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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS FIFTY-FOURTH SESSION
(Geneva, 26-28 March 2008)**

Addendum

REVISION OF THE CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTION ON ROAD TRAFFIC (R.E.1)

Special rules concerning certain categories of vehicles

Note by the secretariat

1. The members of the WP.1 will find hereafter the text relating to the special Rules concerning certain categories of vehicles (background document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/12/Rev.2) such as adopted by the Working Party during its fifty-fourth session (see ECE/TRANS/WP.1/115, paragraphs 20-21).

2. The contents of this text will be included in the new overall Resolution R.E.1 as chapter 7 (see ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2005/15/Rev.7 document).

R.E.1

(The modifications made to document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/12/Rev.1 appear in bold)

Chapter 7 Special rules for certain categories of vehicles

While there are fewer accidents involving heavy vehicles than light vehicles, their consequences are far more serious, especially if buses or coaches are involved.

The recommendations contained in this chapter are aimed in particular at improving the marking of such heavy vehicles in order to make them more visible and to set out rules that should be applied to certain categories of vehicles so as to increase traffic safety.

7.1 Public transport vehicles

7.1.1 Context

The Vienna Convention on Road Traffic 1968 and the European Agreement supplementing it (article 15) merely define, for regular public transport vehicles, the right of way rules that apply when such vehicles depart from a duly marked stop.

These recommendations are intended to supplement those provisions in respect of the marking of public transport vehicles, in particular school buses and coaches, and in respect of the training that drivers of such vehicles should undergo in order to ensure optimum safety.

7.1.2 Recommendations

7.1.2.1 Marking of buses and coaches

In order to improve the visibility of buses and coaches, particularly at night when operating on routes in the open countryside, these vehicles should be fitted with retro-reflective marking strips on the sides and rear; these should be:

- white or amber on the sides,
- red or amber at the rear,

in accordance with ECE Regulation No. 104¹ annexed to the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be Fitted and/or Used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for the Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions.

¹ Regulation No. 104: Uniform requirements for the certification of retro-reflective markings for category M, N and O vehicles.

7.1.2.2 Marking of school buses and coaches

In addition to the marking referred to in the paragraph above, vehicles constructed, fitted out and identified as school buses and coaches, and used permanently and exclusively for this type of transport, should be provided with the marking defined in subparagraph (a) below in order to warn the drivers of other vehicles of the need to take special care, particularly when such vehicles are stopped to allow schoolchildren to board or alight.

If national or local legislation contains provision for the carriage of schoolchildren and other parties of children by other means of transport, for example, by using buses or coaches usually used for the transport of other categories of users, those other means of transport should also bear the same marking.

The above provisions do not concern regular public transport services used independently by schoolchildren.

(a) “School bus” sign

- (i) The “*school bus*” sign hereafter, should be shown on the front and rear of all buses and coaches used solely for the carriage of schoolchildren and should be clearly visible for the drivers of other vehicles, without interfering with the field of vision of the bus or coach driver.



In countries where a different sign is prescribed, comprising for example the word “children”, this sign may replace the sign “school bus” on vehicles transporting children, but should comply with the characteristics set out in the first indent of ii) below.

- (ii) When the above “*school bus*” sign is used, it shall conform to the following prescriptions:
- The background of the sign shall be amber-coloured and consist of retro-reflective material;

- The sign to be shown on the rear of the bus or coach shall be in the form of a square of 400 mm x 400 mm. The sign to be shown on the front may be smaller.
- (iii) In order to increase the safety of children while boarding or alighting the bus or coach, the “*school bus*” sign should be equipped with amber *winking lights* highlighting the silhouette of children, preferably in the form of electroluminescent diodes. This lighting should be switched on only when the vehicle stops to allow children to board or alight.

(b) Special warning lamps

In addition to the sign “*school bus*”, national legislation may, on school buses and coaches concerned exclusively with this type of transport, provide for the installation, in the front and rear of the vehicle, of special *warning lamps emitting a flashing light* according to article 32, paragraph 14 (b), of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic, in order to signal the boarding and alighting of children. Such lights, placed at the four top corners of the vehicle, should, when activated, light up in an alternating sequence: when one side is lit, the other should automatically switch off.

In the absence of these *flashing lights*, national legislation should require the simultaneous flashing of all amber direction-indicator lights, in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 39 and 42 of annex 5 to the Convention on Road Traffic (1968).

7.1.2.3 Requirements for the professional training of drivers of public transport vehicles

(a) In view of the particular responsibility of drivers of vehicles for the public transport of persons (category D or subcategory D₁ driving permits), Governments should ensure, by such means as they consider appropriate, that the candidates for driving permits of this category have no past records which are incompatible with such responsibility.

(b) Regarding their physical, mental and professional abilities, the candidates should meet certain requirements, such as for example those which appear in annex II of the Agreement on Minimum Requirements for the Issue and Validity of Driving Permits (APC) of 1 April 1975.

(c) The candidates should have sufficient practical experience (for example three years) of driving vehicles of categories B or C or subcategory C₁ and undergo special training in driving schools. National legislation may specify exceptions to these rules.

(d) The composition and content of the special training programmes and the duration of the training should be determined according to the qualification and experience of the candidates.

(e) The special training programmes should include topics concerning embarkation and disembarkation of passengers (particularly children, physically handicapped and elderly persons), braking and stopping at different speeds with regard to the safety of passengers, urgent passenger evacuation measures, and rendering of first aid to passengers in case of emergency.

(f) Drivers of vehicles of category D and subcategory D₁ should undergo regular medical examinations within the period specified in national legislation.

7.1.2.4 Additional recommendations

(a) Special rules should be provided in national legislation for a blood alcohol level lower than permitted for other categories of drivers, for drivers of public transport vehicles, especially in the case of school buses or the transport of children (see paragraph 1.2 of this Resolution (Driving under the influence of alcohol) and in particular section 1.2.2.1).

(b) In order to increase the visibility of vehicles transporting children, national legislation should oblige such vehicles to switch on their passing lights if they are not already fitted with automatically activated dedicated daytime running lights.

(c) When a country requires the mandatory fitting on vehicles used exclusively for the transport of children of the special flashing lights referred to in paragraph 7.1.2.2 (b) above, the conditions for their use and the consequences of their use for other road users should also be determined. In particular, the drivers of other vehicles travelling in either direction on the same carriageway may be obliged to stop without overtaking or passing the school bus or coach for as long as the flashing lights are activated to indicate that children are boarding or alighting.

7.2 Specific categories of vehicles assigned to the carriage of goods

7.2.1 Context

In view of the specific nature of certain vehicles or their use, special attention should be paid to their marking in order to make them more visible and easily identifiable for other road users. In this regard, the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic, in annex 5, specifies only what lighting and light-signalling should be fitted on vehicles, without regard to different categories. The recommendations below are aimed at supplementing the Convention in this respect by specifying the rules that should apply to particular categories of vehicles.

In article 30, paragraph 4, the Convention does, however, set out the general rules that apply for loads projecting beyond the front, rear or sides of a vehicle.

7.2.2 Recommendations

7.2.2.1 Long and heavy vehicles

(a) *Rear marking plate*

Considering the difficulties involved with recognizing and overtaking long (as specified in national legislation) and/or heavy vehicles, such vehicles should bear additional marking consisting of rear marking plates to make them more visible and easily identified, in accordance with the specifications contained in ECE Regulation No. 70² annexed to the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be Fitted and/or be Used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for the Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions.

[...]

(b) *Side and rear marking*

Long and heavy vehicles of **7 500 kg** or more should be fitted with a marking consisting of the retro-reflective strips referred to in paragraph 7.1.2.1 above.

National regulations may specify the categories of vehicles which may or should be equipped with this marking and the permitted colours for vehicles registered in the territory of the country.

7.2.2.2 Slow vehicles

Slow vehicles are taken to mean power-driven goods transport vehicles, which by their construction are not capable of exceeding the speed of 40 km/h.

(a) *Rear marking*

In view of the danger in traffic presented by these vehicles, they should bear at least the type of rear identification plate defined in annexes 5 and 12 to ECE Regulation No 69³ annexed to the 1958 Agreement referred to in paragraph 7.2.2.1 a) above.

This plate, in the form of an equilateral triangle with truncated corners, [...] should be different from the one specified in paragraph 28 of annex 5 to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic, for the rear marking of trailers and semi-trailers.

² Regulation No. 70 on uniform provisions concerning the approval of rear marking plates for heavy and long vehicles.

³ Regulation No. 69 on uniform provisions concerning the approval of rear marking plates for slow-moving vehicles (by construction) and their trailers.

If just one plate is mounted, it should be placed, according to the direction of traffic in effect in the country of registration, as close as possible to the left edge of the vehicle for right-hand traffic, or the right edge of the vehicle for left-hand traffic.

The plate should be solidly fixed at the rear of the vehicle or its trailer or, if appropriate, of its load.

b) Special amber warning lights

National legislation should provide for the equipment of slow moving vehicles with special revolving lamps emitting an amber light as stipulated in paragraph 14 (b) of article 32 of the [...] a Convention on Road Traffic **of 1968**.

7.2.2.3 Abnormal road transport

“Abnormal road transport” is taken to mean a vehicle or vehicle combination, which, with or without load, exceeds at least one of the maximum dimensions (length, width and possibly height) and/or the mass allowed by national legislation. When this concerns a load, the latter must be indivisible. Any motorized material or machine exceeding the dimensions and/or the mass allowed is also considered as «Abnormal road transport».

(a) Marking and safety of such transports

The purpose of marking an abnormal transport is to avoid accidents by drawing the attention of other road users to the potential risks of such transport.

- (i) In order to be identifiable by other users, these transports should be fitted, in addition to the marking referred to in paragraph 7.2.2.1 for heavy and long vehicles and to the special amber warning lights mentioned in paragraph 7.2.2.2 b) above, with a general warning sign in the form of two rectangular panels (one in the front and the other in the rear) bearing either a black inscription such as “Abnormal transport” or a black pictogram on a yellow retro-reflective background.
- (ii) In the event that the regulatory dimensions established by the national legislation are exceeded (in the front, in the rear or on the sides), the abnormal transport should be fitted with additional signalling devices such as rectangular panels consisting of alternating red and white or red and yellow retro-reflective diagonal strips, and the position lamps referred to in paragraph 19 of annex 5 to the Convention on Road Traffic of 1968.
- (iii) When an abnormal transport presents a hazard to road safety because of its characteristics, it is recommended to have it accompanied by an escort, the nature of which may vary according to the level of potential risk for other road users, as mentioned below.

- The first escort level should consist of a pilot vehicle in front and another vehicle protecting the rear of the transport, in the following conditions:

Since the standardized appearance and visibility of such escort vehicles is important, their colour should preferably be yellow. Their visibility should also be increased by the addition, in the front and the rear, of white and red retro-reflective diagonal strips, and on the sides of a retro-reflective marking in the shape of an “open arrow”, of alternating white and red or yellow and red colour.

Additionally, all such vehicles should be fitted with special warning lights and the general warning sign (inscription or pictogram) mentioned in i) above.

- Any particularly abnormal transport should, in addition to the escort vehicles mentioned above, be escorted, if necessary, by police (or military) vehicles intended to facilitate and ensure the safety of traffic and the movement of the transport, and to ensure compliance with regulations.

(b) Special traffic regulations

Abnormal transport should be subject to special traffic regulations on the road network, for example to the obligation to take special routes, to comply with special specific schedules and/or to observe special speed limits.

- (i) To that end its movement should be subject to special authorization as set out in article 30, paragraph 5, of the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic. National legislation should therefore define the conditions and modalities for the issuance of such authorizations (duration of validity (per journey or permanent), geographic coverage, etc.), according to the characteristics of the transport in question.
These administrative authorizations are intended to preserve the road infrastructure (in particular engineering works) and to limit inconvenience to other road users while ensuring their safety.
- (ii) Furthermore, national legislation should make it compulsory for such abnormal transports to keep their passing beam headlights switched on if the vehicles are not already fitted with automatically activated dedicated daytime running lights.

7.2.2.4 Vehicles carrying dangerous goods

Taking into account the increased risk that the transport of dangerous goods by road presents, all countries should apply the rules defined in the European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), in particular those relating to the marking of vehicles.
