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## UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ROAD AND MOTOR TRANSPORT

COMMITTEE II ON TECHNICAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED  
BY VEHICLES

## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Friday, 2 September 1949, at 3 p.m.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. FEJFER (Czechoslovakia)

SECRETARY: Mr. MATTER

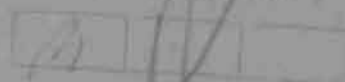
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CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT PROVISIONS FOR INSERTION IN  
THE CONVENTION ON ROAD AND MOTOR TRANSPORT PREPARED  
BY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (Item 4 of  
the Conference Agenda) (Document E/CONF.8/3)  
(Continued).

Annex 9 (continued)

The CHAIRMAN asked whether the French representative wished to maintain his reservation concerning the figure of 8 tons for maximum permissible load per axle which had been accepted by the majority of the Committee at the previous meeting.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) replied that his Government was anxious to negotiate a generally acceptable convention, and, after consultation with his delegation, he wished to inform the Committee that his Government would not stand in the way of the insertion of a provision specifying that the maximum permissible load per axle should be 8 tons. He hoped that at a future stage an exchange of views might be held on the conditions of implementation of such a clause. The United States representative had declared that American roads were designed to carry vehicles with a maximum axle load of 8 tons. The problem for European countries was of a somewhat different character, and it had originally been contemplated by representatives of European Governments that higher axle loads might be permitted on the international network. If a maximum permissible axle load of 8 tons was to be inserted in Annex 9, it would be necessary to safeguard the principle of reciprocity. He was submitting to the Secretariat a draft amendment to that effect for insertion in Annex 9.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, thanking the French representative for his conciliatory gesture, stated that the amendment he had mentioned might be discussed when the exact wording of Annex 9 came up for consideration.

He asked the Netherlands representative whether, in view of the acceptance of a maximum permissible load per axle of 8 tons, he still wished to press his proposal concerning a provision relating to maximum wheel pressure.

Mr. N.P (Netherlands) replied that since the comparatively low figure of 8 tons had been accepted, he would withdraw his proposal.

The Committee adopted the figure of 8 tons for the maximum permissible load per axle.

At the suggestion of the RAPPORTEUR the Committee decided to pass to the consideration of the problem of the maximum weight of vehicles.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, pointed out that there were two methods of approach to this problem. The ECE Draft based its proposals on the classification of vehicles according to their number of axles. The United States proposal (Document E/CONF.8/26) was based on considerations of the distance between the centres of the first and last axles of a vehicle or combination of vehicles, and the distribution of the load over the largest number of axles. Thus, the problem could clearly not be discussed without taking into account the permitted maximum length of vehicles.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) and Mr. VEZZANI (Italy) were in agreement with the principle expounded in the United States proposal, namely, that the maximum weight of vehicles should be determined in relation to the distribution of load by axles and in relation to the number of the latter.

Mr. CHARLOTEAUX (Belgium) stated that according to a regulation which was at present under consideration by his Government, the maximum permissible weight of vehicles was to be based on calculations relating to the distribution of the load according to the length of the vehicle. He therefore had no objection to the United States proposal in principle.

The Committee agreed that the principle, enunciated in the United States proposal, of determining the maximum permissible weight of vehicles in accordance with the distribution of the load and the length of the vehicle,

should serve as the starting point for the Committee's examination of the problem, and that the Committee should accordingly first consider the maximum permissible length of vehicles.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) considered that a distinction should be drawn between two- and three-axled vehicles, and that the problem of the length of each class of vehicle should be discussed separately.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, was not absolutely clear as to whether the fact that a vehicle had two axles or more was an operative factor in deciding its length, once the maximum load per axle had been fixed.

Mr. ROGERS (United States of America) stated that the important point in discussing the length of the vehicle was the off-tracking on curves entailed. In that respect, there was no difference between 2-axled vehicles and vehicles with more than two axles.

Mr. NAP (Netherlands) observed that 3-axled vehicles could turn more easily. A distinction had therefore been made between two- and three-axled vehicles in the Netherlands' proposal.

Mr. BUZZI-QUATRINI (Austria) pointed out that a 3-axled vehicle demanded more skill and strength from its driver, and he did not consider that a longer length should be permitted for such vehicles than for 2-axled vehicles.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) stated that his request that two- and three-axled vehicles should be treated separately was motivated by the fact that the Committee had decided to be guided in its discussion by the principle of the distribution of load over the axles. He agreed with the Austrian representative that 2-axled vehicles could turn more easily. However, as the Committee had decided to reduce the maximum weight per axle and had thereby placed a limitation on the maximum loading of vehicles, it should consider the possibility of fixing a higher maximum for

3-axled vehicles. Another important consideration was the fact that motor buses did not carry as heavy loads as lorries, and should therefore be permitted to be longer. A distinction should therefore be drawn between vehicles intended for the transport of goods and those intended for the transport of passengers.

Mr. N&P (Netherlands) was unable to understand why a distinction should be drawn between lorries and motor buses, since there was no vital difference in their construction. He could not support the argument that different lengths should be fixed for those two types of vehicle.

Mr. LUBARSKY (Israel) observed that the most important factor was the wheel base and turning circle of the vehicle.

Mr. VEZZANI (Italy) agreed with the French representative that a greater maximum length should be fixed for 3-axled vehicles and motor buses. He was in favour of 10 and 11 m. for 2-axled lorries and motor buses respectively.

The Committee then agreed to deal first with the maximum length of 2-axled vehicles.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, summarizing the proposals before the Committee, stated that the maximum length suggested in the ECE Draft was 11 m. The Netherlands' proposal (Document MRT/28/49) was 10 m., the United States proposal (Document E/CONF.8/26) was 10.67 m., except for motor buses, for which a maximum of 12.20 m. should be permitted, and the Permanent International Bureau of Motor Manufacturers had suggested a maximum length of 12 m.

Mr. MASLOG (Philippine Republic) pointed out that the United States proposal referred to 3-axled vehicles as well.

Mr. VELLODI (India) stated that his Government could accept a maximum length of 10.67 m.

Mr. BUZZI-QUATRINI (Austria) stated that his Government could not accept a higher figure than 10 m. because of the difficulty experienced by longer vehicles in turning on hairpin bends on mountainous roads. If such a maximum were inserted in the Draft Convention, his Government would, for reasons of safety, be unable to ratify Annex 9.

Mr. AZKQUL (Lebanon) stated that whereas his Government could accept vehicles of a maximum length of 10 m. on flat roads, it could only accept vehicles of 7.50 m. on mountain roads.

Mr. W.G. HUNT (United Kingdom) stated that he could not accept a figure higher than 8.382 m.

Mr. LUBARSKY (Israel) said that he would prefer a maximum length of 9.15 m. However, if the majority was in favour of a higher figure, he might be able to accept it.

Mr. VEZZANI (Italy) and Mr. ROENNING (Norway) found the United States proposal acceptable so far as main international traffic arteries were concerned.

Mr. WICHRZYCKI (Poland) stated that he could not accept a higher figure than 10 m.

Mr. CHARLOTEAUX (Belgium) stated that his Government could accept a maximum length of 11 m., or any other figure between 10 and 11 m.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) supported the United States proposal of 10.67 m., together with the special United States provision concerning motor buses.

Mr. MARQUART (Switzerland) said that his Government had no objection to a maximum permissible length of 11 m., although the Swiss regulations provided for a maximum of 9.50 m. for all vehicles, and of 11 m. for motor buses.

Mr. ROGERS (United States of America) stated that a survey had been made of the position in respect of the length of single-unit vehicles in the United States of America. It had been found that about 45 per cent were under 20 ft. long, 50 per cent under 20-26 ft., 4 per cent between 26 and 30 ft. and 1 per cent between 30 and 35 ft. The maximum figure of 10.67 meters was based on those findings. As so few vehicles reached that maximum limit, his delegation might be prepared to accept a lower figure, provided that the proposal of 12.20 m. for motor buses was accepted.

Mr. MASLOG (Philippine Republic) was in favour of a maximum length of 10 m. for lorries and 11 m. for motor buses.

Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) asked how the situation of countries which could not accept a higher figure than 10 m. would be viewed by those which were in favour of a longer maximum length. The former could not be forced to accept longer vehicles if their roads were unsuitable for such traffic.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) pointed out that the matter under discussion related only to vehicles circulating on main international arteries. If any Government was unable to subscribe to the maximum length eventually decided upon, it was at perfect liberty to declare that none of its roads formed part of the international network.

Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) replied that the adoption of a maximum length of 10 m. would place his Government in a very difficult position, since no road in his country could at present accommodate vehicles of that length. However, his Government hoped that there would be an increase of international motor traffic in its country. It would therefore do everything possible within the limits of its resources to improve its road network.

Mr. HALL (Sweden) and Mr. VILJOEN (Union of South Africa) were in favour of 11 m. for 2-axled motor buses.

Mr. NAP (Netherlands) stated that his Government could accept a figure of 11 m. for 2-axles motor buses.

Mr. MARQUART (Switzerland) associated himself with the views of the previous speaker, as that length had been stipulated by the regulations of his country since 1922.

Mr. MASLOG (Philippine Republic) accepted a figure of 11 m. for both 2- and 3-axled vehicles.

Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) stated that he would like time to consult his Government on the question of a maximum length of 11 m. for motor buses.

Mr. VEZZANI (Italy) pointed out to representatives who were uncertain as to whether their Governments could accept vehicles of the specified maximum length, that, in accordance with Article 4 of Annex 9, Contracting States could indicate the maximum figures "provisionally permissible for traffic in their territories" for vehicles using the main international traffic arteries.



Mr. FAIRBANK (United States of America) was prepared to accept a figure of 10 m. for lorries, in view of the fact that they seldom reached that length in his country. Motor buses were very often as long as 35 ft., and there was a tendency to design models of 40 ft., the purpose being to increase the comfort of passengers and provide more facilities. In order to safeguard their profitable operation he would be in favour of allowing them a longer length than lorries, and would support a maximum length of 11 m., which was on the conservative side.

The Committee decided to fix maximum lengths for 2-axled vehicles of 10 m. for lorries, and of 11 m. for motor buses.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, invited representatives to give their views on the maximum length of vehicles with three or more axles.

Mr. MASLOG (Philippine Republic) stated that since single-unit vehicles were under consideration, the same maximum length should apply to 3-axled vehicles as to 2-axled vehicles, as the former were more difficult to manoeuvre. He was unable to understand how the addition of a third axle could make turning easier.

The representatives of the NETHERLANDS, the UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA agreed with the Philippine representative.

Mr. DAUVERGNE (France) pointed out that if 3-axled vehicles were not to be permitted a greater maximum length, the development of motor transport would be impeded.

Mr. VEZZANI (Italy) agreed with the French representative, and was in favour of increasing the maximum length for 3-axled vehicles to 12 m. for lorries and to 12.20 m. for motor buses.

Mr. WICHRZYCKI (Poland) could not accept a higher figure than 11 m. for 3-axled vehicles.

Mr. RØNNING (Norway), speaking on behalf of his Government and of the Swedish representative, stated that they were in favour of a maximum of 11 m. for 3-axled lorries and of 12 m. for 3-axled motor buses.



Mr. FAIRBANK (United States of America) and Mr. MARQUART (Switzerland) supported the Norwegian representative.

Mr. NAP (Netherlands), Mr. VILJOEN (Union of South Africa) and Mr. KRŽIĆ (Yugoslavia) accepted a maximum figure of 11 m. for 3-axled vehicles without distinction between lorries and motor buses.

Mr. VELLODI (India) and Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) stated that although they would not oppose a maximum of 11 m. for 3-axled vehicles, they could not accept it.

Mr. W.J. HUNT (United Kingdom) was unable to accept a maximum of 11 m.

The CHAIRMAN, speaking as representative of Czechoslovakia, stated that he could accept a figure of 12 m. for 3-axled lorries and motor buses, since heavy lorries from foreign countries, including Belgium, Norway and Sweden, of greater length than 12 m. were already admitted into Czechoslovakia.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, observed that the majority of the Committee was in favour of a maximum of 11 m., and asked whether representatives of Czechoslovakia, France and Italy, who were prepared to see it raised to 12 m., could accept the lower figure.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) replied in the affirmative.

Mr. VEZZANI (Italy) stated that he could accept 11 m. as far as lorries were concerned, but was still in favour of 12 m. for motor buses.

Mr. CHARLOTEAUX (Belgium) stated that although his Government was in favour of a maximum length of 12 m. for 3-axled vehicles, he would accept a figure of 11 m., subject to the reservation that motor buses of 12 m. should be allowed in international traffic.

Mr. VELLODI (India) stated that in the light of the foregoing remarks he could accept a figure of 12 m. for motor buses with not less than 3 axles.

The representatives of the LEBANON, the NETHERLANDS, POLAND and the UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA stated that they could not accept a figure of 12 m. for motor buses.

Mr. FAIRBANK (United States of America) observed that motor buses had superior turning ability and a higher speed than lorries. They were therefore less of an obstacle on the road, and representatives might perhaps reconsider their views in the light of those considerations.

At the suggestion of the RAPPORTEUR, the Committee agreed to omit reference to motor buses and to fix a maximum length of 11 m. for all 3-axled vehicles.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, invited the Committee to consider the maximum length which should be fixed for articulated vehicles, recalling that the figure proposed in the ECE Draft was 14 m. and that in the United States proposal 15.5 m. The Czechoslovak proposal (Working Paper MRT/18/47) suggested that the maximum length should be made dependent on the number of axles.

The representatives of FRANCE, LEBANON and ITALY were in favour of a maximum of 14 m.

The representatives of INDIA, the PHILIPPINES and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA were prepared to accept a maximum of 15 m.

Mr. W.G. HUNT (United Kingdom) stated that he could not accept a figure of 14 m.

The Committee decided that the maximum length of articulated vehicles should be fixed at 14 m.

At the suggestion of the RAPPORTEUR, the Committee decided to consider the problem of the maximum length of combinations of vehicles.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, asked whether all representatives could admit two trailers.

The representatives of INDIA, the NETHERLANDS, PHILIPPINES and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA replied that they could not admit a combination of vehicles and two trailers.

Mr. CHARLOTEAUX (Belgium) pointed out that the question of whether combinations of vehicles and two trailers could be admitted, and reference made to it in Annex 8 was still under discussion by the Co-ordination Committee, and had not yet been finally settled.

The Committee agreed, at the suggestion of the RAPPORTEUR, to discuss the question of the maximum length of combinations of vehicles without taking into account the possibility of their having more than one trailer.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, recalled that the figure proposed in the ECE Draft was 20 - 24 m: the Netherlands proposal provided for a maximum of 18 m., and the United States proposal provided for 18.5 m.

Mr. BUZZI-QUATRINI (Austria) stated that his Government could accept a maximum of 22 m. where there was more than one trailer. Where there was only one trailer, it was in favour of a maximum of 17 m.

Mr. VEZZANI (Italy), Mr. WICHRZYCKI (Poland) and Mr. FREDERIKSON (Sweden) could accept a maximum of 22 m. for a combination of vehicles and one or two trailers.

Mr. NAP (Netherlands) stated that his Government might accept a figure of 22 m. on main international arteries.

Mr. VELLODI (India) stated that he could not accept a higher figure than 18.3 m.

Mr. W.G. HUNT (United Kingdom) could accept a maximum of 18.3 m. for combinations with one trailer.

Mr. FAIRBANK (United States of America) stated that his Government would not accept a combination of more than one trailer, and therefore could not go beyond the limit of 18.5 m.

Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) asked whether the earlier decisions concerning the maximum permissible weight of single-unit vehicles applied to combinations of vehicles, and whether they in fact meant that the maximum permissible length of trailers was 11 m.

The CHAIRMAN replied that the maximum lengths adopted for single vehicles applied equally to the component parts of a combination.

Mr. RUMPLER (France) drew the attention of the Committee to Part II of Annex 8, paragraph 3, sub-paragraph (b), whereby Contracting States were required to indicate if they were only prepared to accept one trailer, and stated that the Committee should fix the maximum length of combinations of vehicles according to the number of trailers.

Mr. AZKOUL (Lebanon) stated that his Government would more readily accept a figure of 18 m. for a combination with one trailer, but asked whether acceptance of that figure implicitly involved the acceptance of a maximum load of 32,000 lbs., which he had been instructed to oppose when it came up for discussion.

Mr. BANG (Denmark), Rapporteur, replied that acceptance of the maximum length of a combination of vehicles could be provisional, pending the discussion of maximum weight of vehicles. He pointed out, however, that the maximum length for single-units and articulated vehicles had already been formally accepted.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.