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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

for an action programme on road safety

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The current situation

Of all modes of transport, it is our roads which are responsible for the most accidents. Statistics speak volumes about the extent of the road safety problem.

Each year, road accidents are the cause of about 50 000 deaths and more than a million and a half injuries on the Community's roads.

Since the Treaty of Rome was signed, almost two million people have been killed in the twelve Member States and more than 40 million injured.

Some experts put the economic cost of these accidents to the Community at about ECU 70 thousand million per year, this being an average of estimates which vary from ECU 45 to ECU 90 thousand million according to the method used.

But the dangers of our roads are not an inevitable fact of life. Although it is unrealistic to expect to eliminate the problem once and for all, the measures taken by several Member States have proved to be effective in producing a significant fall in the number of accidents and victims.

Transport safety, and especially road safety, is therefore a concern of the highest order for all those responsible for transport policy in the Community.

On this point, the White Paper on "the Future Development of the Common Transport Policy" states that the evolution that is bound to follow completion of the internal market only serves to underline even more the need for appropriate Community action on safety.¹ It goes on to say that it is for this reason, no doubt, that the Union Treaty contains a modification of Article 75 which makes clear that the Common Transport Policy should include measures to improve transport safety.

¹ COM(92)494 final, adopted by the Commission on 2 December 1992.

The White Paper therefore examines road safety in the context of a single transport market, analyses the socioeconomic costs to the community, attests the European Community's competence in this area and sets out an integrated approach to the problem justified by the principle of subsidiarity and based on qualitative targets.

1.2 Background

Prior to 1984, road safety was only taken into account at Community level where the rules on competition and on the free movement of persons and goods might have been undermined by a failure to take action. It was seen only as a by-product of common policies in various sectors: technical rules for vehicles, social conditions of professional transport, driving licences, etc.

In 1984, the Council adopted a resolution in which it stated the need for Community action in this field.¹ To this end, it called on the Commission to submit proposals and declared 1986 European Road Safety Year. European Road Safety Year served as a reference point and a launch-pad for the establishment of a programme of measures to improve road safety in the Community, a programme which also included the objectives set out by the European Parliament (inter alia, the Seefeld Report of 15 June 1987).

In 1989, in its communication "Road Safety: a priority for the Community", the Commission provided an overview of the Community's achievements since 1986 and announced the presentation to the Council of a package of legislative measures.²

Most of the measures proposed since 1986 have been adopted (see chapter 2) except for those on speed limits and on fixing a maximum permitted blood alcohol concentration which have been before the Council since 1989. Against this background, the adoption of Directive 91/671/EEC of 16.12.91 on the compulsory wearing of safety belts and the use of restraint systems for children can be seen as a significant step towards a Community road safety policy.³

1 Resolution of the Council of 19 December 1984, OJ C 341, 21.12.1984, p. 1.

2 COM(88)704 final of 9.1.1989.

3 OJ L 373, 31.12.1991.

In December 1989, the Commission asked a committee of independent experts to draw up a report into the road safety situation of the twelve Member States and to make proposals for its improvement. The committee of experts presented its report (the Gerondeau report) in 1990.¹

In a resolution adopted on 21 June 1991, the Council requested the Commission to draw up and implement a Community programme of measures on road safety.² It invited the Commission to form a high-level working party for this purpose made up of representatives of Member States' governments.

Since it was formed, this working party has met on several occasions.

The Group's discussions were based on suggestions from the Member States, current or planned Commission activities and the Gerondeau report, and focused in particular on:

- the definition of common objectives;
- criteria for establishing priorities for a programme;
- resources and instruments for implementing and developing the programme.

These discussions resulted in the report attached to this communication, which was finalized in April 1992.

1.3 Guiding principles and purpose of this communication

This communication is the response to the request from the Council referred to above. It was based largely on the report contained in the annex which represents the findings of the high-level working party and presents an action programme for the short and medium term.

Community action in the road safety field has also recently received significant support from the European Parliament which, on 12 March 1993, adopted a road safety programme containing many points in common with the programme included in this communication.³

1 Report by a high-level group of experts on European road safety policy, February 1991.

2 Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 21 June 1991, on a Community programme of action on road safety, OJ C 178, 9.7.1991.

3 OJ C,1993.

With the exception of chapter 2, which takes stock of current legislation, the key points of this communication are contained in chapters 3 and 4 which include respectively proposals in the process of being adopted, other ongoing activities and activities in the Commission's programme for the short and medium term in the field of road safety.

The principle of subsidiarity introduced at Article 3b of the Treaty on European Union is apparent throughout the proposed programme, which ties in with the observation made in the White Paper on Community action in the field of transport safety.¹

In view of the variety of different road safety situations in the Member States and the lack of an effective means at Community level for identifying and quantifying problems in an appropriate way or for comparing the effect of the different measures adopted by Member States, no cost/benefit analysis has yet been made on a Community scale, although some States already use this approach for certain initiatives. It is mainly on the basis of the experience of the Member States that the report of the high-level working party (see point 1.2 above) suggested that the Commission carry out specific measures in seven priority fields for action.

In this respect, it is important to point out that the creation of the data bank on injury accidents, referred to at point 4.2.1.1 below, should provide a partial response to the objective contained in this approach and enable a better assessment of priorities and determination of the required degree and type of Community action for the medium and long term.

¹ Article 3b: the Community shall take action only "if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States".

2. CURRENT ROAD SAFETY LEGISLATION

Legislation on road safety already exists in its own right in the framework of the common transport policy and also under other policies. Altogether this represents an important body of Community legislation, the impact of which on road safety is felt both directly and indirectly.

2.1 Vehicles, technical aspects

2.1.1 Community involvement in this sector dates back to 1970. Since then, more than fifty separate directives have been adopted on type-approval of motor vehicles on the basis of the framework Directive 70/156/EEC,¹ as last amended by Directive 92/53/EEC of 18 June 1992.² Technical harmonization has also been achieved in respect of agricultural and forestry tractors by Directive 74/150/EEC³ and by the formulation of specific directives for two- and three-wheel vehicles (Directive 92/61/EEC).⁴ The directives already adopted have also been adapted several times to take account of technical progress.

Although the principal aim of this legislation, based on Articles 100 and 100A of the Treaty, was the removal of barriers to the free movement of goods, the safety aspect was present either implicitly or explicitly (e.g. braking systems, lighting and light-signalling devices, safety belts and their anchorages, lateral protection of HGVs, rain flaps, etc.), by virtue of the reference under Article 100A(3) to the high level of protection in matters relating to safety.

2.1.2 At the same time, legislation directly concerned with road safety also exists in relation to technical aspects of motor vehicles. This is the case particularly with two Directives on the minimum depth of tread on tyres (for vehicles having a maximum weight not exceeding 3.5 tonnes)⁵ and on the installation and use of speed limitation devices (HGVs having a maximum weight exceeding 12 tonnes and buses and coaches exceeding 10 tonnes).⁶

1 OJ L 42, 23.2.1970.

2 OJ L 225, 10.8.1992.

3 OJ L 84, 28.3.74, p. 10.

4 OJ L 225, 1.8.1992, p. 72.

5 Directive 89/459/EEC of 18.7.1989, (OJ L 226, 3.8.1989)

6 Directive 92/6/EEC of 10.2.92, (OJ L 57, 2.3.1992).

2.1.3 Legislation already adopted relating to roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles - starting with Directive 77/143/EEC on goods vehicles¹ and recently supplemented by Directives on light goods vehicles,² on the harmonization of standards and testing methods³ and on private cars⁴ - represents a very important aspect of active and passive vehicle safety and aims to ensure that vehicle maintenance keeps it in the best possible condition.

In addition, the Council has adopted two Directives, the first of which defines the criteria and items for testing the braking system,⁵ while the second sets maximum limit values for gaseous emissions and the opacity of exhaust fumes,⁶ with the aim of ensuring adequate levels with respect to safety and the environment for all vehicles in the Community.

2.2 Driver behaviour

Driver behaviour is the key element in any road safety policy. There are several directives and proposals which deal with the fundamental aspects of driver behaviour. These are:

2.2.1 The first driving licence Directive, adopted in 1980, represented the first stage in the harmonization of the conditions required to obtain a driving licence, as it directly affected driver training.⁷

A second directive in 1991 includes as one of its aims the reinforcement of the provisions relating to training for learner drivers.⁸

2.2.2 A further directive from 1991 makes the wearing of safety belts by drivers and passengers of vehicles with a maximum weight not exceeding 3.5 tonnes and the use of restraint systems for children compulsory as from 1 January 1993.⁹

1 OJ L 47, 18.2.1977.

2 Directive 88/449/EEC of 26.7.1988, OJ L 222, 12.8.1988 + corrigendum OJ L 261, 21.9.1988.

3 Directive 91/225/EEC of 27.3.1991, OJ L 103, 23.4.1991.

4 Directive 91/328/EEC of 21.6.1991, OJ L 178, 6.7.1991.

5 Directive 92/54/EEC of 22.6.1992, OJ L 225, 10.8.1992.

6 Directive 92/55/EEC of 22.6.1992, OJ L 225, 10.8.1992.

7 Directive 80/1263/EEC of 4.12.1980, OJ L 375, 31.12.1980.

8 Directive 91/439/EEC of 29.7.1991, OJ L 237, 24.8.1991.

9 Directive 91/671/EEC of 16.12.1991, OJ L 373, 31.12.1991.

2.3 Other areas of transport policy with an impact on road safety

The common transport policy concerns the environment, social aspects and technical harmonization and consequently has a far from negligible, if indirect, role to play in road safety in the following areas:

2.3.1 Dangerous substances

Community legislation on the transport of dangerous goods by road deals in particular with the training requirements for drivers and carriers, etc., with the aim not only of protecting the environment and public health but also of ensuring road safety.¹

2.3.2 Social legislation

Current social legislation in the road transport sector on the driving time and rest periods of the drivers of vehicles used in the transport of passengers or of goods and the recording equipment relating to it (tachographs), is not only justified in the social and competition sectors, but also contributes to road safety.²

2.3.3 Technical measures

In addition to their main purpose in the context of the common transport policy, technical measures relating to weight and dimensions and other technical characteristics such as the suspension of goods vehicles, are closely linked to road safety requirements and have positive consequences for infrastructure and for the movement of other categories of vehicles.³

1 Council Directive 89/684/EEC of 21.12.1989 on vocational training for certain drivers of vehicles carrying dangerous goods by road (OJ L 398, 30.12.1989).

Council Directive 89/438/EEC amending Directive 74/561/EEC on admission to the occupation of road haulage operator in national and international transport operations (OJ L 212, 22.7.89).

2 Regulations (EEC) 3820/85 and (EEC) 3821/85 (OJ L 370, 31.12.1985) on the harmonization of certain social legislation relating to road transport and to recording equipment.

Council Directive 88/599/EEC of 23.11.1988 (OJ L 325, 29.11.1988, p. 55) on standard checking procedures for the implementation of the above directives.

Communication to the Council of 20.3.1992, SEC(92)496 final, makes an analysis of the implications of replacing the concept of "driving time" by "working time" in the above regulations.

3 Council Directive 85/3/EEC of 19.12.1984 on the weights, dimensions and certain other technical characteristics of certain road vehicles (OJ L 2, 3.1.1985), last amended by Directive 92/7/EEC of 10.2.1992 (OJ L 57, 2.3.1992).

3. CURRENT LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AND OTHER ONGOING ACTIVITIES AND RESEARCH

Since 1989, the year that the communication "Road Safety: a priority for the Community" was published¹ and in addition to the legislative proposals referred to at point 3.1. below, the Commission has embarked on initiatives in the following areas which have resulted either in legislative proposals or in studies and research projects. Initiatives leading to the introduction or to the adoption of Community legislative measures in the short or medium term are marked with an asterisk (*).

3.1 Current legislative proposals

Amongst those measures with a decisive impact on road safety, two in particular concern driver behaviour. These are measures relating to:

- speed limits
- driving under the influence of alcohol

The Commission has made proposals in both areas, one on fixing speed limits for goods vehicles and buses,² the other on maximum blood alcohol concentration levels for drivers.³

As far as dangerous goods are concerned, the Commission has also brought out a proposal for a directive on the vocational qualifications of an officer for the prevention of risks inherent in the carriage of dangerous goods in undertakings which transport such goods.⁴

Finally, as regards vehicles with a significant impact on road safety, the Commission has proposed two legislative measures to the Council, one on coupling systems,⁵ the other on vehicle fire resistance.⁶

3.2 Other ongoing activities

3.2.1 User behaviour

Access to driving mopeds

Monitoring driver behaviour

The impact of wearing safety helmets for drivers of two-wheel motor vehicles

Information campaign on drinking and driving.

1 COM(88)704 final of 9.1.1989.

2 COM(88)706 final of 11.1.1989 (OJ C 33, 9.2.1989).

3 COM(88)707 final of 5.1.1989 (OJ C 25, 21.1.89).

4 COM(91)4 final of 11.8.1991.

5 COM(92)108 final, 30.3.1992.

6 COM(92)201 final, 14.5.1992.

3.2.2 Vehicles

Cars:

- Side impact (*)
- Frontal impact (*)
- Safer fronts for pedestrians (*)
- Seat strength (*)
- Head restraints (*)
- Tyres (*)
- Retractable safety belts for the rear outer seats (*)
- Adjustable upper anchorage (*)
- Air bags (*)
- Lighting and signalling (*)
- Interior design improvements(*)

Buses and coaches:

- Fire resistance (coaches) (*)
- Special provisions relating to buses, coaches and minibuses (safety of doors, steps, emergency exits, etc.) (*)
- Special measures for school buses (removable equipment, sign)

HGVs:

- Front underrun bumpers (*)

Vehicles, all categories:

- Protection of drivers (*)
- Electromagnetic compatibility (*) + (*)
- Fuel tank fire resistance (amendment) (*)
- Alarm systems (*)
- Braking (*)

Roadworthiness tests for vehicles:

- Harmonization of standards (braking systems, speed limitation devices, etc.) (*)

Harmonization of the technical differences for two- and three-wheel vehicles:

lighting, brakes, tamper-proof systems, signals, helmets (*)

3.2.3 Infrastructure

Comparative study of signs and road markings in all Member States.

Within the context of the Directive on construction products (drawn up according to the "new approach"), an explanatory document is due to be adopted shortly dealing with the necessity for safety of use and including a chapter on accidents involving "moving vehicles".¹ This document establishes the ground rules for the harmonization of standards relating to the technical aspects of safety in cases of accidents such as collisions and skids. These aspects will be subject to harmonization by means of mandates from the Commission to the CEN (see point 4.2.5 below).

3.2.4 Improving know-how

Feasibility study into a statistical data bank on injury accidents (CARE project). (See point 4.2.1) (*)

3.3 Road safety under the research programmes

The following ongoing or completed research activities related to road safety should also be mentioned:

- 3.3.1 COST: In addition to the projects which have already been completed on infrastructure problems related to road traffic, COST 313, "Socio-economic costs of road accidents", assesses the various methods for evaluation of the social and economic cost of accidents.²

1 Council Directive 89/106/EEC of 21.12.1988 on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States on construction products.

2 COST 30 "Electronic traffic aids on major roads" (Started: 10.5.77 finished: 30.3.84).
COST 30 A "Electronic traffic aids on major roads" (Started: 31.3.80 finished: 31.3.84).
COST 309 "Road Meteorology and Maintenance Conditions" (Started: 19.2.87 finished: 19.2.89).

3.3.2 EURET-I (Research on transport)

Cost/benefit and multicriteria analysis for new road construction.

3.3.3 DRIVE I (Dedicated Road Infrastructure for Vehicle Safety in Europe)

Under the heading of the application of new technologies and telecommunications to transport, DRIVE I has devoted several specific projects to the subject of road safety.

Pedestrians

- Traffic planning taking pedestrian flows into account;
- Models for positioning traffic lights in relation to pedestrian movements;
- Automatic pedestrian detection at crossings and timing of traffic lights.

Cyclists

- Automatic detection at crossings and timing of traffic lights;
- Models for cyclist flow management in relation to cyclist movements.

Drivers

- Automatic detection of driver failures (traffic rule violations, state of driver: e.g. fatigue, alcohol);
- Automatic highway code enforcement system;
- Automatic policing systems;
- Automatic tutoring systems;
- Assistance for elderly drivers;
- Assistance for drivers with special needs.

Vehicles

- Adaptation of information presentation and control functions to the task of driving, the traffic situation and driver experience;
- Automatic vehicle failure detection and information;
- Automatic accident recording;
- Intelligent cruise control.

3.3.4 Advanced Road Transport Telematics

Within the continuation of the DRIVE programme, the R & D programme "Advanced Road Transport Telematics" stresses on-site testing and proving of telematic systems, most of which were put in place as pilot projects.

Some projects, representing a total budget of about ECU 18 million, deal more specifically with road safety:

- HOPES: Horizontal project for the evaluation of traffic safety and man-machine interaction;
- ARIADNE: Development of an intelligent driver and navigation support system; collision avoidance radar and information system for enhancing driver capabilities;
- VRU-TOO: Observation of pedestrian traffic and optimization of pedestrian detection systems located at junctions and crossings;
- SAMOVAR: Safety assessment monitoring on-vehicle with automatic recording; recording vehicle and driver behaviour in relation to road safety;
- HARDIE: Harmonization of roadside and driver information in Europe;
- CITRA: System for the control of dangerous goods transport in international alpine corridors;
- ROSES: Road safety enhancement system which takes into account road and weather conditions;
- DETER: Detection, enforcement and tutoring for driver error reduction (project for the development of a prototype for the detection of driver behaviour);
- EDDIT)
- TELAID): New technologies for elderly and disabled drivers;
- EMMIS: Evaluation of man/machine interaction;
- TESCO: Test on cooperative driving;

- COMIS: Communication system for cooperative driving;
- PROMISE: Mobile and portable information system in Europe.

The following other projects could also be mentioned:

- PRIMAVERA: Priority management for vehicle efficiency, environment and road safety on arterials;
- PORTICO: Portuguese road traffic innovations, consisting of the surveillance of vehicles transporting dangerous goods and accident detection and warning systems.

3.3.5 The current research programme on Industrial Technologies and Materials (BRITE/EURAM II) could also make a contribution to passive vehicle safety through projects related to new materials and new technologies for industrial design and manufacture. The aspects related to infrastructure (road and road network construction and maintenance, tunnels and surfacing, etc.) are covered under the BRITE/EURAM II programme.

Ongoing or new projects in this field (see 4.2.2) relate to precompetitive and prenormative aspects for safer vehicles. Part of this work could lead to specifications for vehicle type-approval.

4. THE ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMME

4.1 Guidelines

On the basis largely of the April 1992 report by the High-level Group of Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, which is attached to this communication, the Commission believes that a draft programme for Community action should include the following guidelines:

- the desirability of an overall approach giving rise not only to legislation but to other measures as well;
- the need to take integrated action on the factors on which road safety depends (driver behaviour, vehicles and infrastructure);
- the "added value" of Community Initiatives as against national measures (the principle of subsidiarity).

4.2 Priority fields for action and new initiatives

This programme will be directed towards the following priority fields for action:

- exchange of information and experience and setting-up a Community data bank, proposed research (see point 4.2.1 below);
- active and passive vehicle safety (see point 4.2.2 below);
- user education and driver training (see point 4.2.3 below);
- measures related to behaviour (see point 4.2.4 below): measures to encourage sensible driving and the influence of alcohol, drugs and fatigue on drivers;
- infrastructure and road safety (see point 4.2.5 below);
- measures to promote improvements in the safety of the transport of dangerous substances by road (see point 4.2.6 below);
- the problem of aspects of advertising which are bad for road safety (see point 4.2.7 below).

While taking full account of existing Community legislation and the measures now in hand, which are described in points 2 and 3 above, these fields for action, taken all together, provide a master plan for the programme.

The High-level Group's proposals provide a basis which will enable the Commission to take new initiatives for the implementation of a road safety programme.

The new initiatives described below should be seen in the context of the new Treaty of Maastricht. Not only does the amended Treaty explicitly confirm Community competence in transport safety ("measures leading to improvements in transport safety" in new Article 75(c)), but it also explicitly introduces the principle of subsidiarity (new Article 3b). Amongst these initiatives, the Group's efforts have made it possible to draw a distinction between measures of a legislative and those of a non-legislative nature in the light of the principle of subsidiarity.

4.2.1 Exchange of information and experience and setting-up a Community data bank: proposed research

This field of action is of a horizontal nature and represents an innovative aspect of the programme in that it demonstrates the advantage of Community-level action in a non-legislative framework. It will constitute one of the main lines that must guide the programme as shown in point 4.1 above.

This type of intervention fits in with one of the comments made in the Gerondeau report on "desirable new forms of intervention" (see in particular part 2, chapter III of the Gerondeau report). The Commission believes that considerable effort should be put into the development of exchanges of information and experiences of the Member States. In this context and in addition to its involvement in research as such, the Commission must play a role in the coordination of research programmes, especially in relation to those priority areas which are the subject of this communication.

By way of example, several projects on these lines are in progress in the framework of the fields for action referred to in 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5, in areas where Community legislation needs to be supplemented or is lacking, while taking into account the "added-value" principle, which represents one of the guidelines of the programme. In this context, the Commission proposes to give as much support as possible to initiatives with a Community angle involving the media and public information (publicity campaigns, conferences, etc.) on specific topics. It is clear, however, that in order to improve know-how, it is first necessary to gain access to information both in statistical form and concerning legislation and regulations on road safety and traffic.

In this context, the Commission proposes to create two essential and complementary tools, i.e.:

- a Community data bank on road accident statistics (CARE project);
- a documentary file on road safety.

4.2.1.1 The CARE project - Community data bank on road traffic accidents in Europe

The primary objective of the creation of a Community data bank of road accidents involving personal injury (including deaths and injuries) is to provide the Community with a tool giving access to statistical data which would enable studies, research projects and analyses to be set up in areas related to road safety, thereby helping determine the appropriate degree of intervention. One of the first steps in the fight against road accidents is the identification and quantifying of problems so as to define the measures required and then to measure their effectiveness.

Besides providing and enabling the exchange of information, the creation of a Community road accident data bank establishes a platform for international cooperation and leads to a degree of coordination conducive to the development of road safety in the Community.

The introduction of such a data bank can only facilitate the transfer of experience from one country to another without duplication of the research effort. It would also help international committees or organizations to establish standards or regulations relating to road traffic, motor vehicles and integrated road safety policies.

What is special about the CARE project is that this data bank will have the advantage over other past and present efforts by international bodies of consisting of disaggregated data, i.e. data that is broken down at the level of the accident. This type of data offers a much higher research potential because all the classic indicators are revealed by disaggregated data: total number of injuries, deaths, breakdown of these totals under various sub-headings: nature of the impact, time, age of driver, etc.

Thanks to the greater degree of accuracy it provides in the study of cause, disaggregated analysis allows results to be transferred more easily from one situation to another, and hence from one country to another.

This transferability corresponds to one of the essential aims because the fact that it contains data concerning countries with differing structures gives each country the opportunity to obtain information on situations which occur less frequently there than in other Member States.

Similarly, pooling statistics from several countries may allow a Member State to have access to information on the effectiveness of measures taken in other Member States which it might consider adopting.

Following an initial experimental phase, and on the basis of procedures established with the agreement of the Member States, access to the CARE data bank could be extended to regional and local administrations, road safety research institutes, automobile manufacturers and consumer bodies with an interest in this field. Confidentiality will, of course, be respected as any element enabling a person to be identified by name will be omitted from the data bank.

4.2.1.2 Creation of a documentary file on road safety

Information exchange on an international scale comes up against two major barriers:

- the availability of information (existence, type, location, etc.)
- the consultation of information (medium, language, etc.)

The Commission proposes to launch a feasibility study on the creation of a documentary file on road safety, which would be available to a whole variety of users (national and local authorities, international bodies, research institutes, consumer groups, industry, etc.). Initially, this will involve defining the file contents (traffic regulations, measures taken, experiments, research, etc.), the format (data medium) and the procedures for gathering and updating information.

4.2.1.3 Proposed research

The 4th Framework Programme will open up new possibilities for research activities contributing towards the goal of improving road safety. Such activities could touch upon infrastructure, vehicles and driver behaviour (individual or systemic), and could be included in existing specific programmes from the 2nd and 3rd Framework Programmes, or form part of a specific new measure dealing with transport.

In this context, road safety issues will continue to be taken into account within the framework of research into telematic systems and industrial technologies and materials.

4.2.2 Active and passive vehicle safety

The development of new standards for vehicle construction and the improvement of equipment and parts represent one of the three key elements in the "road safety system" (driver, vehicle, infrastructure).

The improvement of the technical aspects of vehicles is a matter for the Community's competence in the area of technical standards governing vehicle construction and conformity. Consideration could be given to the issue of whether technical harmonization can make room for national initiatives to improve road safety, provided that they do not constitute a major barrier to the free movement of goods and persons.

The cost/benefit ratio of measures in this sector merits special attention.

Besides the ongoing measures described under 3.2.2 above, the Commission also proposes to take the following new initiatives in the short and medium term in this field:

- improvement of vehicle passenger protection in case of impact with special reference to the following:

- study into the vehicle-related safety measures most likely to reduce the extent of injuries in case of accident;

- child protection;

- Active safety:

- improving standard safety features by the use of electronics;

- new features;

- leg protection devices for mopeds;
- devices for preventing increasing speed limits imposed by construction, in particular for two-wheel motor vehicles.

Finally, as far as research is concerned, ongoing projects and the DRIVE programme (phase II) are looking into the possibility of using new technologies in order to increase road safety with respect to vehicles in the framework of a Community road safety programme.

4.2.3 Education of road users and driver training

Road safety education represents an invaluable tool for improving road safety. Its horizontal nature makes it an indispensable element in national road safety policies in the form of training and prevention measures for all categories of user (drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and children).

The Commission can play a useful role in this area - in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity - by its contribution to and support for education, especially in relation to road safety teaching in schools, training for professionals and the organization of public information campaigns. Although such activities are primarily the responsibility of other authorities, the Community's support, in particular by way of assembling and producing relevant information on experience gained in the whole Community, would be a significant bonus achieved at less cost than would be involved in taking action on a widespread basis.

In relation to drivers, on the basis of experiments in certain Member States on "accompanied driving" or "early introduction to driving" and driver monitoring (provisional licence), the Commission is to study ways of improving the behaviour of learner and new drivers.

A decision will be made on the sort of initiative to take (legislative measures, information campaign, advertising, etc.) in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

As far as the problem of moped users is concerned, the Commission - on the basis of a study that it set up (see point 3.2.1) on access to driving such vehicles - intends to draw up a legislative initiative on training for the drivers of these vehicles, as they constitute a particularly vulnerable category of user.

Finally, in the context of the new driving licence Directive¹ and with the dual purpose of facilitating the free movement of drivers within the Community and improving safety by making the information on driving licences more comprehensible, the Commission intends to propose a coding system for the additional information contained in licences and to promote information exchanges and cooperation between the national authorities concerned.

4.2.4 Measures relating to behaviour

A large number of the initiatives relating to behaviour have already been the subject of directives (driving licence, safety belt) or legislative proposals (speed limits, alcohol). To complete these measures, the emphasis will be on non-legislative initiatives for improving behaviour relating to the following areas:

4.2.4.1 Measures to encourage sensible driving

The impact of speed on road safety is widely acknowledged.

The Directive on speed limitation devices² and the proposal on speed limits (COM(88)706),³ referred to above in points 2.1.2 and 2.2.3 on goods vehicles and buses, are a response to this concern.

Nevertheless, the issue of sensible driving goes beyond the question of speed limits alone and could figure in other measures in the technical field (in relation to vehicle design and infrastructure planning) as well as in the context of measures on education and prevention.

Proposed measures:

- in the technical field:

a study to research the technical possibilities of adapting a vehicle's speed according to the conditions and class of road;

1 Directive 91/439/EEC of 29.7.1991, OJ L 237, 24.8.1991.

2 Directive 92/6/EEC of 10.2.1992, OJ L 57, 2.3.1992.

3 OJ C 133, 9.2.1989.

an exchange of experience relating to solutions at a national level involving infrastructure planning for sensible driving. In this context, the Commission's role could be to stimulate debate and to pool solutions (see point 4.2.5 below), in particular by studying the possibility of measures related to infrastructure planning which could encourage drivers to drive sensibly.

- In the context of measures relating to education and prevention, it is proposed to cooperate closely with the Member States and international organizations in the area of public information.

4.2.4.2 The influence of alcohol, drugs and fatigue on driving

The influence of alcohol on road safety has been highlighted by research, which has continued to show the level of alcohol as one of the major causes of road accidents. According to some studies, the percentage of drivers killed in road accidents with a blood alcohol concentration of more than 0.80 mg/ml varies between 15% and 45% depending on the Member State. This fact lies behind the Explanatory Memorandum to the proposal for a Directive presented to the Council in January 1989, which fixed a maximum blood alcohol concentration for drivers of 0.5 mg/ml.¹

As far as legislation is concerned, in addition to the above proposal on the maximum permitted blood alcohol level, the Commission is to investigate the possibility of an initiative on standardization and type-approval for testing apparatus.

The issue of driver awareness and education in this area is undoubtedly one of great significance and should complement control measures. In this connection, the Commission proposes to carry out fresh information campaigns on the same lines as those done in conjunction with the AIT (International Touring Alliance) in 1991 and 1992.

In addition to the provisions relating to alcohol contained in Directive 80/1263/EEC and reinforced by the driving licence Directive, 91/439/EEC (Annex III), the same Directives also include provisions relating to the taking of drugs or medicinal products which might affect the driver's mental and physical fitness for driving.

¹ COM(88) 707 (see above).

In relation to this last point, the Commission is to study the effect of drug use on road safety and the possibility of a user information campaign.

Likewise, fatigue appears to be a significant contributory factor in accidents, especially for professional drivers. The Commission is therefore planning technical improvements which would provide drivers with better information as well as more effective control of compliance with the driving time requirements.

4.2.5 Infrastructure and road safety

Disregarding the appropriate level of action, whether Community or national, for a particular measure, road infrastructure plays a significant role in the whole of the "road safety system" (user, vehicle, infrastructure, enforcement). The improvement of the capacity and quality of road networks is one of the most effective and lasting factors in road safety, whether it involves design, construction, maintenance, equipment (e.g. signs and signals), planning with safety in mind, or traffic management.

The report "Trans-European Networks: Towards a Master Plan for the Road Network and Road Traffic",¹ which recommends the adoption of a Community policy dealing both with the road network and road traffic, points out the need for standardization of technical characteristics and identifies the aim of ensuring a high level of service, information and safety for users. As far as the introduction of such networks is concerned, it is to be expected therefore that the Community should devote its full attention to measures for reducing the number of road accidents which, nowadays, take a terrible toll both in human and in economic terms.

This report, which refers to the general aim of a "proper road policy", identifies several clearly defined objectives relating to safety requirements under the headings of "modernization of the network" and "traffic policy".

¹ See chapters 6 and 7, and in particular chapter 8, of this report (doc. VII/308/92 final), which was drawn up in May 1992 by the Motorway Working Group (consisting of national and international experts, formed within the Transport Infrastructure Committee).

These include the following points:

road surface characteristics;

dynamic equipment (driver guidance and driving aids), which is the subject of ongoing research under the DRIVE and PROMETHEUS programmes in relation to new technologies and also with reference to the need for standardization in this respect;

fixed equipment and, in particular, vertical signposting and road markings, while pointing out the importance of standardizing them on major roads at least.

As far as fixed equipment is concerned, the interpretative document on safety requirements in relation to infrastructure, referred to in 3.1.3 above, will form the basis for the harmonization of European standards covering the following factors, *inter alia*:

the skid resistance of road surfaces, in terms of materials used;

the skid resistance and day and night visibility of road markings;

the technical specifications of road signs and signals (other than the choice of shapes, colours and pictograms);

the essential characteristics of permanent road fittings (crash and safety barriers, shock absorbers, etc.), in particular as regards adaptation to the different categories of vehicle.

In the light of this report, the Commission has sent a communication to the Council and Parliament which includes a proposal for a decision on the creation of a trans-European road network (COM(92)231 final) which would involve, inter alia, a unified European system for road classification and signs (Art. 3). The Council welcomed this proposal at its meeting of 15 March 1993.

In conjunction with the updating of the Vienna Conventions by the United Nations in Geneva,¹ the Commission has requested two studies, one dealing with direction signs, the other with regulatory signs, with the aim of looking at the different practices in Member States. A study has already been carried out on temporary signs and signals.

On the basis of the results of these studies, the Commission will be able to look into the desirability of harmonizing some signs.

Finally, the measures referred to under 4.2.1 should also have a role to play and complement the abovementioned initiatives. Measures should be taken, in particular, to increase the exchange of information on technical aspects of infrastructure related to road safety and the pooling of know-how in this field, with the Commission acting as prime mover and coordinator.

4.2.6 Measures to promote improvements in the safety of the transport of dangerous substances by road

Faced with the increasing volume of transport of dangerous goods by road, and in order to improve safety and prevent accidents which not only have dramatic consequences in terms of human lives but sometimes have a catastrophic and irreversible impact on the environment, the Commission is to propose the completion of the existing measures referred to at point 2.3.1 by:

- the introduction of Community measures for the application of international agreements (ADR/RID) on the transport of dangerous substances to national transport and the uniform application for international traffic;
- the setting-up of harmonized procedures for the inspection of vehicles transporting dangerous substances;
- harmonization of the training requirements for drivers of vehicles intended for the transport of such goods.

4.2.7 The problem of aspects of advertising which are bad for road safety

This problem is the subject of consideration by public authorities and non-governmental organizations devoted to road safety and accident prevention.

¹ The Vienna Conventions of 1968 on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, completed by the 1971 European Agreements and the 1973 Protocol on Road markings.

The problem was discussed in the context of European Road Safety Year in 1986 and was included amongst the measures proposed by the European Parliament (Seefeld report).

In 1989, the ECMT's (European Conference of Ministers of Transport) Road Safety Committee drafted a report on this subject, which gave rise to a resolution¹ entitled "The harmful effects of advertising on road safety".

The Commission considers that it is important, while safeguarding the freedom of expression and creativity of the media, to observe the principles of road safety and consumer protection at Community level.

The Commission proposes therefore to establish a dialogue on this subject with the organizations concerned, in particular those which represent car manufacturers and consumer groups at Community level, with the aim of studying the possibility of drawing up a European code of conduct under which manufacturers would undertake, as already happens in certain Member States, not to run counter to the aims of road safety in their advertising campaigns.

¹ Resolution 56 (CM(89) 37) adopted by the Council of Ministers of Transport at their meeting in Paris on 22.11.1989.

5. IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME

Taken together, the measures proposed and in progress, and the new initiatives described above, represent the basic content for setting up an action programme on road safety.

The Commission takes note and shares the wish of the High-Level Group of government experts on road safety to continue meeting in order to promote the exchange of information, to be consulted and to be involved in the development and implementation of the programme in question. By the same token, the Commission will also consult the non-governmental organizations concerned.

The Commission will carry out these consultations and will arrange for the resources required to implement the programme to be made available through the usual procedures.

6. CONCLUSION

Road safety is an area of the utmost importance in any transport policy. Its social and economic ramifications are enormous.

Safety requirements can clearly fall within the area of the Community's exclusive powers, for example, because they affect the free movement of vehicles or transport services. Where they do not fall within that area, the application of the subsidiarity principle may lead to the conclusion that action is best taken at other levels. But the amendment of Article 75 of the Treaty on European Union now makes it quite clear that, even in the absence of an exclusive power, transport safety is a matter which should be addressed by the Community when it is in a position to act usefully.

This, therefore, is the background against which the Commission is proposing initiatives for the short and medium term. The principal measures are listed in the attached Table II. However, it should be pointed out that, even before the Council Resolution of 21 June 1991 (see point 1.2), the Commission was not idle as many measures covering various fields relating to road safety were adopted and others proposed which are still awaiting adoption. All these measures are summarized in Table I which is also contained in the annex.

It must be acknowledged that it has not been possible to satisfy the Council's request, which it made in its resolution, for the evaluation of the cost/benefit ratio of measures for inclusion in the action programme, this being due to the lack of a suitable instrument for providing a precise analysis of the consequences of these measures at the Community level. For this reason, the first priority in the action programme is the creation of a disaggregated data bank which should enable the proposed initiatives to be monitored and the situation to be analysed and assessed, thereby ensuring the continuity of the action and allowing the possibility of presenting further initiatives for examination. As far as the other proposed Community measures are concerned, the majority represent an extrapolation of national experience as presented by the high-level working party.

Finally, the growing significance of non-legislative measures at Community level should be stressed, whereby the Community increasingly plays the role of coordinator, e.g. by means of exchanges of know-how and experience or by recommendations. Such initiatives represent a substantial number of the measures proposed in the programme.

Once the current legislative initiatives and those proposed in the programme have been adopted, and in the light of the implementation of the non-legislative measures, the Commission will draft an evaluation report of the measures taken before the end of 1996.

TABLE ICURRENT LEGISLATIONVEHICLES, TECHNICAL ASPECTS (2.1.)Date of
adoption

92/53/EEC	Type-approval of motor vehicles and their trailers (framework directive) (2.1.1.)		18.06.1992
+	Approximation of the technical rules relating to type-approval		
71/320/EEC	Braking devices of certain categories		26.07.1991
-74/132	" (adaptation)		11.02.1974
-75/524	" (adaptation)		25.07.1975
-79/489	" (adaptation)		18.04.1979
-85/647	" (adaptation)		23.12.1985
-88/194	" (adaptation)		24.03.1988
-91/422	" (adaptation)		15.07.1991
76/756/EEC	Installation of lighting and light-signalling devices		27.07.1976
-80/233	" (adaptation)		21.11.1979
-82/244	" (adaptation)		17.03.1982
-83/276	" (amendment)		26.05.1983
-84/8	" (adaptation)		14.12.1983
-89/278	" (adaptation)		28.03.1989
-91/663	" (adaptation)		10.12.1991
76/115/EEC	Anchorage for safety belts		18.12.1975
-81/575	" (amendment)		20.07.1981
-82/318	" (adaptation)		2.04.1982
-90/629	" (adaptation)		30.10.1990
77/541/EEC	Installation of safety belts and restraint systems		28.06.1977
-81/576	" (amendment)		20.07.1981
-82/319	" (adaptation)		2.04.1982
-90/628	" (adaptation)		30.10.1990
89/297/EEC	Lateral protection of HGVs		13.04.1989
91/226/EEC	Spray-suppression systems		27.03.1991

etc.

89/459/EEC	Tread depth of tyres of vehicles < 3.5 tonnes (2.1.2.)	18.07.1992
92/6/EEC	Speed limitation devices (HGVs > 12 tonnes; coaches and buses > 10 tonnes (2.1.2.))	10.02.1992
77/143/EEC	Roadworthiness test (2.1.3.)	29.12.1976
-88/449	" (amendment)	26.07.1988
-91/225	" (amendment)	27.03.1991
-91/328	" (amendment)	21.06.1991
-92/54	" (amendment)	10.08.1992
-92/55	" (amendment)	10.08.1992

DRIVER BEHAVIOUR (2.2.)

80/1263	Driving licence (2.2.1.)	4.12.1980
91/439	"	29.07.1991
91/671/EEC	Use of safety belts and restraint systems by vehicles < 3.5 tonnes (2.2.2)	16.12.1991

DANGEROUS GOODS (2.3.1.)

89/684/EEC	Vocational training (2.3.1)	21.12.1989
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SOCIAL LEGISLATION (2.3.2.)

3820/85/EEC	Certain social legislation relating to road transport	20.12.1985
3821/85/EEC	Recording equipment	20.12.1985
-3314/90	" (adaptation)	16.11.1990
-3688/92	" (adaptation)	21.12.1990
88/599/EEC	Standard checking procedures	23.11.1988

TECHNICAL MEASURES (2.3.3.)

85/3/EEC	Weights and dimensions	19.12.1984
-86/360/EEC	" (amendment)	24.07.1986
-86/364/EEC	" (plate)	24.07.1986
-88/218/EEC	" (amendment)	11.04.1988
-89/338/EEC	" (amendment)	27.04.1989
-89/460/EEC	" (amendment)	18.07.1989
-89/461/EEC	" (amendment)	18.07.1989
-91/60/EEC	" (amendment)	4.02.1991
-92/7/EEC	" (amendment)	10.02.1992

PROPOSITIONS SUR LA TABLE DU CONSEIL

Date du
Document

o VEHICULES, ASPECTS TECHNIQUES

Com(92)108 final	Systèmes d'attelage (3.1)	30.03.1992
Com(92) 201final	Résistance au feu (3.1)	14.05.1992

o COMPORTEMENT DU CONDUCTEUR

Com(88)707 final	Alcoolémie (3.1)	5.01.1989
Com(89)640 final	(modification)	7.12.1989
Com(88)706 final	Limitations de vitesse (véhicules utilitaires et autobus) (3.1)	11.01.1989
Com(91)66 final	(modification)	25.03.1991

o MARCHANDISES DANGEREUSES

Com(91)4 final	Préposé à la prévention des risques (3.1)	11.06.1991
Com(92)327 final	(modification)	14.08.1992

PROGRAMME D'ACTION

TABEAU II

Actions législatives à court ou moyen terme	Date prévisible adoption	Etudes menant le cas échéant à des actions législatives	Autres mesures non-législatives
<p>O <u>Banque de données communautaire (CARE)</u> - (3.2.4. et 4.2.1.1)</p>	93	<p>O Mesures spécifiques aux transports scolaires (3.2.2.)</p> <p>O Formation des conducteurs des cyclomoteurs (4.2.3.)</p>	<p>O Mise en place de projets pilote sur test et validation des systèmes télématiques sur site (3.3.4.)</p>
<p>O <u>Sécurité des véhicules</u> (Harmonisation des règles techniques dans le cadre de la réception)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voitures particulières • (crash-test, appui-tête, résistance des sièges, etc...) (3.2.2) • amélioration des conditions de protection des passagers (4.2.2.) • Poids lourds (3.2.2.) • (dispositif anti-encastrément) 	94	<p>O Codification des mentions additionnelles sur le permis de conduire (4.2.3.)</p> <p>O Contrôle plus efficace du temps de conduite (tachygraphe) (4.2.4.)</p>	<p>O Recherche envisagée dans 4ème Programme-cadre (4.2.1.3)</p> <p>O Etude de faisabilité d'un fichier documentaire de sécurité routière (4.2.1.2)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Véhicules toutes catégories (3.2.2.) • (protection conducteurs, avertisseurs, ...) • 2 roues (4.2.2.) • dispositif visant à empêcher l'augmentation des vitesses 	94	<p>O Harmonisation et homologation des appareils de contrôle de l'alcoolémie (4.2.4.2)</p> <p>O Signalisation et marquage (3.2.3. et 4.2.5.)</p>	<p>O Etude des expériences sur la conduite accompagnée apprentissage anticipé ou permis provisoire (4.2.3.)</p> <p>O Education routière scolaire : mise en commun d'expériences (4.2.3.)</p>
<p>O <u>Contrôle technique (3.2.2.)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directive sur valeurs limites admissibles de freinage • Directive sur CT des limiteurs de vitesse 	> 94	<p>O Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonisation en matière d'équipement fixes (résistance au glissements de la chaussée... (4.2.5.) • Signalisation de direction (recherche d'une approche communautaire) (4.2.5.) 	<p>O Examen de l'incidence des drogues sur sécurité routière (4.2.4.)</p>
<p>O <u>Matières dangereuses (4.2.6.)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directive cadre sur harmonisation des législations des E.M. • Uniformisation des procédures de contrôle 	93	<p>O Crash-test (étude pour développer nouvelle procédure) (4.2.2)</p>	<p>O Etude des possibilités techniques d'adapter la vitesse aux conditions de la route (4.2.4.1)</p> <p>O Renouvellement campagnes sur l'alcool et la conduite (4.2.4.2)</p>
<p>O <u>Contrôle du temps de conduite (4.2.4.)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Règlement introduisant un appareil de contrôle digital 	94		<p>O Publicité nuisible à la sécurité routière : définition d'un "European code of conduct" (4.2.7.)</p>

**PRIORITY FIELDS FOR ACTION
AND GUIDELINES FOR
A COMMUNITY ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMME**

HIGH-LEVEL GROUP OF GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

FINAL REPORT

APRIL 1992

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2. Community accident statistics

Road safety in the Community

1. Introduction

1.1 On 21 June 1991 the Council and the Representatives of the Government of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted a resolution which, inter alia

- (a) stressed the importance of new efforts to improve road safety,
- (b) requested the Commission to draw up and implement a programme of measures at EC level, and to bring Member States' activities more into line with each other,
- (c) asked the Commission to invite a High-Level Group to define the aims and methods of implementation of such a programme.

In response to this resolution (the text of which is given in Annex 1) a High-Level Working Group of government representatives was set up by the Commission. This report is a distillation of its work and sets out the objectives, guidelines and priorities for action which it has adopted. The proposals made by the Members of the Group will form the basis for a Community road safety programme to be prepared by the Commission and forwarded to the Council.

1.2 Despite earlier initiatives at EC and national levels, including European Road Safety Year 1986, the road safety situation in the Community remains unsatisfactory, to say the least. As Annex 2 shows, the total number of accidents with personal injuries in the Community has remained relatively static in recent years at 1.2 million and the casualty level almost stable at an intolerable 50 000 deaths and over 1.6 million injured per year. Moreover the economic danger to the Community has been estimated by some experts at about ECU 70 billion per annum, taking the mid-value of a range from ECU 45 to 90 billion.

1.3 Despite these appalling human and economic losses, less public attention and less consistent effort has been given to road safety than would be tolerated in epidemics with similar effects. This may be partly because road accidents are widely scattered and involve complex interactions between the human and technical elements involved. However, as a former Minister of Transport expressed it so graphically: "If three Jumbo jets crashed in one week with the loss of 1 000 lives, the aviation industry would be turned upside down; yet in the Community we continue to live with 1 000 deaths every week from road accidents." It is the realization that this state of affairs cannot be allowed to persist which has led the Council to declare the urgent need for a consistent and effective road safety policy and programme at Community level.

1.4 Casualty and other data in Annex 2 and the studies mentioned below, show up considerable differences between Member States in the level of road safety and its incidence on particular groups of road users, though precise and agreed comparisons are difficult to establish.

1.5 Earlier reports by the Commission, the European Parliament and others, as well as the Council Resolution on European Road Safety Year 1986¹ drew attention to the scale of the efforts required to improve road safety and to the different levels at which activities should be

¹ Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Communities, meeting within the Council, of 19 December 1984 on road safety (84/C 341/01).

undertaken. In its recent comprehensive review the Gerondeau Working Party¹ addressed the complex issues concerned and identified no fewer than 80 activities of value, without at this stage attempting to rank them in order of priority. The report concluded that despite its various activities in road safety the Community had not yet defined a coherent road safety policy, let alone implemented one. Irrespective of the discussion on certain aspects of Community competence in the field of road safety, there was scope both for more legislative action and the development of new Community activities in the sphere of coordination and persuasion, in close collaboration with the Member States and other organizations involved in road safety. Bearing these needs in mind, several expert reports have addressed the problems of organization as a means for achieving road safety objectives.

1.6 Even today, however, there are numerous ongoing and planned Community activities in road safety. These are:

(a) existing legislation relating to:

vehicle construction,
tyres,
driving licences,
technical inspection of vehicles,
wearing of seat belts,
speed limitation devices for heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches,
safety windscreens;

(b) planned legislation on:

blood alcohol levels,
speed limits for certain vehicles,

¹ Report of the High-Level Group for a European Policy on Road Safety, February 1991.

(c) study of legislation on:

more stringent technical standards for private and heavy goods vehicles,

road signs and signals;

(d) research and other non-legislative activities:

the DRIVE programme,

some aspects of EURET¹,

the CARE statistical road safety data bank.

1.7 The High-Level Group of Government Representatives has met on four occasions, 20 September and 5 November last year and 17 February and 10 April this year, and there have been informal contacts between them and the Commission, as well as amongst each other.

The Group notes that, on the basis of its preliminary conclusions, the Commission has also consulted non-governmental associations active in the road safety field, such as the AIT/FIA², PRI³, IRU⁴, ACEA⁵, IRF⁶, FEVR⁷, ECF⁸ and IFP⁹. It is keeping in close touch with international governmental bodies such as the OECD, ECMT, UN/ECE and the WHO and is also following closely the initiative of the European Parliament which is expected to adopt a new report on road safety in the coming months.

1 Commission research programme on transport.

2 AIT - International Touring Alliance.

FIA - International Automobile Federation.

3 PRI - International Road Safety Organization.

4 IRU - International Road Transport Union

5 ACEA - Association of European Car Manufacturers.

6 IRF - International Road Federation

7 FEVR - European Federation of Road Accident Victims.

8 ECF - European Cyclist Federation.

9 IFP - International Federation of Pedestrians.

2. General Objectives

2.1 Before a Community road safety programme can be fruitfully set up, its general objectives must be defined. In this connection two major aspects have been considered:

- (a) the desirability of setting quantitative objectives or targets;
- (b) the level at which such objectives should be defined (EC, national etc.).

This report naturally concentrates on the Community dimension of road safety and should be read with this purpose in mind.

2.2 As regards the general Community objective, it would at least theoretically be conceivable to set a quantitative target different from the national objectives of the Member States. For example, a reduction of 20% to 30% in road casualties as suggested in the Gerondeau Report could be set as a long-term (10 to 15 years) objective for the Community. It could be attained at different speeds in the Member States, and those Member States with poor current records could make special efforts to achieve above average reductions. Setting EC objectives for the medium term (5 years) would, of course, be more difficult.

2.3 The High-Level Group discussed the desirability of quantitative targets in depth. A number of Member States do set such targets and have put forward good arguments in their favour, such as the political and real value of giving precise indications for planning. In other Member States, which recognise the attractions of setting such targets, experience has been less satisfactory. In some cases, despite the introduction of

specific safety measures, overall road safety deteriorated because of the effect of other more important factors, including notably the growth in road traffic. There have also been instances of campaigns that proved unexpectedly successful and in which possible targets have been easily exceeded. For these reasons the Group felt that it would not be appropriate at this relatively early stage of greater Community involvement with road safety to set quantitative EC targets. It is intended, however, to monitor closely the achievement of national targets and to profit from the experience for determining future road safety policy at EC level.

2.4 In these circumstances it is all the more important to set qualitative targets as part of a coherent overall strategy, which is designed to encourage the creation of a homogeneous European road safety space and culture. In this respect a number of basic ideas and principles have been put forward:

- (a) taking road safety into account in other policies and projects, both at Community and national level;
- (b) proposing and implementing measures to encourage calm driving;
- (c) defining standards to improve vehicle safety;
- (d) paying greater attention to the most important factors causing accidents and to the most vulnerable road user categories.

2.5 As regards point (a) above the Group reviewed a suggestion for a framework directive which would provide that road safety considerations should be taken into account in Community transport and other policies, somewhat on the lines of environmental impact statements. It was pointed out that this idea was being incorporated into the projects now being put forward for the second DRIVE research programme. The Group takes the view that, even without such a framework directive, road safety should already be made an integral part of the common transport policy and other Community policies. Points (b), (c) and (d) were accepted as appropriate aims.

The Group felt that "calm driving" had very wide application, especially in the sphere of information, education and publicity, and that it stretches across the three safety areas of users, infrastructure and vehicles. Higher vehicle safety was of particular and direct interest to the Community in view of the predominant EC role in setting vehicle standards, whilst it was becoming clear that some categories of vulnerable road users had not shared the improvement in safety standards imposed on others.

2.6 In view of the heterogeneous nature of legislative and other national/EC measures for improving road safety members of the Group compiled a list of specific items in the field of road safety and indicated whether these should be carried out at EC or national level.

2.7 The Group then discussed possible criteria for rating measures in order of priority recommended by the Gerondeau report in the light of the initiatives being taken by the Commission:

- (a) cost/benefit ratio which compares the value of the expected reduction in accident victims and material damage resulting from the introduction of the proposed measure with the direct cost of the equipment and manpower required and takes into account other effects, e.g. on the environment;
- (b) public acceptance which attempts to measure the extent to which restrictions on freedom or extra costs would be acceptable to those affected. This criterion is closely linked to:
- (c) enforcement capability, i.e. the volume of police and similar resources which can be devoted to the road safety sector and the role of the legal system which must set penalties broadly acceptable to society for the offences committed;
- (d) political circumstances may add an ad hoc criterion, in so far as a bad accident may create a favourable climate for legislative or other road safety measures;
- (e) long term education and social developments should be borne in mind, especially when assessing measures in the sphere of behaviour.

2.8 Finally, in looking at the particular role to be played by the Community the Group emphasized that two further elements must be added to these general criteria:

- (a) concentration on those measures for which EC activities would

provide "added value" over and above national and/or regional action;

- (b) recognition of the need for action at EC level where it cannot be taken by Member States because of the provisions of the Treaty, e.g. in the vehicle construction field.

2.9 In the light of the above considerations the Group reviewed the initial replies to the Commission's questionnaire and revised some of the rankings provided therein. Measures and priorities were also considered in relation to the three classic areas of road safety: users, vehicles and the infrastructure. It became clear that, whilst measures relating to vehicles had long been the main focus of EC road safety activity, prior to the coming into force of the Single European Act safety considerations had sometimes played a secondary role in the drive to complete the internal market and remove technical obstacles to trade. By virtue of the new Article 100a the highest level of protection is mandatory, thus making EC vehicle regulations more safety conscious and providing higher construction safety standards.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION PROGRAMME

3.1 In the light of the action being taken by the Commission the High-Level Group was of the opinion that, in order to carry out the most effective road safety policy at Community level which would have a tangible impact on the intolerably high level of casualties and economic damage at present being inflicted, it was necessary to concentrate on a few high priority fields of action.

Having reviewed the Member States' own priorities and action being undertaken by the Commission, the Group came to the following conclusions:

- 3.1.1 the Community should take greater action on road safety in legislative and other fields;
- 3.1.2 Community measures and initiatives should be evaluated on the basis of both other common criteria and the added value they make to national activities;
- 3.1.3 among the range of possible long-term Community initiatives priority should be given in the short term to:
 - (a) measures to moderate speed,
 - (b) the problems of alcohol connected with driving,
 - (c) education of road users, including driver training and road safety education at school,
 - (d) greater active and passive vehicle safety,
 - (e) exchange of know-how and experience, including a Community data bank,

(f) combating publicity which may adversely affect road safety, especially as regards vehicle speed;

(g) infrastructure aspects relating to road safety.

3.2 The Group looked at possible practical measures and action which might be taken by the Community to implement the priorities outlined above.

Appropriate proposals will be included in a Community programme which the Commission will draw up and put before the Council on the basis of this report.

3.3 The Group discussed funding for such a programme in the course of its work on non-legislative measures (exchange of information and pooling of research).

Various suggestions for an appropriate organizational framework were also examined. They included ideas put forward by others for setting up an "independent" road safety agency or road safety council, on lines similar to the European Environmental Agency or to "federal" road safety institutions in the United States or Canada. Without excluding further consideration of such options in the longer term, the High-Level Group - representing the views of both Member States and the Commission - thought that road safety was and should remain essentially in the public domain, as an instrument of government policy.

At this stage the High-Level Group came to the conclusion that it would be premature to establish an independent organization or indeed to determine the final shape of the body to handle road safety.

3.4 It is essential, however, to provide continuity in implementing the above programme. It is, therefore, proposed that the High-Level Group should continue the work it has successfully begun, in determining the contents and establishing priorities for the Community road safety programme whilst establishing closer links between the Member States and the Commission.

International organizations concerned with road safety should be involved in the Community's work as far as possible.

3.5 On the question of a permanent role the Group would like, in addition to holding ad hoc discussions with the Commission and groups of government experts in preparing practical legislative initiatives, to work together with and be consulted by the Commission on non-legislative action where the Community is to play a new role, i.e.:

- (a) exchange of experience;
- (b) publicity (awareness campaigns at community level);
- (c) supporting Member States' road safety activities;
- (d) exploiting the results of the CARE statistical road safety data base;
- (e) study, follow-up and reporting on the road safety situation in Member States;
- (f) additional or new activities.

3.6 The Group concluded that the present level of - human and financial - resources allocated to road safety within the Commission was inadequate and would not cover such a programme and that additional measures should be provided through the normal administrative channels.

I

(Information)

COUNCIL

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

of 21 June 1991

on a Community programme of action on road safety

(91/C 178/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

Having regard to the European Parliament's resolution of 13 March 1984 on the introduction of a programme of Community measures to promote road safety (*) and the resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Communities, meeting within the Council, of 19 December 1984 (†) relating in particular to 1986 as Road Safety Year in the Community,

Having regard to the European Parliament's 1987 report on Road Safety Year,

Having regard to the Commission communication to the Council of 9 January 1989 entitled 'Road safety: a priority for the Community',

Whereas road traffic must be expected to increase, in particular following the completion of the internal market in 1992;

Whereas the human suffering and the social cost of road accidents that each year cause more than 50 000 deaths and more than 1 500 000 injuries are unacceptable not only from the moral and political but also from the economic and social points of view;

Whereas, in this situation, a special effort must be made to improve road safety in all sectors pertinent to the prevention of road accidents, including vehicle manufacture and equipment;

Whereas action should be taken at Community level to intensify national measures, where joint action is likely to be more effective than measures taken on an individual, uncoordinated basis by the Member States,

REAFFIRM the importance of improving transport safety, particularly road safety;

REQUEST the Commission to draw up and implement a Community programme of practical measures designed to put into effect new common initiatives and compare existing national experience in the different fields of action and research in the campaign against road accidents and the consequences for the victims of such accidents;

REQUEST the Commission to form a high-level working party of representatives of the Governments of the Member States to define the objectives of, and the detailed arrangements for implementing, this programme, taking into account previous measures and studies as well as initiatives currently being carried out in this area;

CONSIDER that such a working party should undertake a cost-benefit analysis of the measures to be included in the programme;

REQUEST the Commission to submit a report to the Council by December 1991, accompanied, if appropriate, by initial proposals for the implementation of the programme from 1992.

(*) OJ No C 104, 16. 4. 1984, p. 38.

(†) OJ No C 341, 21. 12. 1984, p. 1.

Road Accidents in the European Community:Number of deaths 1975-91 (a)

COUNTRY		1975	1980	1985	1988	1990	1991(b)
B	Belgium	2 346	2 396	1 801	1 967	1 978	1 881
DK	Denmark	827	690	772	713	634	604
D	F.R. Germany	14 870	13 041	8 400	8 213	7 906	7 465
							(c)
GR	Greece	1 187	1 372	1 908	1 692	1 945	1 955
E	Spain	5 833	6 522	6 374	8 252	9 032	8 843
F	France	14 166	13 499	11 387	11 497	11 215	10 325
IRL	Ireland	586	564	410	463	478	439
I	Italy	10 177	9 135	7 629	7 425	7 085	9 095
L	Luxembourg	124	98	79	84	70	80
NL	Netherlands	2 321	1 997	1 438	1 366	1 376	1 289
P	Portugal	3 479	2 941	2 438	3 294	3 140	3 564
UK	United Kingdom	6 679	6 239	5 342	5 230	5 402	4 700
EC		62 595	58 494	47 978	50 196	50 261	50 240
	Other ECMT (7)	17 283	14 778	15 507	17 813	17 201	
ECMT (19)		79 878	73 272	63 485	68 009	67 462	
USA	United States	44 425	51 091	43 825	47 093		
J	Japan	14 206	11 752	12 039	13 447		

Source: ECMT

Notes: (a) deaths converted to 30-day basis.

(b) Estimated on basis of provisional data for 1991.

(c) D = 11 Länder.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

A. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Title of the operation: A Community road safety programme
2. Budget heading involved: B-2 - 702
Other heading can be involved (for example, research).
3. Legal basis:
Article 75 of the Treaty.
4. Description:
 - 4.1 Objective: to promote and develop, by legislative and non-legislative measures, road safety in the Community.
 - 4.2 Duration: open-ended.
5. Proposal for classification of expenditure or revenue
 - 5.1 non-compulsory expenditure
 - 5.2 differentiated appropriation
 - 5.3 type of revenue involved: None
6. Type of expenditure or revenue
 - 6.1 100% grant: no
 - 6.2 Grant co-financed by other private/public sector sources: yes
 - 6.3 Interest rebates: no
 - 6.4 Others: studies
 - 6.5 In case of the measure making a profit, is a partial or total reimbursement of the Community financial support foreseen? no
 - 6.6 Does the proposed action imply modification of the level of revenues? no

7. Financial Impact

7.1 Method of calculating the total cost of the action.

At the level of the Community, the measures to be taken will be most often studies, which will be subject to the normal Commission rules.

Because of the wide-ranging nature of the measure, and the need to await guidelines from the Council which can be translated into concrete, costed, actions, it is not possible at this stage to give a total cost.

The monies required for the programme are included in the framework of the future financial perspectives, for the period 1993 - 1997.

7.2 Distribution by measure

	BUDGET 93	PDB 94	% VARIATION
Studies			
Data collection	PM	PM	
Others			

7.3 Administrative costs directly linked to this measure

None

7.4 Indicative scale of commitments

In MIOECU

BUDGET 1993	PDB 1994	INDICATIVE PROGRAMME			
		1995	1996	1997	1998 and after
Budget heading B2-702 (partly)	1,8 MECU	PM	PM	PM	PM

8. Anti-fraud measures foreseen in the proposal

Normal procedure

B. Administrative cost (Part A of the Budget)

none

C. Cost Benefit Analysis

9. Elements of Cost Benefit Analysis

9.1 Objectives

Road transport safety is an accompanying measure of the Common Transport Policy.

9.2 Justification of the measure.

As the objective is to improve road safety in the Community, it is legitimate to consider the socio-economic benefits to the Community. The most recent studies on the socio-economic cost of road accidents (e.g. COST 313) estimate the cost per death at 500.000 ECU and per injury at +/- 125.000 on average.

Given that road accidents cause each year, around 55.000 deaths and 1 1/2 million injuries (light or serious) the total socio-economic cost could be estimated at around 46.000 million ECU per year.

The multiplier effects are unknown.

9.3 Follow-up and evaluation of the measure.

9.3.1 Performance indicators chosen: periodic reports.

9.3.2 Method and timing of the evaluation foreseen: usual controls

9.4 Coherence with the financial programming.

9.4.1 Is the measure foreseen in the DG's financial programme for the years in question? yes

9.4.2 Indicate which general objective of the DG's financial programme corresponds to the objective of the proposed measure.

Common Transport Policy, transport safety.

9.4.3 Major unforeseen factors which could affect the specific results of the measure: none

