NEWS RELEASE

# EU Policy Makers, Businesses and NGOs discuss drink driving in a work context in the European Parliament

*5th of November 2013, Brussels* – **"Despite European and national policies [to address drink driving], the level of harm […] on the roads and at workplaces is still unacceptably high in all Member States," said MEP Dieter Lebrecht Koch, Vice Chairman of the European Parliament's Transport and Tourism Committee and Observer on the ETSC[1] Board, during yesterday's dinner debate. The kick-off event of the SMART – Sober Mobility Across Road Transport – project gathered MEPs, representatives of the European Commission and a number of stakeholders within the road safety community to debate and share ways of addressing drinking and driving in a work context.**

On behalf of the European Commission, Casto López Benítez presented the current policy framework of the EU road safety policy, with a focus on the work context and drink driving. This includes legislation on the organisation of working time, driving time and rest periods for professional drivers, the driving licence Directive and the Directive dealing with initial qualification and periodic training of drivers, the Directive on Cross-Border Enforcement of traffic offences, the recommendations on maximum BAC limits and traffic law enforcement, but also a number of initiatives which address drink driving: the Road Safety Charter and the upcoming Urban Mobility Package. Mr. López Benítez also mentioned progress on an EC-commissioned study assessing the use of alcohol interlocks as a measure to prevent and deter drink driving.

Providing the experience of a national workplace health and safety regulator, Deirdre Sinnott of the Health and Safety Authority in Ireland stressed the importance of a cooperative, enabling approach with employers to tackle drink driving, rather than a prescriptive one. She stressed that drivers need to be made aware of the important differences between driving for private journeys and the responsibilities and risks entailed by driving in a work context. "There are certain areas of individuals' attitudes and sometimes also behaviour while driving in which employers are uniquely well placed to address," she said.

The final part of the evening focused on the experiences of three private sector employers, Rauwers Controle, Arriva Denmark and SAB Miller, in implementing policies to address alcohol in the workplace and particularly on the road.

The presentations of yesterday's event are available at http://www.etsc.eu/SMART-dinner.php

The SMART project receives funding from The Brewers of Europe and will represent the two organisations' commitment under the European Alcohol and Health Forum of the European Commission.

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**Notes to editors:**

[1] ETSC is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries in transport in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 46 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.eu