsset (Switzerland). Representatives of the following member States participated: Austria; Belgium; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Italy; Latvia; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; United States of America.

The following non-governmental organizations were also represented: European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR); European Natural Gas Vehicle Association (ENGVA); Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations (FEMA); Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP); International Road Transport Union (IRU); International Federation of Motorcyclists (FIM); International Federation of Pedestrians (FIP); International Road Safety Organization (PRI); International Touring Alliance/International Automobile Association (AIT/FIA); International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA); FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society.

2. At the opening of the session, WP.1 was invited by its Chairman, Mr. Périsset (Switzerland), to observe one minute's silence as a tribute to Mr. Haegi of FEVR, who had died several weeks previously. Mr. Périsset recalled the active role played by Mr. Haegi in the work of WP.1 and his constant concern to advance road safety through his efficient and determined involvement in ensuring progress in certain dossiers, particularly that of assistance to victims.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (*agenda item 1*)

Document: TRANS/WP.1/93

3. The Working Party adopted its agenda without amendments.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE WORKING PARTY (*agenda item 2*)

Document: TRANS/WP.1/92

4. The Working Party adopted the report of its forty-third session without amendments.

SIXTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE (*agenda item 3*)

Document: ECE/TRANS/156

5. The Working Party (WP.1) was informed that the Inland Transport Committee:
- had endorsed the amendments to the 1968 Vienna Conventions and the European Agreements supplementing them (documents TRANS/WP.1/2003/1 to 5/Rev.3) and had congratulated the Working Party on finalizing this important task;
 - had thanked the Russian Federation for volunteering to transmit the amendments to New York;
 - had adopted Resolution 253 supporting WP.1 in assuming the role of a global forum for road safety;
 - had requested each Working Party to identify in the context of the nine issues contained in paragraph 11 of the strategic objectives it had defined (ECE/TRANS/156, Annex 1), the topics to be added to their programmes of work. Of these issues, the secretariat had indicated that the ageing of the population was a particular concern of WP.1;
 - had also requested all Working Parties to speed up work on the account to be taken of security aspects and to consider new activities. The secretariat recalled that the amendments that WP.1 had just adopted concerning driving permits and the incorporation of the country distinguishing sign on the registration plate should be considered as measures contributing to reinforcing security. It pointed out that the use of cameras or video surveillance systems could also contribute to reinforcing security at strategic points such as tunnels or bridges and that this aspect could, if necessary be developed in the context of R.E.1.;
 - had requested, lastly, the identification of those legal instruments administered by the Working Parties that were obsolete and those that should be updated or modernized. The Working Party considered that all the instruments it administered were up-to-date but that the future of the Agreement on Minimum Requirements for the Issue and Validity of Driving Permits (APC) should nevertheless be reviewed.

AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1968 CONVENTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS AND THE 1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM (*agenda item 4*)

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/1 to 5/Rev.3

6. After being informed that some amendments involving form and consistency had been made to documents TRANS/WP.1/2003/1 to 5/Rev.3 under the same symbol (in particular, in the explanatory memorandum of TRANS/WP.1/2003/1/Rev.3, deletion of the last sentence of the last indent in annex 3), WP.1 requested the secretariat to give the final documents the symbol Rev.4 in order to prevent any confusion. In addition, following a comment by the delegation of Denmark, WP.1 asked the secretariat to add to the English version of document TRANS/WP.1/2003/3/Rev.3 the introductory sentence of article 29 bis which had disappeared from the previous version, Rev.2.

7. The Working Party was informed that the European Commission had adopted a third proposed directive on driving permits intended to make the document secure by making the use of the plastic card mandatory, requiring the renewal of the permit every 10 years, establishing a category of permit for driving mopeds and simplifying the definition of category BE.

REVISION OF CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTIONS R.E.1 AND R.E.2 (*agenda item 5*)

Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic, R.E.1

(a) Safety in tunnels

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2002/28, *informal document No. 1*

8. After taking note of the informal document prepared by the secretariat (summary table), WP.1 decided to entrust the drafting of the points to be inserted in R.E.1 and R.E.2 to the small group that had drafted document TRANS/WP.1/2002/28 (France, Norway, Switzerland, European Commission, PRI, IRU, secretariat), on the basis of the above-mentioned documents.

9. The Working Party was also informed that a WP.15 informal working group would be meeting in May to consider in detail ways to take into consideration measure 1.07 of the report of the Group of Experts on Safety in Tunnels and its possible impact on existing signs and signals applicable to these transport operations in tunnels.

(b) Roadside checks

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/13, *informal document No. 2*

10. The Working Party considered carefully the document (informal document No. 2) prepared by the small group (France, Portugal, Switzerland) on the basis of existing documents on the subject from ECMT and the European Union. It invited the small group to add to the project on certain points so that means and devices enabling drivers to control their own behaviour better (for example, visual devices giving information on driving speed and road markings or lighting devices to help to keep a sufficient distance between vehicles) could also be taken into account along with educational and preventive aspects, in order to improve

compliance with traffic regulations. It also considered that roadside checks should be viewed in the broader framework of checks/sanctions/rehabilitation. The future document should also take into account the results of the seminar of 5 April 2004 on aggressive driving behaviour.

(c) Driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs and medication

Documents: TRANS/SC.1/336/Rev.1, informal document No. 3

11. The Chairman (Italy) of the small group (Finland, Italy, Romania, United States of America and WHO), with responsibility for preparing a new recommendation on the subject, presented the state of progress of the group's work (submitted in informal document No. 3, distributed during the meeting). She said that the small group had initially decided to restrict itself to the problem of alcohol, focusing particularly on young drivers and professional drivers. The Working Party asked the group also to take into account:

- aspects of prevention, sanctions and rehabilitation;
- the question of the responsibility of third parties (café owners, discotheques, family circle, friends ...) in the process when they let a person who had consumed too much alcohol take the wheel;
- the need to raise the awareness of medical personnel and draw a distinction between repeat offenders and occasional offenders, stressing that driving under the influence of alcohol was not only a problem of young drivers.

12. The members of WP.1 were asked to send the small group examples of best practices for inclusion in the document which would be submitted to WP.1 for consideration in September 2004 (deadline for submission: 9 July 2004).

(d) Improving motorcyclist safety

Document: TRANS/WP.1/2004/6

13. The Chairman (United States of America) of the small group (United States of America, FEMA, FIM, IMMA) introduced the draft questionnaire contained in document TRANS/WP.1/2004/6. The Working Party congratulated the group on the clarity and completeness of the draft submitted. It requested a separate questionnaire, however, for mopeds and the addition to the questions of the minimum required age for driving a motorcycle and a moped, and the number of motorcycles registered. It also considered that certain questions were too subjective.

14. The small group was requested to prepare a new draft and to send it to the secretariat as rapidly as possible so that it could be circulated to UNECE member countries and to all other countries, possibly through the other regional commissions; it was hoped that a first analysis could be made of the replies received before the forty-fifth session of WP.1.

(e) Increasing seatbelt usage

Document: TRANS/WP.1/2004/7

15. On behalf of the small group (Finland, Spain, United Kingdom, United States (Chair) and the FIA Foundation), the representative of the United States of America introduced the draft questionnaire contained in document TRANS/WP.1/2004/7. The small group was requested to prepare a new draft in the light of the comments by members of WP.1. In particular it was requested to take into account child restraint systems, to review the wording of certain questions which seemed either too subjective or too restrictive and to supplement certain points of the questionnaire such as exceptions to the use of seatbelts.

(f) Overtaking

Document: Informal document No. 4

16. The Working Party took note of the draft questionnaire prepared by the small ad hoc group (Estonia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation (Chair), FEMA) and requested the group to prepare for the forty-fifth session a new and more detailed draft that could be better exploited, with an explanatory note stating the object of the exercise and its repercussions on the existing provisions of the Vienna Convention.

(g) Pedestrian rules and signs

17. The small group entrusted with proposing future work on pedestrian rules and signs (Israel, Netherlands, Switzerland, FIP and GRSP, chaired by FIP) was requested to prepare a questionnaire on the subject for the forty-fifth session of WP.1. In a second stage, a questionnaire on rules and signs for cyclists would be prepared in liaison with the European Federation of Cyclists.

(h) Variable message signs

18. The Working Party noted that a document would be prepared by the small group on variable message signs (France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain (Chair)), for consideration at its forty-fifth session.

(i) Driving permits issued in accordance with the 1949 Convention

19. It was agreed that, in accordance with the general request by the Inland Transport Committee, the secretariat would contact countries that were Contracting Parties to the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic but had not yet acceded to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic, in order to ascertain the reasons and encourage their accession. On the basis of the results of the inquiry, the small group established to consider the problems of driving permits issued in accordance with the 1949 Convention (Portugal, Russian Federation (Chair), Spain, IMMA) would consider whether future work should be undertaken on the subject, including the possibility of preparing a resolution requesting Contracting Parties to the 1949 Convention to recognize permits issued in accordance with the 1968 Convention and vice versa.

20. The Working Party decided to defer consideration of document TRANS/WP.1/2004/1, prepared by the representative of IRF, until its next session.

(j) Restructuring of the Consolidated Resolutions R.E.1 and R.E.2

Document: TRANS/WP.1/2004/2

21. With the exception of the Russian Federation which entered several reservations, WP.1 gave a favourable reception to the draft restructuring of R.E.1 proposed by the small group established for the purpose (France (Chair), Switzerland, PRI, secretariat) and submitted by the secretariat. In order to have a more precise picture of the contents of the proposal, however, the secretariat said that for the forty-fifth session it would prepare a draft in French and English incorporating in the new structure the texts relating to the points mentioned, taken from the current version of R.E.1 (TRANS/SC.1/294/Rev.5 of 6 January 1998) and the recommendations WP.1 had adopted since then. The secretariat was requested to take the following into account: Chapter 8 should be placed after Chapter 4 and a new point 1.6 "Night driving" should be added. The Working Party was of the opinion that it would be advisable to await the consolidated version of the draft to examine the impact on the wording of the text. It was requested that there should be an index of keywords in the final draft to enable readers to find easily the subjects they were looking for.

Consolidated Resolution on Road Signs and Signals R.E.2

22. The Executive Director of the European Natural Gas Vehicle Association (ENGVA) introduced a proposal for a new harmonized road sign for service stations selling compressed natural gas (TRANS/WP.1/2004/4). Members of WP.1 were invited to contact ENGVA if they had any questions or comments on this proposal. The decision to introduce this new sign, initially in Consolidated Resolution R.E.2, would be considered at the forty-fifth session of WP.1.

23. The secretariat introduced the proposal transmitted by ECMT for the inclusion in R.E.2 of a new harmonized sign to indicate the availability of sulphur-free fuel in service stations (TRANS/WP.1/2004/3). Since this proposal had given rise to various reactions, particularly with reference to the proposed colour yellow which did not exist in the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals, the Chairman of WP.1 considered that there was a need for better information and requested delegations to make the necessary contacts with their countries' experts. He nevertheless stressed the urgent need for a decision on this matter since this fuel would be introduced into the European Union in 2005, and noted that consensus on the introduction of this sign seemed possible, perhaps by means of a separate R.E.2 recommendation.

24. All groups or participants submitting proposals for consideration at the forty-fifth session were asked to send in their contributions by 9 July 2004 so that they could be translated into the three official UNECE languages.

FOURTH ROAD SAFETY WEEK IN THE ECE REGION (*agenda item 6*)

25. The Chairman of WP.1 welcomed the success of the seminar of 5 April on aggressive driving behaviour and said that its content and organization had produced only favourable reactions. He thanked the secretariat and all those involved who had worked to make it a success. He said that from now on lessons should be learned from the documents and suggestions by experts so that decisions could be made on the specific action to be taken in terms of regulations (Vienna Conventions, Geneva Agreements) or through the Consolidated Resolutions. For this purpose, WP.1 endorsed its Chairman's proposal to entrust the task to the small group established to prepare the seminar (France, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland (Chair), ECMT, secretariat). The representative of ECMT took the floor to remind the meeting that the results of the work should be incorporated in a resolution to be submitted to the Council of Ministers in Moscow in 2005.

FUTURE ROLE OF THE WORKING PARTY (*agenda item 7*)

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/14, TRANS/2004/11 and Add.1, and TRANS/WP.1/2004/5

26. After recalling the background to this item, the Director of the UNECE Transport Division said that the Inland Transport Committee had proposed in Resolution 253 that WP.1 should assume the role of global coordinating body for road safety activities within the United Nations system.

After a lengthy exchange of views, the Working Party decided the following:

- It was unanimously acknowledged that, as proposed in Inland Transport Committee Resolution 253, WP.1 should become the global coordinating body for road safety within the United Nations system;
- Further reflection should be given to the precise functions to be entrusted to WP.1 in that role while the points contained in document TRANS/2004/11/Add.1, paragraphs 11 to 16, should be taken as a common denominator;
- All delegations should urgently contact their permanent missions in Geneva and New York to ensure that they supported the designation of WP.1 in its new functions in the resolution to be adopted by the General Assembly on 14 April 2004;
- In this case, it was preferable that WP.1 should report to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) rather than to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), but WP.1 should nevertheless collaborate closely with whichever body was appointed to coordinate road safety. It was further recommended that the resolution should make appropriate reference to WP.1's competence in the area of road safety and that the coordinating body appointed should be actively encouraged to call on its expertise in that field.

27. Following this exchange of views, WP.1 was informed that WHO could be appointed as coordinating body.

28. The Chairman of WP.1, Mr. Périsset, said that he would take part in the meetings to be held in New York on 14 and 15 April 2004 along with the Director of the Transport Division.

OTHER BUSINESS (*agenda item 8*)

29. The secretariat informed delegates that the next session of WP.1 would be held from 27 to 30 September 2004.

30. Following the announcement of the departure of Ms. McMurray (United States of America), who had been called to other duties, Mr. Périsset, on behalf of WP.1, thanked and congratulated her on her efficient work within WP.1 and wished her every success in her future activities.

ADOPTION OF DECISIONS (*agenda item 9*)

31. The list of decisions taken by WP.1 at its forty-fourth session and prepared by the secretariat was adopted.
