



NEWS RELEASE

Brussels, 27 June 2005

“Wanted: a Strong UK Leadership on Road Safety”

As the U.K. prepares to take up the Presidency role of the EU, ETSC⁽¹⁾ urges the new Presidency holder to put safety high on its list of transport tasks. The U.K. is the best-performing EU country on road safety with one of the lowest death rates in the world⁽²⁾. It should therefore prioritize actions to extend its experience across Europe during its upcoming Presidency of the European Union.

The UK takes over the driving seat of the EU at an important time for the future of road transport safety. The Mid Term Review of the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme⁽³⁾, impatiently awaited by road safety stakeholders, is due to be one of the major transport dossiers to be considered under the UK Presidency. ETSC's principal recommendation as set out in its Memorandum⁽⁴⁾ to the U.K. Presidency: “The U.K. Presidency must demonstrate political leadership, especially to deliver a sufficient response to the Mid Term Review of the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme.” The UK should use its experience to support other Member States, especially the worst performing, in ways to decrease their level of road risk. The Mid Term Review will evaluate progress achieved up to 2005 on the way towards halving road deaths and injuries in Europe by 2010⁽⁵⁾.

The U.K. Presidency is also due to chair the third Verona Council meeting of Transport Ministers on Road Safety in November 2005. ETSC's Executive Director, Jörg Beckmann, today called upon Alistair Darling, the U.K. Transport Minister, to use his Presidency and leadership “to launch a road safety process at the Verona Council and to accompany the Mid-Term Review with concrete policy initiatives including a Directive on cross-border enforcement and the so-called infrastructure safety package”.

For more information contact: ETSC Programme Officer Ellen Townsend
programme@etsc.be Tel. + 32 (0) 2 230 4106

Notes to Editors:

(1) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of transport crashes and casualties in Europe. ETSC seeks to identify and promote effective measures on the basis of international scientific research and best practice. It brings together 26 international and national organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.

(2) 7.4 deaths per billion motor vehicle km. compared with an EU average of 13.1; ETSC (2003) :Transport Safety Performance in the EU - A Statistical Overview

(3) http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/transport/road/library/rsap/rsap_en.pdf

(4) http://www.etsc.be/documents/Memorandum_UK_Presidency.pdf

(5) http://www.etsc.be/documents/pre_30sept03.pdf