



Economic Commission for Europe
Inland Transport Committee
Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
Sixty-third session

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**Report of the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety on its
 sixty-third session**
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I. Attendance

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) held its sixty-third session in Geneva from 19 to 22 March 2012, chaired by Ms. L. Iorio (Italy). Representatives of the following member States participated: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United States of America.

2. The European Union (EU) and the following non-governmental organizations were also represented: International Confederation of Associations of Experts and Consultants (CIDADEC), European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR), International Motorcycling Federation (FIM), FIA Foundation, Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE), International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA), International Road Federation (IRF), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Union of Railways (UIC), Laser Europe and Nederlandse Organisatie voor toegepast-natuurwetenschappelijk onderzoek (TNO).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

3. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/134) with the addition of the subject of road tunnel safety and the development of rules/best practices to be followed while renting buses/coaches for school trips; the item was added under "other business".

III. Adoption of the report of the sixty-second session (agenda item 2)

4. The Working Party adopted the report of its sixty-second session (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/133) with one modification. The title of item VIII should say "Convention on Road Signs and Signals (agenda item 7).

5. WP.1 expressed its concern about the unavailability of the French version of the report (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/133) in time for this session. All delegates urged UNOG Conference Services to ensure that all documents submitted in accordance with deadlines are translated and available in all three official ECE languages.

IV. Seminar on "Consistency between the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic and other international legal instruments" (agenda item 3)

6. WP.1 held a special one-day round table on issues of consistency between the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic and other legal instruments. The programme of the round table (Informal document No. 1) and presentations are available at WP.1 website. WP.1 expressed its appreciation to all the speakers for taking the time to share their knowledge and expertise.

V. Activities of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 4)

7. The Working Party was informed about recent road safety related developments in France.

8. The Government of France informed WP.1 about particular problems with motorcycles. They represent 2 per cent of traffic but 25 per cent of deaths. New legislation prescribes for larger licence plates so as to be read by radars in order to ensure equality of treatment with car drivers; and for motorcyclists to wear retro-reflective elements on clothing for better visibility. The Government has set up a working group to work on motorcycle safety.

9. In the area of drink-driving, the Government has improved speed enforcement, and reduced the maximum speed limit, to counteract that 30 per cent of lethal accidents involve alcohol.

10. The Government has also introduced the requirement for self-testing. Club owners must ensure that clients have the possibility to test their alcohol level on the premises. The tests are not obligatory. As of 1 July all drivers in France must have an alcohol level testing device in their vehicle. Until, November 1, police will not fine for lack of a test device in the car.

11. The Minister of the Interior requested European Commission to consider making alcolocks mandatory for all vehicles in the EU.

12. On 20 and 21 November 2012, a conference will be held in France on youth and road safety.

VI. Decade of Action for Road Safety, 2011–2020 (agenda item 5)

13. Sweden presented Informal document No. 3 on a Safe System Approach and possible implications for the WP.1 work plan. Sweden believes that approach should be reflected in UNECE legal instruments to enhance road safety. The Government of Sweden will make a detailed presentation on the topic at the next session.

VII. Convention on Road Traffic (1968) (agenda item 6)

A Consistency between the Convention on Road Traffic (1968) and Vehicle Technical Regulations

14. WP.1 considered amendment proposals to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic on lighting and light-signalling (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2011/4) with a view to maintaining consistency between the Convention and the Regulations developed by the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations.

15. WP.1 discussed the proposed amendments to article 25 bis, article 32, and annex 5 up to Chapter II, article 19, paragraph 10 of ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2011/4. The remaining amendment proposals will be discussed at the next session of WP.1. The Working Party welcomed and appreciated the presence of a WP.29/GRE delegate who provided invaluable background information related to the proposed changes and invited the delegate to be present at the next session.

16. WP.1 continued to consider amendment proposals on the possible incorporation of “Driver Assistance Systems” (DAS) into the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic. An

informal group of experts presented an update of its work on amendment proposals related to DAS in Informal document No. 7. WP.1 discussions – in the context of amending the 1968 Convention - centred on the issues of DAS definition, overridability, liability arising from malfunction, on whether or not amendments to article 8 paragraph 5 are needed, on the actual need and purpose of defining DAS and on the need for the informal expert group to explain the reasons and rationale for working on these amendments (perhaps by addressing policy aspects of the DAS in a concept paper).

17. WP.1 encouraged the informal expert group to continue its valuable work, to take into account the comments received and report back to WP.1 at the next session.

B. Other issues: Driving Permits and Distinguishing Signs

18. The Working Party was informed about the communication between EU, its member States and the secretariat on apparent discrepancies between the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic and the EU “Driving licence directive” (2006/126/EC). A representative of the EC presented Informal document no. 6 elaborating the EC position. The EC believes that – depending on the category of a driving permit – there were either no differences or they were small and/or inconsequential.

19. WP.1 noted the European Commission suggestion to amend the 1968 Convention to incorporate the technological development and progress made to strengthen road safety in the field of driver licensing since the last amendment of the Convention in 2006.

20. WP.1 also noted the EC’s appreciation of the importance of the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic to facilitate international transport and to improve road safety, as well as the EC’s willingness to contribute to a more efficient implementation of the principle of mutual recognition of driving permits.

21. WP.1 discussed the implications of the discrepancies and concluded that although practical arrangements in the interest of the public may be made in the short term, the discrepancies should be removed to ensure legal certainty. In order to consider and document the possible options for the resolution of the discrepancies, WP.1 decided to create an informal group. The ISO representative volunteered to prepare the first informal document detailing the options. The informal document will be circulated to WP.1 before it is tabled at the next meeting of WP.1.

22. The Working Party was reminded of the requirement for a Contracting Party to notify the Secretary-General about the distinguishing sign in use. In this context, WP.1 would welcome notifications from Montenegro, Republic of Moldova and Serbia – three UNECE members that have yet to formally notify the Secretary-General of their choice of distinguishing sign. The secretariat delivered a presentation concerning the United Kingdom’s (UK) use of two different distinguishing signs on number plates (GB) and on driving permits seemingly contrary to the country’s obligations under the 1949 and 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic.

VIII. Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968) (agenda item 7)

Proposal on Variable Message Signs

23. The Working Party was informed about the progress made by an informal expert group on Variable Message Signs (VMS). The informal VMS expert group presented a proposal amending the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals to include variable message signs (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2012/1).

24. In principle, WP.1 found the proposal acceptable and requested the secretariat to modify ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2012/1 by embedding the proposals into the relevant parts of the Convention. The revised ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2012/1 will be considered at the next session with a view of approving it.
25. The informal expert group on VMS was encouraged to continue its work especially in the area of pictograms. The pictograms will be considered in the next session for the possible inclusion in R.E.2.
26. WP.1 agreed to assist a member of the informal VMS expert group in undertaking a study by filling out a VMS questionnaire. The questionnaire will be sent to all WP.1 delegates to be filled out either by WP.1 delegates or by VMS national experts.
27. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about road sign formats (e.g. those contained in a panel) that may either be non-conformant to the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals or present a difficulty in proper interpretation (i.e. Article 8). WP.1 decided to explore this issue in more detail and requested the secretariat to prepare an informal document for the next session.
28. The secretariat also informed WP.1 about possible challenges in the implementation of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals. WP.1 acknowledged there is a problem and decided to explore the establishment of a new initiative to assess the implementation of the Convention in the near future.
29. The Government of Belgium made a presentation concerning the introduction of new road signs and of “modernized” road sign symbols that were not prescribed in the Convention. The presentation raised questions about how to proceed to obtain a regional agreement as stipulated in article 8, paragraph 2 of the Convention on Road Signs and Signals (to facilitate the introduction of new signs and symbols in national traffic codes). The Working Party discussed how to proceed towards reaching a regional agreement enabling the introduction of new road signs which are not prescribed in the 1968 Convention and decided that a way to endeavour to secure a regional agreement is to propose amendments to R.E.2.
30. WP.1 expressed its appreciation to Dr. R. Baluja, of Institute of Road Traffic Education, for his invitation to hold a special session of WP.1 in 2013 in New Delhi on this subject.

IX. Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (agenda item 8)

A. Multidisciplinary crash investigation (MDCI)

31. WP.1 considered how to promote a MDCI mechanism with a view of enhancing road safety. To this end, Sweden presented an Informal document No. 3 outlining proposals on the “way forward” in this area. WP.1 endorsed the informal document – in particular the proposal to develop an MDCI framework first - and invited the Governments of Norway and Sweden (with participation of the United States) to prepare an informal document for the next session. The IMMA and IRU expressed their willingness to contribute to this endeavour to the extent it is needed.

B. Mutual recognition of international technical inspection's certificates

32. The delegation of the Russian Federation described the current developments in WP.29 concerning this initiative and requested to not reintroduce this agenda item at the next session.

X. Consolidated Resolution on Road Signs and Signals (agenda item 9)**A. Charging points for electric vehicles**

33. The Working Party discussed the design of a new sign (and of an additional panel) for charging points for electric vehicles (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2011/2 and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2011/10). WP.1 decided to consider incorporating all the proposals into R.E.2. To this end, the Governments of Belgium, Denmark, France, Norway and Sweden were invited to submit to the secretariat high quality, colour reproductions of the designs for road signs and/or for additional panels with brief definitions and technical descriptions. The secretariat was requested to contact the Government of Portugal to obtain the same. On the basis of the information provided, the secretariat will table the formal document for approval at the next WP.1 session.

B. Secure parking areas

34. WP.1 continued discussing the proposal concerning an inclusion of a secure parking area road sign into RE.2 (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2011/3). WP.1 discussed the benefits and possible implications of implementing such amendments. Concerns were raised regarding the involvement of both private and public actors in the matter. The government of Belgium will revise ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2011/3 by adding reference to "Measures achieving comparable levels" and submit it for further consideration at the next session.

XI. Group of Experts on improving Safety at level crossings (agenda item 10)

35. The Working Party was informed about the Executive Committee's (EXCOM) decision not to consider at this time the establishment of the "Safety at level crossings" multidisciplinary group of experts (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2011/6). The secretariat informed WP.1 that once EXCOM approves the establishment of the expert group, it will proceed expeditiously to arrange for the first meeting.

XII. Other business (agenda item 11)

36. WP.1 discussed the possibility of developing a set of rules/best practices to be followed for individuals in charge of renting buses/coaches for school trips. It agreed to submit informal documents on the subject for the next session.

XIII. Date of next session (agenda item 12)

37. The sixty-fourth session is scheduled to take place from 24 to 27 September 2012 in Geneva. The deadline for submission of formal documents is 2 July 2012.

38. WP.1 will consider holding three sessions in 2013 following the invitation of Dr. R. Baluja, of Institute of Road Traffic Education, to host a special WP.1 session in New Delhi.

XIV. Adoption of decisions (agenda item 13)

39. The Working Party adopted the list of decisions taken at its sixty-third session.
