

HGV Compatibility – Report to GRRF

At the 49th Session of GRRF when the UK presented their research report on HGV Compatibility it was decided that industry, national representatives and other interested bodies should take the time to discuss the report. An informal meeting should be held to prepare a uniform view of the report and make recommendations to GRRF on the way forward with this issue.

An informal international meeting was held in Munich on 12 July, after industry had had time to consider the report. At the meeting it was agreed that the following points could be reported to GRRF:

The motor vehicle manufacturers admitted that they have unspecified maintenance problems affecting brake performance only on a limited number of vehicles but they did not have a safety problem in general.

The trailer manufacturers admitted that they had a major maintenance problem and expressed concerns over safety.

Industry required clarification that the TRL report only applies to semi-trailer/truck combinations and that results were not directly transferable to drawbar-trailer/truck combinations. It was agreed that the discussions in Munich would be restricted to tractors for semi-trailers and to semi-trailers.

Since the mandatory introduction of ABS for towing vehicles and their trailers, only compliance with the laden diagram has to be demonstrated during certification, the unladen case is no longer regulated.

A discussion was initiated, if by amending existing bands for the braking performance could compatibility be improved? Concern was expressed by sectors of industry over the unladen performance requirements in that they are significantly higher than the laden requirements, particularly on trailers.

Motor vehicle manufacturers expressed concern that with the conventional technology of pneumatic valves compliance with narrower bands could not be fulfilled and if the upper boundaries for the unladen motor vehicle bands were reduced then problems may be experienced in fulfilling secondary and/or residual performance.

The introduction of a restriction in the corridor at 1.5/2.0 bar could be considered to control the vehicle performance where most braking occurs. The motor vehicle manufacturers would prefer this to be part of an "in-service" check not a Type Approval requirement.

Mr Hoerner offered, on behalf of OICA, to consult with the Vehicle Manufacturers to determine the extent of the problem and to identify any safety issues. The Vehicle Manufacturers would also determine the configuration of vehicles involved i.e. disc/disc, disc/drum, drum/disc, drum/drum etc.

Ms Luchie offered, on behalf of CLCCR, to consult the trailer manufacturers to obtain similar information. Mr Peirce, General Trailers, offered his assistance.

Motor Vehicle, Trailer and Component manufacturers would consider the effect on their vehicles/components of restricting the laden compatibility corridor in the 1.5/2 bar region. Worked examples would be provided for discussion at another meeting.

To allow industry time to co-ordinate the information the next meeting would be scheduled for 7 December, the day after the OICA/GRRF meeting in Paris.

Mr Fontaine would make the necessary arrangement for the meeting and organise the OICA/GRRF meeting agenda to include braking items on 6 December.

A more comprehensive report would be presented at the January/February 2002 session of GRRF.