ETSC's

25 April 2007

Transport Safety Dinner

"Safe & Sober"
Preventing drink driving in commercial transport

Chairman: **Murray Mackay** (ETSC)
Panelists: **Bjorn Stafbom** (SRA) **Joel Valmain** (European Commission), **Nils Petter Gregersen** (NTF), **Martin Mönnighoff** (DHPol), **Lennart Pilskog** (Volvo Trucks), **Carolyn Panzer, tbc** (Diageo)
Welcome by: **Herman De Croo** (ETSC President)

In a report produced in response to the Commission's mid-term review of the European Road Safety Action Programme, the European Parliament has recently called on Members States to consider introducing a zero alcohol limit for new drivers and professional drivers. In light of this call, and of the recently developed EU Alcohol Strategy to reduce injuries and deaths from alcohol-related road traffic accidents, ETSC is organising a Transport Safety Dinner to discuss ways of preventing abuse of alcohol by commercial drivers. The event will also mark the launch of a new 3-year ETSC campaign on preventing drink driving in commercial transport: "Safe and Sober".

The effects of alcohol on driving performance range from anaesthesia after large amounts of alcohol to impairment of behavioural and cognitive capabilities after small doses. Alcohol may also decrease motivation to comply with safety standards, which may result in an active search for dangerous situations (such as competitive behaviour, or excessive speed). In general, all functions which are important in the safe operation of a motor vehicle can be affected by alcohol abuse.

Currently, there are five different limits operating in EU countries, ranging from 0.8 mg/ml to 0.0 mg/ml. Some countries (Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Spain) have introduced a special limit for professional drivers with the aim to obtain a substantial reduction in alcohol related deaths caused by this category of road users.

It is primarily the responsibility of the transport operator to manage the operation safely, and of the driver to drive safely and only when in a fit condition to do so. These responsibilities should be the starting point for a framework regulation for the safe management of the fleet for all operators irrespective of size.

There certainly needs to be a consistent level of enforcement across the Community, with penalties designed to strongly influence behaviour towards compliance. Consideration should be given to measures which would support and encourage small operators with few management resources to develop more effective management of their operation.

New technology could also work to reduce deaths caused by drink driving. Alcolocks are devices that require the driver to take a breath test before starting the car. If the driver fails the test, the device locks the ignition so the engine will not start. Alcolocks also hold some promise as a primary prevention tool in professional transport. Conditions should be created to promote their use in professional transport sector including tour operators, (local) bus companies, dangerous goods or heavy freight transport companies, and taxi companies.

European Transport Safety Council

Finally, responsible advertising is a prerequisite for all countermeasure activity. There is a need to encourage a climate of opinion that drinking and driving is a socially unacceptable activity. There is empirical evidence that publicity campaigns contribute to the required attitude change. The alcohol industry has an important role to play in conducting responsible advertising of its products.

ETSC's Transport Safety Lunches and Dinners are the site for openly debating promising and successful European approaches to prevent both accidents and injuries in transportation. They bring together decision makers from the transport sector in Brussels, thus establishing a platform to exchange information and views for all those interested in transport safety.

Following a buffet dinner the experts provide the audience with an insight into innovative transport safety work. By addressing the most pressing problems they are paving the way for sharing knowledge and experience of how to best reduce transport-related accidents and injuries. The debates will explore possibilities of how key actors can develop the political and organisational leadership that it takes to implement effective safety schemes.

The Events provide good opportunities for both public authorities from all EU countries and private companies from all transport sectors to present their technical and organisational measures for the improvement of safety and security within the different modes of transport.



Professor Herman De Croo MP, Speaker, Belgian Chamber of Representatives

ETSC's Transport Safety Dinner

On 25 April 2007 from 19:00 to 21:15

"Safe & Sober. Preventing Drink Driving in Commercial Transport"

At Hotel Leopold, Rue du Luxembourg 35, B-1050 Brussels

Free of charge
Limited seats

More information: Mr. Timmo Janitzek, timmo.janitzek@etsc.be
Mr. Antonio Avenoso, antonio.avenoso@etsc.be

Please register online (www.etsc.be) before 20 April 2007

22 rue du Cornet
B-1040 Brussels

Tel +32 (0)2 230 41 06/40 04
Fax +32 (0)2 230 42 15

research@etsc.be
www.etsc.be