



## NEWS RELEASE

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#### EU Cross-Border Enforcement of Traffic Rules Can Save Many Lives

EU Member State Representatives gather tomorrow in Brussels for the **High Level Group on EU Road Safety**. On this occasion the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)<sup>(1)</sup> calls for representatives to press for EU action to tackle the increasing problem posed by non-resident traffic offenders *“As cross-border traffic volume increases more must be done urgently to see that traffic rules are applied equally to all EU nationals as they travel”*, stresses ETSC’s Executive Director Jörg Beckmann.

The enforcement of rules covering speeding, drink driving and the use of seat belts alone can help prevent 14 000 fatalities by 2010, according to Commission estimates. This has been recognised at an EU level with the adoption of the EC Recommendation on Traffic Law Enforcement<sup>(2)</sup>. Yet, lack of compliance with traffic law by non-resident drivers remains a particularly serious problem in important transit countries such as France and Germany. As shown in ETSC’s fact sheet on Cross-Border Enforcement about 25% of violations detected by speed cameras in France are committed by vehicles registered outside the country<sup>(3)</sup>.

Currently bi-lateral co-operation agreements exist but are mostly unable to tackle the complex problems posed by cross-border enforcement of traffic law. Member States follow up offences, carrying both financial penalties and driving restrictions, in a piecemeal and often resource intensive manner. Yet in the case of financial penalties, both the legal basis for EU legislation<sup>(4)</sup> and the necessary frameworks for information exchange exist. Furthermore VERA 2<sup>(5)</sup>, a Commission funded study, recommended that a European Directive be prepared to facilitate cross-border enforcement of financial penalties in the EU-25. According to Transport Commissioner Barrot, Member States asked the Commission to “grab the bull by the horns” and propose further initiatives at EU level on road safety. *“In the particular field of cross-border enforcement Member States need legislation proposing a workable EU wide approach. Only then will drivers respect traffic law in whichever EU country they are driving”*says MEP Ewa Hedkvist-Petersen.

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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 27 national and international organisations in membership, leading transport safety experts from across Europe.

(2) EC Recommendation on enforcement in the field of road safety (2004/345/EC)

(3) ETSC Fact Sheet on Cross-Border Enforcement, 2005

(4) Council Framework Decision on the Application of the Principle of Mutual Recognition to Financial Penalties (COPEN 24), 2005

(5) The VERA project on recognition of financial penalties and cross-border enforcement has produced a DVD with the project results of VERA 1 and VERA 2. This also includes a video depicting U.K. tourists flouting traffic law in France. Please contact Jan Malenstein for copies of the VERA DVD Email: [j.malenstein@worldonline.nl](mailto:j.malenstein@worldonline.nl); Tel: +31 318518153