

## **P5\_TA(2003)0343**

### **Safety of coaches**

#### **European Parliament resolution on safety of coaches**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its position at first reading of 14 January 2003 on the proposal for a European Parliament and Council regulation on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 2135/98 of 24 September 1998<sup>2</sup> on the introduction of the digital tachograph,
  - having regard to its resolution of 12 February 2003 on the Commission White Paper on European transport policy for 2010: time to decide<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to the Commission's Communication on a European Road Safety Action Programme - Halving the number of road accident victims in the European Union by 2010: A shared responsibility (COM(2003) 311),
- A. whereas, according to statistics, more than 42 000 people are killed each year on EU roads,
- B. whereas a comprehensive road safety strategy, guided by numerical targets, is needed to address this major public health and safety problem; whereas reducing injuries that result from driver impairment, especially driver fatigue, is an important part of that activity,
- C. whereas the recent tragic bus accidents in Siofok, Hungary, on 8 May, with 33 tourists killed, and near Lyons in France, on 18 May, with 28 tourists killed, and other recent accidents show that the human factor considerably influences road safety,
- D. whereas the Commission proposed a general revision of Regulation (EC) No 3820/85 on the harmonisation of certain social legislation relating to road transport and driving time<sup>4</sup>, replacing it with a new one; whereas, subject to substantial amendment, Parliament was prepared to accept this action and concluded its first reading on 14 January 2003; whereas the Council has not yet adopted a common position on this subject,
- E. whereas the use of the digital tachograph will improve surveillance and control of drivers' driving hours and rest periods,

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<sup>1</sup> P5\_TA(2003)0008.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 274, 9.10.1998, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> P5\_TA(2003)0054.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 370, 31.12.1985, p. 1.

- F. regretting that up to now the installation of seat belts has not been made compulsory on all new coaches, and that the mandatory wearing of safety belts in coaches so equipped has yet to become general throughout the EU,
- G. whereas Community guidelines covering areas such as railway crossings at major roads, and more generally concerning suitable road conditions and appropriate road design, do not exist,
1. Expresses its firm solidarity with the victims of these accidents and stresses the need to take effective measures as soon as possible in order that such tragic events are avoided in the future;
  2. Demands that the Council take full account of Parliament's position at first reading when adopting its common position on the driving time regulation;
  3. Calls on the Council to accept, in the framework of the draft driving time regulation, the demand of Parliament concerning the introduction of a minimum number of roadside checks to be carried out in the Member States (2% of the total number of days worked);
  4. Urges the Member States to accelerate the transposition of the provisions of Directive 2002/85/EC<sup>1</sup> on speed limitation devices into their national legislation, given the importance of such measures for road safety;
  5. Calls on the Commission to present a legislative proposal on the obligation for coach passengers to wear seat belts and, more generally, on appropriate coach construction as soon as possible;
  6. Calls on the Commission to present legislative proposals amending Council Directives 77/541/EEC relating to safety belts and restraint systems of motor vehicles<sup>2</sup>, 74/408/EEC relating to the interior fittings of motor vehicles (strength of seats and of their anchorages)<sup>3</sup>, and 76/115/EEC relating to anchorages for motor vehicle safety belts in order to render mandatory the installation of safety belts in new touring coaches<sup>4</sup>;
  7. Calls on the Commission to speed up transposition of Directive 2003/20/EC of 8 April 2003<sup>5</sup> on the approximation of laws of the Member States relating to the compulsory use of safety belts in vehicles of less than 3.5 tonnes, by which the mandatory wearing of safety belts in touring coaches thus equipped is introduced for passengers whilst seated;
  8. Stresses the importance of proper implementation of the Commission's recent proposal on the training of professional drivers<sup>6</sup>, which should contribute significantly to the quality of driving of professional coach drivers throughout the EU;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 327, 4.12.2002, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 220, 29.8.1977, p. 95.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 221, 12.8.1974, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 24, 30.1.1976, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 115, 9.5.2003, p. 63.

<sup>6</sup> OJ C 154 E, 29.5.2001, p. 258.

9. Asks the Commission to present proposals to facilitate exchanges in best practice between Member States regarding areas such as railway level crossings at major roads and, more generally, concerning suitable road conditions and appropriate road design;
10. Welcomes the Commission Action Programme on European Road Safety and calls on the Commission to support the demand to put special emphasis on intensified and accelerated measures for the greater safety of coaches;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.