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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda

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

Instruction of children in safe road behaviour (annex 7)

Note by the secretariat

1. This document is submitted in accordance with the terms of reference of the Working Party (WP.1) as set out in document TRANS/WP.1/100/Add.1, paragraph 1 (c), which are aimed at developing, updating and circulating Consolidated Resolutions R.E.1 and R.E.2, and with the programme of work for 2008-2012 of the Inland Transport Committee, adopted at its seventieth session, in 2008 (ECE/TRANS/200/Add.1, section 02.3 (b)).

2. Members of WP.1 will find below a corrected version of the text of annex 7 of R.E.1 on the instruction of children in safe road behaviour, which includes the amendments adopted at the fifty-fourth session.

REVISION OF R.E.1

Annex 7

INSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN IN SAFE ROAD BEHAVIOUR

Additional recommendations

(See chapter 2, paragraph 2.1.3, of this Resolution)

(The amendments made to document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2007/3/Rev.1 appear in bold)

I. CONTEXT

Results of recent research make it obvious that motorized road traffic has a profound impact on the development of children. In extreme cases, motorized road traffic impedes the development of the very abilities required to handle dangers on the road safely.

This knowledge leads to important conclusions regarding road safety education:

(a) To be effective, road safety education should always respect both aspects - the development of the child and the environment. Improvements in the environment, for example, through traffic calming measures [...] are important prerequisites for children's healthy development of motor skills and their acquisition of a measure of independence as road users. Therefore, road traffic education requires first of all the provision of a conducive and safe neighbourhood. Measures to achieve this should require the collaboration of authorities with parents;

(b) The area of road traffic management is undergoing rapid development with the growth of urbanization and the increasing density of traffic in urban areas, which increase the demands, particularly on children and parents, who are continually confronted by new requirements;

(c) In conducting road traffic education with younger children, attention should be given to the use of real scenarios. Through the instructions in road safety which they give to younger children, professionals and parents should ensure that these children increase their independence and enlarge their range and radius of autonomous operation in a gradual manner, and that they do so in full safety.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Countries should take the necessary measures to ensure that road safety education is provided on a systematic and continuous basis, particularly in schools at all levels, **as provided for** in article 3, paragraph 5 bis, of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic.

The present recommendations are designed to define the conditions under which this education should be provided to children, in accordance with their age.

A. Professional qualifications and training of instructors

1. Teachers and other experts (e.g. police officers) giving road safety instruction in schools should preferably have pedagogical training backed by practical experience.
2. Governments and other bodies, including non-governmental organizations, involved in road safety work (e.g. local authorities) should try to take steps to ensure an adequate supply of teachers with suitable up-to-date training in traffic education and equip them with the necessary teaching materials.

B. Tuition

3. Road safety instruction for children should be provided with the use of up-to-date pedagogical methods, incorporating practical training and technical aids, which should be regularly updated in the light of studies of their effectiveness and trends in traffic conditions. In this process, the active participation of pupils is vital if training is to succeed.
4. Road safety instruction for school-age children should be provided both as part of the school curriculum in accordance with the age of the children and through a range of after-school educational activities.
5. The system of road safety instruction for children should be on a step-by-step basis, depending on their age, their capabilities, the local environment and their means of moving about. In this instruction, the importance of the role of the environment, which has a great influence on the behaviour of children, should not be neglected.
6. Instruction should begin with preschool-age children. It is necessary to encourage parents to contribute to the instruction of their children, starting before they begin school and continuing throughout their development. Parents should be given the knowledge necessary for them to participate in their children's road safety development.
7. School-age children should be successively familiarized with habits of safe behaviour as pedestrians, passengers and cyclists.
8. Recognized driving instructors, traffic police officers or other road-safety specialists may usefully assist teachers in organizing courses on road safety and training in schools. In this way, pupils should more easily be able to put their theoretical instruction into practice, thanks to the experience of these specialists.
- 9. Training of children towards safe road behaviour and the use of roads should start in protected areas which may be specially equipped, but gradually spread into real roads, bearing in mind the physical and other limitations of children.**

C. Programme

10. Children are naturally curious and are therefore also interested in everything that happens on the road. Simple explanations of situations on roads should commence early and be repeated

again and again, in an environment that is safe and free from anxiety or fear. Even if children are able to comprehend traffic situations cognitively to some degree, this does not mean that they will act accordingly in concrete situations.

11. Fear or other spontaneous feelings, or the often observed deep interest of children in their immediate surroundings (the cat at the roadside may cause all other things around to be ignored) will often lead to a failure to act correctly. School-age children should therefore receive appropriate instruction in how to behave safely in traffic. This involves developing pedestrian, passenger, cycling and possibly driving skills as well as knowledge, understanding and positive attitudes to road safety.

12. Instruction needs to be developmental, starting off with simple traffic situations and developing into an understanding of more complex road safety situations. In the following guidelines for a minimum programme of road safety instruction, it is assumed that earlier training will be built upon and reinforced at every age.

(a) General recommendations for all age groups

13. Generally speaking, children, throughout their schooling, should have explained to them, or be reminded of, the following basic safety rules when they use roads as pedestrians, cyclists or moped riders, or when they are passengers in a vehicle:

- The importance, when walking or cycling at night or in bad weather, of making oneself seen by other road users by wearing safety equipment such as fluorescent jackets and clothing and/or a helmet with retroreflective materials;
- The role of the protective helmet, and the importance of wearing it and ensuring that it is properly attached when riding cycles and mopeds;
- The importance of **using child restraint equipment** and wearing seatbelts in vehicles equipped with them, it being made clear to children the role of seatbelts, notwithstanding the physical constraints they impose, so that **buckling up** becomes a reflex.

14. To ensure the proper application of these rules, parents play a crucial role and should lead by example.

(b) Preschool children

15. Instruction to children in this age group is aimed at introducing them gradually to the road environment and traffic, as both pedestrians and passengers. This notwithstanding, children of this age should always be accompanied by an adult when out in traffic.

16. During such instruction, children should gradually be guided to develop knowledge and understanding of the parts of the road, e.g. carriageway, pavement, kerb, crossings, traffic lights, and what road traffic is (movement of vehicles of all kinds, in particular), so as to make them aware of road hazards and bring them to adopt cautious behaviour.

(c) **Small school children (aged up to 10 years)**

(i) *Underlying principles for training*

17. Training of children in this age group should be carried out gradually, with step-by-step acquisition of appropriate, risk-free behaviour in traffic and of knowledge of road traffic, including the dangers it presents. It should also be age-appropriate and adapted to the risks they face.

17.1 Based on these principles, it would be advisable for children first to be taught how to behave, on the one hand as pedestrians in traffic, and on the other hand as passengers in a vehicle. When national legislation permits children in this age group to move about unaccompanied, a monitored training programme should be planned in light traffic, under adult supervision. However, where traffic is heavy, the children should be accompanied by an adult.

17.2 **In addition**, children should also be **taught safe bicycle riding**. To this end, **supervised training should start** on roads with low traffic volumes, **subsequently children should be** progressively introduced to increasingly complex and dense traffic situations.

(ii) *Rules to be taught to children*

18. Instruction to children in this age group should include at least the following points and aspects:

- The basic traffic rules as well as the meaning of traffic signs and signals, traffic lights and pedestrian lights, which directly affect their safety;
- The road environment as a setting that requires special behaviour so as to reduce risks [...];
- The various parts of the road environment, i.e. pavements and, where there are none, the side of the road, and their proper use;
- [...]
- **The necessity** of not crossing at a pedestrian crossing equipped with a traffic light unless [...] the pedestrian light, if there is one, is green, **and even then extreme caution should be used**;
- The basic rules for the use of bicycles, until the children are sufficiently autonomous to move about in traffic.

(d) **Intermediate-age children (aged 10-15 years)**

19. As children of this age group tend to travel more independently, they hope to be able to ride a bicycle or even, if national legislation allows (for example, from the age of 14), a moped. It is thus important to motivate them to become disciplined road users and to understand the

various risks that they run themselves and create for others. In particular, they should be imbued with positive attitudes towards road safety and made aware of their responsibilities as pedestrians, riders and possibly drivers.

20. Building upon earlier education, the instruction given to children in this age group should include at least the following points and aspects:

- The main rules relating to traffic and signs and signals, their importance for road safety and their use in practice;
- The different traffic environments which may be encountered;
- The different groups of road users and the importance of sharing the road or street and cooperating with them;
- Road user behaviour which may present a danger for children in this age group;
- Avoidance of risk-taking behaviour, often encouraged in peer group situations, through instruction of young people in the principles of defensive driving (while driving, being aware of risks run because of one's own behaviour or that of others **and preparing for a proper action**) on bicycles and mopeds;
- The principles of operation of vehicles and the importance of maintaining them, in particular in respect of parts essential to safety (brakes, lights, etc.);
- In countries where moped use is authorized from the age of 14, awareness of the consequences of the change of status that occurs when using a motor vehicle for the first time on the road, in respect of both behaviour and responsibilities (legal liability and moral responsibility, etc.);
- Awareness of the serious consequences of altering the technical characteristics of mopeds, in particular by tampering with the engine speed control.

(e) **Young people (aged 15 years or over)**

21. **Young persons of this age group fairly are often injured in accidents resulting from increased risk-taking behaviour and a resistance to overly strong restrictions.** Such types of behaviour, which find no justification in the reality of road traffic, should be taken into consideration in the road traffic education given to young people. In particular, it is important to inculcate in them a sense of responsibility and thus prepare them to become disciplined car drivers and motorcyclists.

22. Building upon earlier development of road safety skills, knowledge and attitudes, instruction to young people in this age group should emphasize the following:

- Encouragement of positive and responsible attitudes on the road through the adoption of cautious behaviour and the use of safety equipment;

- Promotion among such young people of the acquisition of technical skills and practical knowledge to drive a motor vehicle, and raising of awareness of the negative effects of risk taking. Defensive driving (see para. 19, fifth bullet) should be the underlying principle of instruction;
- Knowledge and awareness of their responsibilities (legal, moral and other) to themselves and other road users;
- Development of skills against negative peer pressure, especially when driving a motor vehicle.
