

MANDATORY FITTING OF SAFETY-BELT ANCHORAGES AND SAFETY BELTS FOR CLASS II BUSES.

Two proposals to amend Regulations Nos. 14 and 16 have been presented by France and Italy with the main purpose of making mandatory the fitting of safety –belt anchorages and safety belts on buses belonging to Class II. (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRSP/2007/10 and ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRSP/2007/11).

Background

Class II buses are constructed principally for the carriage of seated passengers and are normally used for interurban services. They can circulate at 100 km/h on the motorways.

Research has shown that the use of safety-belts and restraint systems can contribute to a substantial reduction in the number of fatalities and the severity of injury in the event of an accident, even due to rollover.

A lot of fatalities occur because the passengers are violently thrown around within the confines of the vehicle or even more seriously ejected from the vehicle through the broken windows.

Many studies have demonstrated over time that wearing a safety belt can contribute to decrease significantly the number of people killed.

In cases of coaches, many fatally injured passengers would have survived accidents if they had been provided with and were wearing safety belts.

The issue

An agreement has not been reached in GRSP since in some countries Class II buses are regarded as Class I derived vehicles (urban buses) while in other countries Class II buses are mainly based on Class III (coaches). These different vehicle designs have lead to different opinions among GRSP experts.

GRSG was mandated to try to find a better definition of bus classes which could help GRSP to solve the issue of mandatory fitting of safety-belts anchorages and safety-belts. However, while a definition is still lingering, a general agreement among the majority of GRSG experts to mandate safety-belts and anchorages on Class II has been reached.

Since in GRSP the same agreement could not be reached, GRSP agreed to seek guidance on this issue from WP.29.

[The above mentioned proposals will be complemented with suitable transitional provisions which amongst others will allow for specific exemptions allowing Cps to continue to permit the non-fitment of anchorages and seat belts on folding seats if their national legislation in force at the time of acceding to these Regulations does not require them.]