



NEWS RELEASE

Brussels, 22 June 2006

Review of Transport Safety Policy – mobility yes, but not without safety!

ETSC⁽¹⁾ regrets the lack of concerted action taken by the European Commission in the area of road safety in its Mid-term review of the White Paper on Transport (2001)⁽²⁾ adopted today. There are still over 43,500⁽³⁾ deaths every year in road traffic. It seems that, even in the important field of transport safety, the meditative phase of EU policy making has taken root.

Measures to increase road safety must be the priority, as 97% of all transport deaths occur in the road mode. ETSC continues to call for a traffic system that is better adapted to the needs, errors and physical vulnerabilities of its users rather than one which expects users to cope with increasingly demanding conditions. One of the only concrete commitments included in the Mid-term review of the White Paper is to organise a European road safety day from 2007 onwards. This is not a strong enough measure to address the traffic system's inadequacies. In isolation a European road safety day will not deliver a sustained impact on road safety⁽⁴⁾.

ETSC's Executive Director Jörg Beckmann stresses *"Alongside awareness initiatives, the White Paper's Mid-term review must be followed up by regulation in areas where clear safety benefits can be reaped"*. The Mid-term review has failed to provide an inspiring vision of safer road use. Such strong political leadership is key not only to bringing about further improvements in the better performing Member States but also in the laggard states.

In its response to the Commission's Consultation in December 2005⁽⁵⁾ ETSC stressed the need to urgently develop legislation to raise standards in all EU countries in the following areas: infrastructure, enforcement (in the areas of speeding, drink driving and seat belts also across borders); lastly the transport system should also improve safety for the needs of all transport users (including motorcyclists, pedestrians and cyclists).

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Notes to Editors:

(1) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), founded in 1993 is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of the number and severity of transport crashes in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 34 national and international organisations in membership, leading transport safety experts from across Europe.

(2) Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Keep Europe moving – Sustainable mobility for our continent, Mid-term review of the European Commission's 2001 Transport White Paper, June 2006

(3) Figures for 2004 in the EU-25. CARE Community Road Accident Database: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/care/statistics/series/fatal1991_actual/index_en.htm

(4) ETSC fact sheet: "How to create a Road Safety Day or Week in your country?" . http://www.etsc.be/documents/Fact_Sheet_Road_Safety_Day.pdf

(5) ETSC response to the Commission's Consultation document on the White Paper "European transport policy for 2010": time to act. http://www.etsc.be/documents/ETSC_response_WP_consultation.pdf