

Safety Monitor

ETSC's Newsletter on Transport Safety Policy Developments in the EU

SEPTEMBER

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Editorial

The Commissioner designate for transport, Frenchman Jacques Barrot, has now faced his confirmation hearing in the European Parliament. M. Barrot has pledged to make safety a priority of his tenure. He repeatedly stated the need to continue the progress already made in maritime, rail and aviation safety. For road safety, he promised a thorough review of the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme by the end of next year. He also pledged, in a response to Swedish MEP Ewa Hedkvist-Petersen, to leave no option closed in order to secure the Unions goal of halving road deaths by 2010.

Like the other Commissioner designates Mr. Barrot gave a demonstration of an experienced politician. Pleasing all political perspectives in the European Parliament and avoiding controversy. Yet political progress requires tough decisions, especially in transport safety, where political leadership is so often vital.

During his time in office, Mr. Barrot will have his opportunities to lead transport safety policies in areas such as the protection of vulnerable road users, e-safety, or traffic law enforcement. He will have the chance to get e-safety priorities right and lead Member States in establishing 112 emergency calls; and he can use the unique occasion to promote the success story of his own country by leading Member States towards the implementation of the EU Recommendation on police enforcement.

We also hope that if the upcoming review of the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme highlights a need for additional measures, M. Barrot will not hesitate to suggest these measures and persuade his Commission colleagues as well as the Parliament and Council to adopt them.

Jörg Beckmann
ETSC Executive Director

Across the Modes

EU MONITOR

Brief news

New Transport Commissioner

Transport Commissioner designate Jacques Barrot has set out his priorities in reply to questions asked by the European Parliament. In relation to road transport, he plans to evaluate in a mid-term review the progress made in relation to the EU target of reducing road death by 50%. "Controls and sanctions" will be a major priority for the Frenchman, with a strong focus on cross-border enforcement of traffic rules. Barrot proposes to create a European area of police and judicial cooperation to facilitate harmonised standards, joint controls and the exchange of information.

The Commissioner designate is also considering new legislation in relation to infrastructure, reflective strips, rear view mirrors and daytime running lights, and he is keen to "resume reflection" on the internalisation of certain external costs (including pollution, congestion and accident costs) in the revised Eurovignette Directive.

In maritime transport, three actions are envisaged: enhancing flag state control, enhancing port state control and improving working standards. In the inland waterway sector, the Commissioner plans to focus on the connection of waterways with the rest of Europe and the mutual recognition of certificates.

Regarding the balance between the different modes of transport, Barrot wants to regularly assess the effectiveness of railway liberalisation and promote shipping with new measures to ensure the quality of services if needed.

Jacques Barrot will start his term on 1 November, provided the European Parliament approves his candidature.

Expert group on accident investigation

The European Commission's group of experts on accidents in the transport sector has held its first meeting. The experts set up five working groups to cover the four sectors of transport (road, rail, maritime and aviation) as well as pipelines. A sixth working group on methodology is planned at a later stage.

The group, which will advise the Commission on its transport safety strategy, was created in June 2003 and has 12 appointed members, out of 100 candidates from across Europe. See [Commission press release](#).

Road Safety

EU MONITOR

Bull bars

BACKGROUND European, Japanese and Korean carmakers committed in 2001 to stop installing so-called "rigid bull bars" on new cars from 2002. Despite this voluntary commitment, Council and Parliament called for a complete ban of such bull bars, which are also supplied as aftermarket equipment, by legislation. The Commission then proposed a Directive to ensure that all frontal protection systems satisfy a series of safety tests akin to the EEVC tests.

NEWS The Parliament's TRAN Committee debated the bull bars proposal on 29 September. The exchange of views demonstrated a continued high degree of political consensus for the need to ban rigid bull bars. Questions remaining include elaborating a precise definition of what constitutes a rigid bull bar and how this may be tested, as well as ensuring consistency with the pedestrian protection Directive in general.

FUTURE STEPS The adoption of the proposal in the TRAN Committee is foreseen on 23 November 2004.

First proposal: 10/10/2004
EP draft report: 29/09/2004

Driving licences

BACKGROUND The Commission's new proposal on driving licences aims to harmonise licence categories and renewal procedures across Europe to combat fraud and ensure complete recognition of licences among Member States. The proposal also sets out minimum requirements for the initial qualification and training of driving examiners. The previous European Parliament started talks on the proposal but stalled them in March 2004 to avoid "playing into the hands of Eurosceptic press ahead of the European elections".

NEWS On 1 and 29 September, the Parliament's TRAN Committee resumed discussions on the driving licence proposal. Hopes that the new Parliament would progress quickly on the dossier were however short lived, as MEPs displayed a wide variety of opinions, both regarding the scope of the proposal in general and individual topics within the

draft. MEPs are divided over how far a harmonisation of driving licences should go, and whether decisions in this area should not be left to a greater extent to the Member States. They also differ in opinion regarding the requirements for older drivers and for certain vehicle classes (e.g. caravans). Five-yearly medical tests for older drivers will "needlessly discriminate against healthy older drivers who pose no risk to others," ETSC Executive Director Jörg Beckmann has said in a [statement](#).

FUTURE STEPS The draft report is to be presented by the end of October, and adoption in the TRAN committee is expected in January 2005. The Council of Ministers aims to agree on a general approach at its meeting on 7 October 2004.

First proposal: 21/10/2003
ETSC press release: 29/10/2004

Working time

BACKGROUND The Directive on working time standards for transport workers was adopted in 2002 after years of debate, with Spain, Finland and Greece fighting it right to the end. Shortly afterwards, Spain and Finland decided to continue their opposition in court, claiming the inclusion of self-employed workers was at odds with a number of principles laid down in the Treaties.

NEWS The European Court of Justice has ruled that Directive 2002/15/EC can apply to both employed and self-employed transport workers. The Court argued that all parts of the Directive, which is based

on Article 71 of the Treaty, do indeed pursue the objective of road safety, and that this goal outweighs in this case all other important principles cited by the two countries, e.g. the freedom to pursue an occupation. The Court rejected all of the claims brought forward by Spain and Finland.

FUTURE STEPS Self-employed transport professionals will be included in the scope of the Directive from March 2009, if a European Commission report considers it necessary.

Directive 2002/15/EC
Court judgement

Brief news

Second Verona Conference

On 25 and 26 October 2004, European Transport Ministers will gather in Verona to hold informal discussions on road safety. Agenda points include infrastructure safety, traffic law enforcement and vehicle safety technologies. The meeting, organised jointly by the Dutch presidency and Italy, follows a first gathering on road safety held a year ago in the same city, which then led to the adoption of the so-called "Verona Charter". See [Council conclusions](#) of 5 December 2003.

Progress in road safety

According to a recent report by the [eSafety Forum](#) progress has been positive in the EU of 15, with a drop of 3% in traffic deaths recorded from 2001 to 2002, and close to 7% from 2002 to 2003. In the 10 new Member States fatalities have however risen by nearly 6% from 2001 to 2002, according to the latest available figures.

eCall

The Memorandum of Understanding on an EU-wide eCall system, published before the summer, has been signed by the European Commission, the Association of European carmakers (ACEA), ERTICO and a number of other stakeholders. Experts estimate that in-vehicle emergency call systems can reduce average rescue times in rural areas by 50% and in urban areas by 40%. In the EU, this is expected to save over 2000 lives yearly. See [eSafety Working Group report](#).

Car parts liberalisation

Following the European Commission's proposal to liberalise the market for visible spare parts, car makers' opposition has led to claims that the new rules would, once enacted, jeopardise vehicle safety. Internal Market Commissioner Bolkestein dismissed these claims saying all manufacturers had to respect the same European safety norms. See [Commission memo](#).

Research news

A simulator study carried out by the Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI) has shown that **mobile phone use** with a hands-free set is no safer in traffic than using a hand-held device. The study concludes that a driver's attention is negatively influenced in both cases, no matter whether a hands-free or hand-held mobile phone is used. Most European countries have banned the use of hand-held mobile phones while driving but allow the use of hands-free sets. See [TIS.pt study](#) of January 2004.

Several field trials are about to be launched to test the safety potential of **alcohol ignition interlocks** in Europe. In Germany, thirty trucks and in Norway thirty buses will be equipped with alcohollocks. In Belgium, the devices will be built into cars of repeat drink driving offenders and alcohol dependent patients. The trials are carried out in the framework of a European project, which is coordinated by the Belgian Road Safety Institute (BIVV/IBSR).

Independently, the UK is also starting a pilot project on alcohol interlocks in Bristol and Birmingham. In both towns, the devices will be fitted into cars of convicted drink drivers. See [DfT press release](#).

COUNTRY NEWS

Strategies and targets

In **Austria**, the number of road deaths has dropped by about 2% from 2002 to 2003, with pedestrian and cyclist deaths decreasing most significantly. The number of child deaths rose however sharply in the first six months of 2003. During that period, 37 children were killed, half of them as car occupants. See [Statistics Austria website](#).

In **Spain**, road fatalities have fallen in July and August by almost 17% compared to the same period in 2003. In those two months, fatalities were at the lowest level in 25 years. This success has been attributed to increased alcohol and speed enforcement in combination with a revitalised media debate about the burden of traffic deaths.

According to the Spanish FITSA Foundation, the new figures highlight the importance of both public awareness and police enforcement. The organisation has called on Spanish policy makers to "develop as soon as possible a more comprehensive road safety plan including other measures in addition to communication and enforcement".

In **Ireland**, road deaths are up again this year after a historical drop following the introduction of a penalty points system in 2002. Last year, as the system bedded down, road deaths fell to their lowest level for 40 years. See [Garda Siochana website](#).

The country has now adopted a new road safety strategy for the period 2004-2006, aiming at a 25% reduction of yearly road deaths by the end of that period, compared with the average number of road deaths between 1998 and 2003. See [Department of Transport website](#).

In **Denmark**, traffic fatalities are at their lowest level since the 1940s. In the first eight months of this year, 251 people have been killed in traffic, 27 fewer than in the same period last year. Denmark has set itself the target of no more than 300 traffic deaths and 2440 seriously injured in 2012. See [Sikkertrafik.dk website](http://Sikkertrafik.dk).

Traffic law

The **UK** is considering to lower fines for speeding motorists who are driving not far above the limit. It is planning to introduce graduated sanctions according to severity, rather than continuing the “one-size-fits-all” approach, which is currently applied. The UK government has also proposed to offer speed awareness courses to first-time offenders in lieu of a two point penalty. See [DfT consultation document](#).

The Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety (PACTS) has criticised the plans as “sending the wrong message to drivers”. In urban areas driving at even small margins over the limit can increase the risk significantly, and penalties should reflect not only the perceived severity of the offence but also the severity of the consequences, the organisation argues.

In **France**, a similar move has been under discussion since May, when Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin announced a lowering of fines by 50% for speeding offences of less than 20 km/h above the limit. The new fines will however not apply before new legislation has been passed. See [CISR press dossier](#).

Austria has introduced an obligation for drivers to carry reflective vests in their vehicles from 1 May 2005, following the example of Italy and Spain where similar laws were passed in April and July this year. Drivers have to put on the garment when they are on the road after a breakdown or accident outside built-up areas. Similar measures are under discussion in other European countries, including Portugal.

France has introduced a new BAC limit of 0.2 mg/ml for drivers of buses and coaches. Sanctions imposed for violations of the new rule will be the same as for violations of the 0.5 mg/ml general limit, i.e. a fine and 6 points on the driving licence. See [CISR press dossier](#).

Accident data

France has changed its definition for “killed in traffic” from “death within 6 days” to “death within 30 days” of road accident, aligning its definition with the standards used in all EU countries except Portugal. The new calculation is expected to have a major impact on future accident statistics. A re-calculation of previous figures has shown that fatalities for the year 2000 would have been 5% higher (8 079 instead of 7 643) had the new definition been applied at the time.

Daytime Running Lights

France has introduced the use of headlights in daytime on a voluntary basis. Drivers are recommended to keep their lights on outside urban areas from 30 October 2004 to 27 March 2005. This measure is expected reduce the number of road deaths by about 5-8%.

In **Switzerland**, drivers have been recommended to use of headlights in daytime for the past three years. About 40% of drivers are now following that recommendation, and this has a significant impact on road safety, according to latest figures presented by the Swiss Council for Accident Prevention (bfu). See [bfu website](#).

Daytime running lights are compulsory for passenger cars in the Scandinavian countries and in some of the new Member States, such as Estonia, Slovenia and Slovakia. In Poland, Lithuania and the Czech Republic they are obligatory only during the winter, and in Italy and Hungary only outside urban areas.

Speed cameras

New **UK** statistics indicate that speed cameras are effective in changing drivers' behaviour. While the number of penalty points issued for speeding has grown significantly, the number of drivers disqualified for speed-related offences has remained broadly static. The figures suggest that drivers at risk of disqualification modify their behaviour to avoid losing their licences. See [PACTS Research Briefing](#).

Maritime & Inland Waterway Safety

EU MONITOR

Brief news

ERIKA III package

The Commission is expected to table new proposals on maritime safety either at the end of this or the beginning of next year. The package should include proposals on port state control, the transposition of international rules regarding flag state obligations, and the presentation of a common methodology on accident investigations. According to DG Tren Director-General Francois Lamoureux, the Commission is also keen to reconsider the issue of havens taking take in ships in distress to be publicly identified by the Member States.

Commissioner for Maritime Affairs

In the next Commission, there will be a separate Commissioner for Maritime Affairs, presumably Joe Borg from Malta. The responsibility for maritime transport and maritime safety will however rest in the hands of the Transport Commissioner.

Port state control

The European Court of Justice has ruled France guilty of not fulfilling its duties under the 1995 Directive on port state control. The country did not carry out sufficient inspections of ships entering its ports in 1999 and 2000. Numbers of ships inspected seem to be actually decreasing, with only 9% (instead of 25%) of ships checked in 2001. See [press release](#).

European Maritime Safety Agency

Following the December decision of the European Council to permanently locate EMSA in Lisbon, the site has now been agreed. EMSA's new home will be near the historic centre of the city, in a waterfront property. The Maritime Safety Agency, currently located at Rue de Genève in Brussels, should have a presence in Lisbon from August 2005.

Air Safety

EU MONITOR

Brief news

Air passenger information

The Commission will soon come forward with a proposal to ensure passengers are informed of the identity of their carrier when booking a package holiday. According to the draft, passengers should be allowed to cancel their journey if the airline is changed and the new carrier is not considered 'safe'.

ETSC News

ETSC secretariat

Enforcement campaign

In September, ETSC launched its new programme on traffic law enforcement (see [Safety Monitor 54](#)). Over the next years, ETSC will be monitoring, assessing and comparing Member States' efforts in traffic law enforcement and report on its findings regularly.

With its new programme, ETSC aims to promote best practice not only in police enforcement of traffic rules, but also in the enforcement of those rules through "self-enforcing" cars and roads. The programme will be carried out by new recruit Programme Officer Ellen Townsend and Information Officer Franziska Achterberg.

Conferences

Policy and Research Officer Antonio Avenoso gave a presentation to the VI Conference on Global Safety in the European Union held in Portorož, Slovenia. His presentation focused on the responsibility of Member States for adopting effective measures at the national level. See [Conference website](#).

Policy Officer Frazer Goodwin spoke at a conference called 'Smart Moves for Sustainable Mobility' in Brussels. The conference marked the launch of the European Mobility Week which was held this year under the heading of "Safer streets for children". All conference presentations are available from the [European Mobility Week website](#).

Best in Europe 2004

This year's Best in Europe conference will take place on 27 October 2004 in Brussels. The conference will focus on successful policies from the EU Member States in the areas identified in the 3rd European Road Safety Action Programme. For the programme, see [ETSC website](#).

ETSC members

The Polish **Motor Transport Institute (ITS)** has taken a critical view of the new Polish speed limit for urban areas of 50 km/h during the day, and 60 km/h at night time. In its latest BRD magazine it presents accident data demonstrating that despite the fact that fewer crashes are registered at night, the seriousness of the accidents is significantly greater.

The Austrian **Road Safety Board (KfV)** has called for higher and harmonised sanctions for traffic offences in Austria. In Austria, only a minimum level of sanctions is set at federal level, while the exact amount of the fine is determined by the different länder. See [KfV website](#).

The Swiss **Council for Accident Prevention (bfu)** has released latest seat belt wearing rates for Switzerland showing that in 2004, 81 percent of Swiss drivers were wearing their seat belt, a one percent rise from 2003. The bfu is organising a conference on seat belt use on 25 November 2004. See [bfu website](#).

International Events Diary

- 16-17 September 2004 **Presseseminar "Senioren im Straßenverkehr"**
Leipzig, Germany Contact: DVR, Tel: +49 (0)228 400 0172
- 27 October 2004 **The EU road safety agenda: What Member States suggest**
Brussels, Belgium Contact: ETSC, Tel: +32 (0)2 230 4106, Fax: +32 (0)2 230 4215, E-mail: information@etsc.be
- 24-26 November 2004 **Mobility in the enlarged European Union: The road sector's challenges and opportunities**
Lisbon, Portugal Contact: European Union Road Federation (ERF)
Tel: +32 (0)2 644.58.77, Fax: +32 (0)2 647.59.34, E-mail: info@erf.be
- 25 November 2004 **Sicherheitsgurt - das Potenzial ist noch lange nicht ausgeschöpft**
Bern, Switzerland Contact: bfu, Tel: +31 (0)390 22 22, Fax: +31 (0)390 22 30
- 25 November 2004 **Towards sustainable urban transport - what actions are needed?**
Brussels, Belgium Contact: UITP, Fax: +32 (0)2 663 66 23
- 2-3 December 2004 **19th Annual Polis Conference**
Genoa, Italy Contact: Polis Tel: +32 (0)2 282 84 67, Fax: +32 (0)2 282 84 66, E-mail: polis@polis-online.org
- 9-10 February 2004 **Road Safety & Traffic Management 2004**
Cairo, Egypt Contact: International Event Partners, Tel: +20 (0)2 754 5550, Fax: +20 (0)2 754 6106, E-mail: egypt@i-ep.com
- 28 February - 2 March 2005 **70th National Road Safety Congress: Driving deaths down**
Brighton, UK Contact: Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)
Tel: +44 (0)870 777.21.20, Fax: +44 (0)870 777.21.99
E-mail: events@rospa.com
- 14-15 March 2005 **Out of Hospital Emergency Medical Services: Move towards integration across Europe**
Paris, France Contact: Hesculaep Conference secretariat, Tel: +33 (0)1 47 10 70 39,
Fax: +33 (0)1 47 10 70 07, E-mail: conference.hesculaep@rpc.aphp.fr
- 1-3 June 2005 **5th European Congress and Exhibition on ITS**
Hamburg, Germany Contact: Kerri Underdown Brintex, Tel: +44 (0) 20 7973 4603, Fax: +44 (0) 20 7233 5054, E-mail: k.underdown@hgluk.com
- 15-17 November 2005 **Second International Conference on Driver Behaviour and Training**
Edinburgh, UK For the Call for Papers, visit the [PACTS website](#) or contact Dr Lisa Dorn, Tel +44 (0)1234 750111 ext 5232, E-mail l.dorn@cranfield.ac.uk
For general information regarding the conference, contact Mrs Tricia Jolly, Tel: +44 (1)1234 750192, E-mail: t.jolly@cranfield.ac.uk

Call for Papers

ETSC Yearbook 2005: Safety and Sustainability

The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is the sole independent European transport safety NGO offering research-based advice to EU policymakers. In 2005, ETSC will publish the first issue of its Year Books, a new series addressing contemporary problems in transport safety policy. The ETSC Year Book offers a unique possibility for both young and established researchers from all academic disciplines to contribute with innovative ideas to EU transport safety policymaking. The Year Books are located at the cross-road of science and politics and provide a platform for presenting applied safety-related research from all modes of transport. Submissions to the Year Book are refereed through an Editorial Board.

The first Year Book, to be published in 2005, will place **transport safety in the context of sustainable development**, with a particular emphasis on environmental sustainability. Transport safety work, at all political levels, frequently encounters environmental issues, either finding possibilities for making the transport system both safer and environmentally sounder, or confronting negative and potentially harmful environmental side-effects of measures to make it safer. It is in particular this potential conflict between safety and the environment - as well as the various ways of trying to resolve it - that is of interest for ETSC. An example from the road mode is the possibly detrimental effect of environmentally sound light-weight vehicles on impact-compatibility.

The overall intention with the 2005 Year Book is to facilitate an integrated and systemic perspective on transport risks to life, limb, health and the environment. The individual papers should identify synergies between safe and sustainable transport measures in order to help significantly reduce all transport risks alike. Although, accident/injury prevention and environmental protection are discussed predominantly in relation to road transport, ETSC welcomes papers addressing these issues within the non-road modes and intermodally. Moreover, contributions that address low-cost, short term measures to protect human health and the natural environment in the new EU Members States from transport impacts are of particular interest.

Submissions: by 31 December 2004; 3000-4000 words

Date of Publication: Summer 2005

Editorial Board: Prof. Murray Mackay, Prof. Richard Allsop, Dr. Joerg Beckmann

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ETSC is grateful for the financial support provided for the Safety Monitor by

DG TREN European Commission • BP • KeyMed • Shell International • Volvo Group • Ford • Toyota