

VERONA 2
CONCLUSIONS
26 Oct. 2004

The Ministers of the EU member states, candidate countries and the EEA and EFTA countries,
in the presence of Ms de Palacio, vice President of the European Commission, Commissioner
in charge of the common transport policy,

meeting informally in Verona upon the initiative of Mr Pietro Lunardi, Minister of Infrastructure
and Transport of the Italian Republic and Mrs Karla Peijs, President of the Council of the
European Union and Minister of Transport, Public Works and Water Management of the
Netherlands,

each of them holding responsibility for road safety in their own country,

recognise the need to achieve sustainable development of the European Union's transport
systems;

aware that road accidents cause unacceptable socio-economic damage and cause tens of
thousands of fatalities and millions of people injured, with a cost to the State, companies and
families of around 2.0% of GDP in the above mentioned countries;

hereby declare that the death toll, disability, suffering and economic loss caused by road
accidents are unacceptable and are to be given top priority and tackled with specific policies
and investments aimed at improving road safety;

considering the conclusions drawn by the Council of the European Union on 5 – 6 June 2003
aimed at improving road safety,

confirming the objective of a reduction of the number of victims by at least 50% by 2010, as laid
down in the *"European Road Safety Action Programme: Halving the number of road accident
victims in the European Union by 2010: A "shared responsibility"* agreed by the European
Commission and the Council of the European Union;

regarding the results of the informal meeting of the Ministers of the EU member countries,
candidate countries and the EEA and EFTA countries held in Verona on 24 October 2003,
regarding the identification of the most effective measures for rapidly achieving the objective of
halving the number of victims of road accidents expressed in the above mentioned programme,

relating to what is said in the "Verona Declaration", containing the ten measures for road safety
that were deemed a top priority at the meeting,

regarding the commitment to enforce such measures and monitor their application and results,

taking into account the results of surveys regarding the enforcement of measures contained in
the above mentioned "Verona Declaration" by the member countries,

recognising the overall attempt to broaden the sectors involved and to strengthen the effort to
improve road safety in terms of legislation, programmes, people and financing,

considering the latest data on victims of road accidents showing that significant progress has been made in some countries, as well as the need for further and considerable efforts to reach the objective of halving the number of victims by the lesser performing countries,

confirming the effort to develop multi-sector safety policies based on co-operation and partnership between public and private sectors, on the commitment to develop the tools and structures necessary to facilitate the exchange of experiences and extend the use of the best practices between national and regional governments and local administrations in the countries of the European Union, candidate countries and the EEA and EFTA countries,

Hereby agree on the need to focus road safety policies within four themes, on the basis of indications made by the Netherlands Presidency and particularly the Dutch Minister of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, Mrs Karla Peijs, and by Italy's Minister of Infrastructures and Transport, Mr Pietro Lunardi,

recognise the need to focus at the following four important sectors of road safety.

1. Improving safety on European roads

We highlight the need to develop a widespread improvement of the safety of the European road network. The following measures appear to be promising.

- 1.1 Identify roads with the highest number of victims of road accidents and analyse the relevant conditions and risk factors on the basis of common and shared principles, so as to guarantee risk assessment criteria shared by all the citizens of the European Union, candidate countries and the EEA and EFTA countries.
- 1.2 Define medium and long-term plans at the appropriate level aimed at gradually increasing safety levels on roads by giving top priority to the roads by analysing accidents' causes and by giving top priority to the roads where the highest number of accident victims or the highest intensity of collision relative to traffic occur.
- 1.3 Foster road network maintenance programmes using GIS and other innovative techniques for monitoring road conditions, traffic flows and road accidents' victims, with the aim of increasing the road safety level.
- 1.4 Develop programmes for improving the protection of vulnerable users, especially by reserving lanes of the existing road surface for pedestrians and cyclists only. Speed management is also an essential tool in the protection of vulnerable road users.
- 1.5 Include road safety audit and impact assessment as well as road safety criteria in any investment or incentive programme concerning infrastructure maintenance or building.
- 1.6 Develop national and regional training programmes for public and private technicians to promote a broader training in all road safety relevant skills and to improve the identification of risk factors and establish the most effective measures and actions to remove or limit them.
- 1.7 Set up structures and tools to promote and organise an appropriate information exchange between public administrations in charge of road safety, information on the best ways to identify major risk factors, on the most effective measures to remove them, on the results of such actions, on the ways to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions carried out.
- 1.8 Set up information campaigns aimed at giving citizens complete and accurate information on the situations with highest risks and raise the awareness of the various risk factors.

- 1.9 Set up pilot projects to give the road users detailed information on the most dangerous trunk roads and black spots (e.g. advance warning signs) until their removal through improvements of road safety levels in these locations.
- 1.10 Encourage industry, operators, organisations, local and regional authorities to commit themselves to concrete road safety actions by signing the European Road Safety Charter.

2. Funding road safety

Defining a process to access financial resources for road safety investment and to use existing resources in the most efficient way is extremely important if we are to realistically achieve the objective of halving the number of road accident victims by 2010. The following measures appear to be promising.

- 2.1 Affirm the importance that road safety is an integral component of the design, construction, improvement maintenance and upkeep of all roads, and is fully provided for in road funding regimes.
- 2.2 Develop national programmes and measures aimed at fostering an increase in investments in road safety, as well as more efficient use of existing resources, by regional and local administrations, keeping as top priority the most dangerous roads, and strengthening the technical structures for checking road safety.
- 2.3 Promote extended co-operation projects between cities, regions and corridors to demonstrate, validate and disseminate innovative and cost effective road safety solutions
- 2.4 Encourage collaboration with private companies, evaluating also the possibility of promoting public-private cooperation and the investment of private financial resources for road safety.
- 2.5 To consider the opportunity of allocating a percentage of vehicle taxes, motorway fees, insurance premiums, etc. to a road safety fund intended for top priority improvement actions in this field.
- 2.6 To encourage insurance companies to find ways to reward safe driving and stimulate the use of safe vehicles.
- 2.7 To evaluate the possibility of allocating a part of fines for traffic offences to road safety improvements.

3. Enforcement and best practices

The enforcement of rules and a widespread use of best practices are two basic factors for being successful in road safety policy on European level as well on national, regional and local level.

- 3.1. Traffic rules have to be effective for road safety, credible for the road users and enforceable.
- 3.2. Enforcement of traffic safety is part of an integrated road safety policy. Enforcement therefore should be a common and unrelenting effort, recognising each player's role and responsibility but also the need for cooperation. In this respect ministers also welcome recently started efforts on EU level as part of the work programme of the European Commission.
- 3.3. Technological means play an increasing role in support of enforcement. In future some of these might replace conventional enforcement in specific cases. It is certainly of interest to follow closely these developments and to exchange experiences with regard

to the automatic speed control, speed warning or limiting devices, the alcohol lock and to stimulate further developments such as seat belt reminders and to promote the introduction of such devices.

- 3.4. Enforcement directly linked to public information campaigns is a successful combination and should be further promoted. In this respect ministers also support European wide campaigns followed by comparison of results in the participating countries.
- 3.5. The improvement of cross-border enforcement enhances the credibility and effectiveness of enforcement in general. An European system of collaboration will have to be implemented for the settlement of penalties for foreign offenders and for the verification of driver license validity.
- 3.6. With regard to road safety enforcement, priority should be given to roads with high accident risks, and to driver behaviour that causes high accident risks or could have severe consequences, like speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, non-use of seat belts . This makes data collection and distribution essential for effective enforcement.
- 3.7. Incentives and programmes to promote a widespread use of surveillance techniques, traffic management systems, automatic information systems, systems dedicated to automatic maintenance systems, should be further developed.
- 3.8. Promote and organise tools for an information exchange between national and regional governments as well as local administrations regarding best practices, including effects of applied penalties and penalty systems for road safety offences.

4. Vehicle safety

In the last decades the automobile industry has made a major effort to increase vehicle safety. But much has and can be done to further improve the safety of road vehicles. Without this, the ambitious goals for road safety will not be attainable.

- 4.1. Many lives can be saved by new intelligent safety features integrating both active and passive safety systems. Ministers urge the industry to implement them as quickly and widely as economically possible and sustainable for the users.
- 4.2. Knowledge about the cause of accidents and the possible benefits of new technology is insufficient. Governments and the European Commission (for accidentology) and industry (for the assessment of technology) have a shared responsibility to improve the situation.
- 4.3. Ministers agree that exchanging views between industry and governments about the future of vehicle safety is essential to make progress. Specifically, road operators have an important role in the realisation of an intelligent road infrastructure and databases required to optimise the benefits to be derived from intelligent vehicles. Member states, the European Commission and industry will make a joint effort to create opportunities for a more intensified collaboration.
- 4.4. Like environmental friendliness, vehicle safety is not always easy to sell to the customer. The mandatory label on fuel economy, test results of Euro-NCAP, -tax breaks or demonstrations are examples of ways governments can increase customer awareness and support the sale of well-performing vehicles. The ministers would welcome the exchange of views and experiences in this field
- 4.5. In the commercial transport sector an improved safety performance will reduce costs. This can be a good incentive for the inclusion of vehicle safety standards in the corporate safety strategy (*'safety culture'*).

- 4.6. Authorities have a role to play in promoting the installation and use of advanced safety features, by including them in their procurement criteria for their vehicles.
- 4.7. Ministers also urge the Community's continued engagement in the wider international development of vehicle safety standards through UNECE regulations, developed by the World Forum for Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulation (WP.29)