

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0013/09
pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure
by Georg Jarzembowski, Corien Wortmann-Kool and Mathieu Grosch, on behalf of the PPE-DE
Group
to the Commission

Subject: Evaluation of driving hours and rest periods (Regulation(EC) No 561/2006)

Since 2006 both Regulation(EC) No 561/2006¹ and Directive 2006/22/EC² on driving hours and rest periods have been applied. This legislation provides, in a large degree of detail, harmonised rules aiming to improve road safety and social protection for truck drivers, and to guarantee a level playing field for road hauliers in Europe. In its first years of existence, the legislation on driving hours and rest periods has received a considerable amount of criticism, among both road hauliers and truck drivers. A number of aspects is being criticised, ranging from limited flexibility, impractical or unclear provisions, differing interpretations and excessive fines for relatively minor infringements, not to mention the enduring problems with the digital tachograph.

On the digital tachograph and the categorisation of infringements the Commission has started up some initiatives to reduce the problems. However, a number of serious problems is also specifically linked to the legislation of the driving hours and rest periods *itself*. The Commission has published some guidelines on these problems, but in practice these guidelines have limited effect.

In the current legislation, there is unfortunately no provision included on a thorough evaluation of the driving hours and rest periods. Considering the problems regarding the way the current provisions are set up, interpreted and enforced, an evaluation in 2009 would be extremely useful and the least Europe could do to show its citizens and companies that it is taking their concerns seriously.

1. Is the Commission aware of the problems that are arising with road hauliers and truck drivers on the way the current legislation of driving hours and rest periods is set up, and is the Commission aware of the excessive fines for relatively minor infringements?
2. Does the Commission acknowledge the problems relating to the provisions on driving hours and rest periods, apart from the digital tachograph?
3. What has the Commission done so far to reduce the problems from the current legislation?
4. Is the Commission prepared to start an evaluation on the current legislation on driving hours and rest periods in 2009? If not, why not?
5. What other activities is the Commission planning to undertake to reduce the problems.

Tabled: 28.01.2009

Forwarded: 30.01.2009

Deadline for reply: 06.02.2009

¹ OJ L 102, 11.4.2006, p. 1.

² OJ L 102, 11.4.2006, p. 35.