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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Principal Working Party on Road Transport

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
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agenda item 6 (b))

EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF ROAD SAFETY

Transmitted by the Government of Slovakia

1. On 1 April 1997, the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as "NCSR"), No. 315/1996 Col, concerning Road Traffic came into force. Some of its provisions are to be implemented by:

- the Notice of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as "MISR"), No. 90/1997 Col, concerning Road Traffic, and by
- the Notice of the Ministry of Transport, Post and Telecommunications, No. 95/1997 Col, concerning the Training of Driving Licence Applicants, Further Courses for Driving Licence Holders, the Training of Trainers Licence Applicants and Further Courses for Trainers,

which both came into force on 1 April 1997;

- the Notice of the Ministry of Transport, Post and Telecommunications, No. 116/1997 Col, on Conditions for Road Traffic which came into force on 30 April 1997; and
- the Notice of the Health Ministry, No. 164/1997 Col, on the Health Requirements for the Driving of a Vehicle which came into force on 1 July 1997.

2. The subject of the NCSR Act, No. 315/1996 Col, and of the MISR Notice, No. 95/1997 Col, are, among others, the Road Traffic Code, problems connected with the examinations for driving licence applicants, decision-making on driving authorization, issues of driving licences, and the registration of vehicles which rank among the areas of the MISR's responsibilities. Some substantial changes have been made to previous legislation.

TRAFFIC SPEED

Vehicles in Group A

3. Drivers of mopeds are allowed to drive on all roads at a speed of up to 50 km/hour (the speed is limited by the design of the moped).

4. Drivers of motorcycles (without any distinction of motor volume) are allowed to drive on motorways, highways and other roads at a speed of up to 90 km/hour. This speed limit is also valid for motorcycles with a side carriage.

Vehicles in Group B

5. Drivers of vehicles in Group B are allowed to drive on motorways and highways at a speed of up to 130 km/hour. On other roads, drivers of such vehicles are allowed to drive at a speed of up to 90 km/hour. All these speed limits are also valid for drivers of vehicles towing a trailer with a total weight of not more than 750 kg.

6. Drivers of vehicles in Group B towing a trailer with a total weight of more than 750 kg are allowed to drive on all roads at a speed of up to 80 km/hour.

Vehicles in Group C

7. Drivers of vehicles in Group C are allowed to drive on all roads at a speed of up to 80 km/hour. This speed limit is also valid for drivers of vehicles with an adjoining trailer.

Vehicles in Group D

8. Drivers of buses are allowed to drive on motorways and highways at a speed of up to 110 km/hour and on other roads at a speed of up to 90 km/hour. These speed limits are also valid for drivers of buses with an adjoining trailer with a total weight of not more than 750 kg.

9. Drivers of buses with an adjoining trailer with a total weight of more than 750 kg are allowed to drive on all roads at a speed of up to 80 km/hour.

10. In built-up areas, drivers of all vehicles may drive at a speed of up to 60 km/hour. If travelling along a motorway in a built-up area, or along a highway in a built-up area, the speed limit is 80 km/hour unless there is a traffic sign allowing a higher speed. These speed limits for built-up areas are also valid for vehicles with any adjoining vehicle. Within residential and pedestrian zones, where driving is permitted, vehicles may drive at a speed of up to 20 km/hour.

11. In the case of a vehicle towing another, the speed limit inside or outside built-up areas is 60 km/hour.

ADMISSIBLE LEVEL OF ALCOHOL IN THE BLOOD AND TESTING METHODS

12. Drivers must not drive any vehicle immediately after taking an alcoholic drink or another intoxicating substance, or at a time when they could still be under the influence thereof ($0.0 \text{ g}/1000 \text{ cm}^3$).

13. Police officers are entitled to ask drivers to undergo a test to ascertain whether they are under the influence of alcohol or any other substance or medicine that could decrease their ability to drive a vehicle. This is performed by a breath test apparatus to determine the percentage of alcohol in the blood. If the person refuses to undergo the test, it is possible to instigate a medical examination on request through the taking and testing of blood or other biological material. If the person refuses such a medical examination, the alcohol level is determined, according to the medical and clinical symptoms, by a doctor.

SAFETY BELTS IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

14. Vehicles put into operation after 31 December 1968 must be equipped with safety belts in the front seats and by related attachments anchored to the body of the vehicle. Vehicles put into operation after 30 September 1986 must be equipped with safety belts on the back seats as well. Safety belts for the front seats must be self-rolling. Vehicles put into operation before 31 December 1968 must be equipped with safety belts on the front seats if they are only equipped with the prescribed anchor attachments.

15. While driving, persons sitting in seats of vehicles compulsorily equipped with safety belts are obliged to be properly fastened by the belt. This is not the case in the following circumstances:

- (a) drivers of vehicles in the armed forces, armed corps, armed security corps, community police, and fire brigade in the course of carrying out their duties.
- (b) persons training or examining applicants for a driving licence in a built-up area.
- (c) drivers of taxis transporting passengers in built-up areas.
- (d) drivers of vehicles used in built-up areas supplying shops or collecting or distributing the post.
- (e) persons measuring less than 150 cm in height, except drivers who are obliged to use a specially approved and designed security system.
- (f) persons unable to do so because of health reasons on the basis of a medical certificate showing the term of validity which must not be longer than a year. The person concerned must carry this certificate while operating the vehicle and must, if asked by a police officer, present it.

CHILDREN TRAVELLING IN THE FRONT SEATS OF PRIVATE VEHICLES

16. Persons younger than 12 years of age and with a height of less than 150 cm must not travel in the front seat (or seats) next to the driver. This is not the case if these persons use a security system of their own, approved and fitted for them specially.

17. If the vehicle is also equipped with such a security system on other seats, children should preferably use those seats.

USE OF PROTECTIVE HELMETS BY MOTORCYCLISTS

18. Motorcyclists and their passengers are obliged to use a properly fixed and approved protective helmet while driving in and outside built-up areas. This also concerns drivers of mopeds.

USE OF LIGHTS

19. There are no changes concerning the use of lights. When there is decreased visibility, vehicles must use the prescribed lighting. Drivers must not drive with the sidelights unless the headlights are also switched on, or the front foglights, if the vehicle is equipped with these lights.

20. Drivers must not use their headlights on full beam if the roadway is sufficiently and continuously lit, or if the driver of an oncoming vehicle or a car in front or other vehicle, train driver or the driver of another track vehicle or the driver of a vessel, could be blinded.

21. Also, even in normal visibility, motorcyclists are obliged to drive with their headlights on. This obligation also relates to drivers of vehicles or combinations where the size of the vehicle or of its freight exceeds the prescribed norms. Drivers of other vehicles are not obliged to use headlights in normal visibility, but their use is not forbidden.

22. Front and back lights intended for use in fog may be used in fog, snow or heavy rain only.

AGE FOR GRANTING OF A DRIVING LICENCE

23. The minimum age for granting a licence to drive a vehicle in the different groups is as follows:

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|------------|---|-----|--|
| Group A | - | 17 | |
| Group A/50 | - | 15 | |
| Group B | - | 18 | |
| Group C | - | 18 | |
| Group D | - | 21 | (at least 12 months' driving experience on Group C vehicles) |
| Group E | - | (a) | in the case of a licence to drive a combination consisting of a Group B or C vehicle in front and an adjoining vehicle, it is required to prove at least six months' experience of driving the vehicle of the group concerned. |
| | | (b) | 21 to drive a combination consisting of a Group D vehicle in front and an adjoining vehicle; |
| Group T | - | 17 | |

24. Handicapped persons may be granted:

- (a) permission to drive three- or four-wheeled vehicles in Group B, where the weight does not exceed 400 kg and if they are more than 16 years of age.
- (b) a driving licence for Group B vehicles, if they are older than 17 years of age.

25. Before the issuance of a driving licence, drivers for all groups of vehicles are required to undergo obligatory training.

26. The valid vehicle groups in the Slovak Republic are as follows:

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|-------------|---|---|
| Group A | - | motorcycles. |
| Group A/50F | - | motorcycles with a cylinder volume not exceeding 50 cm ³ . |
| Group B | - | (a) vehicles, except those in Group A, whose total weight does not exceed 3500 kg and which, in addition to the driver's seat, do not have more than 8 other seats. A vehicle in this group can be coupled to an additional vehicle with a total weight not exceeding 750 kg. |
| | | (b) a combination consisting of a Group B vehicle in front and an additional vehicle as long as the total driving weight does not exceed 3500 kg and the total weight of the adjoining vehicle does not exceed the weight of the front vehicle. |
| Group C | - | vehicles, except those in Group D, whose total weight exceeds 3500 kg. A vehicle in this group can be coupled to an additional vehicle with a total weight not exceeding 750 kg. |

- Group D - vehicles intended for the transport of persons, which, in addition to the driver's seat, have more than 8 seats. A vehicle in this group can be coupled to an additional vehicle with a total weight not exceeding 750 kg.
- Group E - a combination consisting of a Group B or C or D vehicle in front, which the driver is authorized to drive, and an additional vehicle if this driving combination does not belong to Group B or C or D.
- Group T - agriculture and forestry tractors as well as other special vehicles which do not belong to Group C. Vehicles in this group can be coupled to an additional vehicle.

27. The following changes have taken effect as a result of the recent legal arrangements:

- (a) drivers are obliged to allow pedestrians to cross the road at the crossings designated for them, and must, of course, neither endanger nor restrict them. For this reason, they are obliged to stop their vehicle. This rule, however, is not valid for drivers of vehicles using, in accordance with the law, special warning signals, but they must not endanger pedestrians.
- (b) while driving, a driver must not operate a telephone or engage in any other similar activity not connected with driving.
- (c) buses transporting children must carry a special sign (this special sign is shown in MISR Notice, No. 90/1997 Col - a black outline of two children on a yellow background). The driver of a bus transporting children or handicapped people is obliged, while they are getting on or off the bus, to use special warning lights.
- (d) the new legal arrangements permit those involved in a traffic accident not to declare it to the police provided that all the following conditions are satisfied simultaneously:
 - (i) damage to any vehicle involved in the accident, including objects transported, or other property does not clearly exceed by ten-fold the minimum wage (at present, this ten-fold figure amounts to 27,000 Slovak koruna);
 - (ii) no one was killed or injured in the accident, there was no damage to the road or any related equipment and there was no release of any dangerous substance;
 - (iii) all those involved in the traffic accident explicitly agreed that the police need not be informed.
- (e) the first driving licence is issued for a two-year probationary period starting on the day of issuance.

- (f) the driving licence of a person with permanent residence in the Slovak Republic is limited as follows:
 - (i) Driving licences issued before 31 December 1992 remain valid until 31 December 2002;
 - (ii) Documents concerning vehicle registration and the registration number table issued before 31 December 1997 remain valid until 31 December 2002. For motorcycles whose documents were issued before 31 December 1997, they remain valid until 31 December 1998.
 - (iii) The exchange of the related documents should be done, at the request of the holder, by the competent district traffic authority.
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