

RESOLUTION NO. 37 ON DRIVER TRAINING

[CM(78)17]

The Council of Ministers of Transport, meeting in Brussels on 31st May and 1st June 1978,

HAVING REGARD to the report by the Committee of Deputies on driver training;

REFERRING to the reports by OECD Road Research Groups S8, S10 and S13 on the following topics:

- Young driver accidents (March 1975).
- Driver instruction (March 1976).
- Prevention of accidents involving users of two-wheeled vehicles (August 1977).

HAVING REGARD to the agreement drawn up by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on minimum requirements for the issue and validity of driving permits (1st April 1975);

CONSIDERING:

- That theoretical and practical driver instruction should always be an essential element of road safety policy.
- That analysis of road accidents in Member countries shows that young beginner drivers (those aged under 25 who have had their driving licence for less than three years) account for a disproportionate share of such accidents as compared with other drivers (from twice to four times the average rate depending on the country concerned) and that, in the Member countries, this group usually accounts for 85% of all beginner drivers.
- That this high accident rate is due to inexperience combined with youthful inclination to take risks.
- That closer analysis brings to light the kinds of accidents that young beginner drivers are typically involved in, such as running off the road or collisions when overtaking.

ALSO CONSIDERING:

- That the instruction now given to learner drivers is directed more particularly to preparation for the driving test rather than to theoretical and practical tuition for safe driving in the true sense, and that the present contents of the driving test itself do not suitably provide for road safety.
- That the issue of a driving licence nowadays is wrongly regarded as certifying that a driver has completed his training for safe driving whereas in fact he then goes through a high-risk period during which he gradually gains the experience needed to drive safely when faced with the various kinds of traffic hazards.
- That it would also be useful to look into the conditions on which a driver who has been convicted of a serious traffic offence can be re-authorised to take charge of a vehicle.

IS OF THE OPINION:

- That driver instruction and driving tests should be designed to minimise the length of the high-risk period immediately after acquisition of a driving licence.
- That driver instruction should be comprehensive and, to ensure that it is effective, should encompass risk training and how to avoid putting various categories of road-users at risk.

RECOMMENDS the Member countries of the ECMT

1. *With regard to the instruction of future drivers*

- a) To declare that safety should be the primary purpose of the instruction given to learner drivers; that in addition to teaching them how to drive and giving them a formal knowledge of the highway code, such instruction should above all be designed to make them think and behave in such a way that they will be able to drive as safely as possible.
- b) In consequence, to review the contents of driver instruction, this often being too closely designed simply with an eye to passing the driving test.
- c) To include in the theoretical and practical instruction given to learner drivers, the main risks encountered by the various categories of road users, and what they should do, first, to avoid such risks and, secondly, how to overcome them if they arise.
- d) To provide practical instruction ensuring that, when the time comes, the driver is capable of driving on busy roads, at night and in poor visibility conditions.
- e) To treat driver instruction and the driving test as a “single entity” designed effectively to cater for the road safety considerations listed above.
- f) To improve existing methods of driver instruction and, to this end, to promote teaching of basic skills in handling a motor vehicle together with risk training on special circuits off the public highway to encourage wider use of audio visual aids.
- g) Alongside traditional teaching in successive lessons, to experiment and develop new methods of instruction, notably those involving continuous courses with up-to-date teaching procedures and equipment.

2. With regard to road safety education in schools

- To promote road safety education in schools as recommended by the Second ECMT/Council of Europe Joint Conference in 1971.
- In this connection, to begin to make children traffic-minded, even at nursery school age; to teach them road behaviour gradually as pedestrians and as drivers of two-wheeled vehicles; in secondary education establishments, to provide initial motor traffic training with special reference to the use of power-driven two-wheeled vehicles.

3. With regard to driver training after the acquisition of a licence

- To provide beginner drivers with further training designed to eradicate the worst mistakes in driving behaviour.
- Gradually to extend this facility to all drivers so that they may take useful refresher courses periodically.
- To consider whether drivers who have had their licence withdrawn for a serious traffic offence might in particular be compelled to undergo a further training course so that their ability to drive safely may be ascertained before they recover their licence; to consider how further special instruction could be provided to cover the most common types of serious traffic offence, notably driving under the influence of drink or drugs.

4. With regard to driving school instructors and driving test examiners

- To provide careful training in road safety for driving school instructors and examiners.
- To provide refresher courses or seminars for existing instructors and examiners.
- To consider gradual co-ordination of their occupational training at European level.

More generally, further **RECOMMENDS** the Member countries:

- Gradually to introduce a comprehensive and coherent system of driver instruction from nursery school to driving licence and even beyond, the main purpose of which would be to ensure that road user behaviour will be closely and lastingly in conformity with road safety requirements under present-day traffic conditions.

INSTRUCTS the Committee of Deputies to keep under review the application of the measures recommended in this Resolution.

REPORT ON DRIVER TRAINING

[CM(78)17]

1. Through a number of Resolutions, the ECMT Council of Ministers has already exerted a positive influence on the trend of road accidents in Member countries. The Resolutions relate, inter alia, to driving ability and driver behaviour, and also to the action that drivers can take to avert serious consequences in the event of an accident, the improvement of pedestrian safety, etc. The following are concrete examples:

- The ruling that a blood alcohol level of 0.8 per mille impairs driving ability and that driving in this condition is a punishable offence.
- A Recommendation for specific speed limits on rural roads and motorways.
- A Recommendation for compulsory wearing of seat belts.
- Recommendations on a package of measures for improving pedestrian safety and drivers of two-wheeled vehicles.

2. The ECMT Council of Ministers analyses road accident trends at specific intervals in order to identify the causes of accidents in the light of which wider and more effective traffic policy measures can be taken for accident prevention or for mitigating the effects of accidents. These efforts are backed up by careful scientific analysis of the contributing factors which have a bearing on the causation of accidents and, to this end the ECMT, in recent years, has started a useful co-operation exercise on “road safety”, especially with the OECD Road Research Department. Scientific reports on these OECD activities are evaluated by the EC MT with a view to converting their findings into appropriate traffic policy measures.

3. Driver training, especially for young beginners, has a decisive impact on road safety. In the last few years, basically new theoretical and practical progress has been made in this field, especially in countries with a high level of car ownership, but also in the framework of international co—operation. Three reports on these subjects have been produced by the OECD alone, under the Road Research Programme:

Young driver accidents	(Research Group S8)
Driver instruction	(Research Group S10)
Accidents involving users of two-wheeled vehicles	(Research Group S13)

4. OECD Road Research Group S8

4.1 The OECD Road Research Group S8 gives the following findings in its report on young driver accidents:

- Young drivers between the ages of 18 and 25 have a disproportionately large number of road accidents with three to four times the average accident rate.
- Analyses of accidents involving young traffic offenders indicate a high percentage of speeding violations.
- Young drivers commit more traffic offences than the other driver groups and a greater proportion of them drive unroadworthy vehicles.

Other factors contributing to the higher proportion of young drivers involved in road accidents were also listed:

- Inadequate driving experience.
- The fact that young drivers are more accident-prone at night and on weekend evenings.
- The behaviour of young drivers is at least partly due to factors bound up with youth psychology, such as egocentricity, lack of self—discipline, and the inclination to “let off steam” and to take risks.
- Social maladjustment, for instance reaction against stern discipline at home and at school.
- Also in many cases, the use of mopeds and motorcycles, which in any case present an objectively higher risk than four-wheeled vehicles.

4.2 The report proposes a series of measures to overcome these deficiencies, such as driver training, further training opportunities, driver licensing, application of speed limits, and also further research.

4.2.1 Group S8 considers that driver training must be thoroughly reappraised, and that this reappraisal should include audiovisual methods, the value of training grounds and safety training.

4.2.2 The group also feels that active alternatives to existing penalties could be useful, such as requiring the offender to take a driver retraining course which could be designed to match the rules he has infringed.

4.2.3 For driver licensing, two types of driving licences are regarded as a possible suitable means of improving the performance of young drivers:

- A provisional licence with special conditions and/or restrictions.
- A probationary licence – the granting of the full driving licence would be dependent on the behaviour of the applicant during the probationary period.

Both types of driving licence already exist in some countries.

4.2.4 Speed limits for beginner drivers are also felt to be a suitable means of reducing accidents, particularly during the probationary period.

4.2.5 The Group specifically states that:

- Driver training as presently constituted has not been effective.

The Group therefore considers, inter alia,

- That scientific research in this area is necessary together with.
- Research on the content and structure of driving tests, and on.
- The training of driving instructors.
- The effectiveness of the various types of driving licence.
- Driver behaviour for each age group, the aim being to ascertain its structural characteristics.

5. **OECD Road Research Group S10** – Driver Instruction has systematically continued the work done S8 on a broader basis. The starting point was international recognition of the following

- Beginner drivers are over-represented in road accidents.
- In many countries the objectives of driver instruction are aimed at the driving test rather than road safety.
- It is often mistakenly assumed that the test is the ultimate stage in the development of a safe driver.

5.1 As there are sometimes considerable practical and methodological differences in driver instruction from one country to another (oral or written tests, audiovisual techniques for the theoretical examination, different types of driving licence) the Research Group had to confine itself to presenting a synopsis of existing types and methods of instruction, and to identifying the most useful methods and criteria for testing the efficiency of these models. In consequence, their findings merely constitute an outline of the problem, which would need to be followed by a second stage where practical conclusions for driving instructors, and possibly examiners would be identified and published in a handbook. This second stage has still to be tackled.

5.2 The main findings in the report of Research Group S10 may be summarised as follows:

- Lack of driving experience must above all be regarded as an additional hazard; the driver learning process needs to be suitably accelerated.
- To be successful, driver instruction must be based on systematic and structural analysis of the driving function and its purpose; in order to do this it is necessary to work out a systematically and logically graduated learning process.

- The main components of an improved driver instruction system are as follows:
 - Teaching methods.
 - Teaching aids such as slides and films.
 - Teaching principles.
 - Testing methods.
 - Evaluation of given test exercises.
- Education and testing requirements must be adjusted to each other and integrated.
- Risk training (recognising, avoiding and possibly overcoming road hazards) should be introduced as a special feature in driver training programmes.
- Teaching objectives and principles play an important role in a new instruction programme.
- Instructors should become familiar with modern educational principles (instructor training by means of specific seminars, and refresher courses focussed on road safety).
- A learner driver performance should be measured against a specified level of requirements.
- Test requirements and methods should be standardized as far as possible and raised to a specified level.
- Even optimum improvement in driver education and instructor training (i.e. more stringent requirements for training instructors) promises only limited success; road safety education must begin at the nursery school stage, and continue at school and vocational training establishments, and drivers must have opportunities for voluntary further training or, possibly, be made to undergo further training by the courts or by administrative authorities as an effective alternative to other penalties.

6. The special situation of two-wheelers — whether power-driven or not — and its attendant safety problems have become plainly apparent in recent years. Cyclists, moped riders and motorcyclists are the main road users in this group.

OECD Road Research Group S13 reached the following conclusions, among others, after studying “accidents to users of two-wheeled vehicles”:

6.1 **Considering that,**

- Riding a two-wheeled vehicle is fundamentally different from driving a car.
- Age and experience play a comparatively more important role for riders of two-wheelers than for car drivers.
- Special training and education programmes are necessary as riders are younger and require experience.

Group S13 recommends the following measures:

6.2 **Instruction and licensing**

- Cyclists must be specially informed and trained but do not require licences;
- Motorcyclists and moped riders must receive better training; in view of their youth and inexperience and because of the difficult nature of the duties of a driver, they require licences.
- Instruction and training programmes should be developed for cyclists, moped users and motorcyclists.
- Tests should be carried out to see whether a graded instruction and licensing system for motorcyclists can be introduced (e.g. Switzerland). Points to be considered: licences to ride powerful motorcycles to be issued only after a given period of time, creation of more categories (not just moped and motorcycle).

6.3 **Safety campaigns and enforcement**

- Education campaigns should be designed to make other road users, especially car drivers, aware of the dangers of riding a two-wheeler.
- Features of moped and motorcycle advertisements that are inconsistent with road safety should be avoided.
- In the course of police supervision special stress should be placed on checking alcohol intake by two-wheeler riders.

6.4 **Design and equipment of two-wheeled vehicles**

- Numerous technical improvements are possible and necessary, such as better lighting, direction indicators, rear-view mirrors, improved tyres, better braking systems, user comfort, wind screens.
- Improvement of visibility and recognition of two-wheeler users (e.g. use of headlights during daytime and suitable clothing for riders such as yellow or red leather suits).

6.5 **The following are also recommended**

- Compulsory periodical inspection of mopeds and motorcycles.
- Technical standards for type approval.
- Improving rider protection by making the wearing of crash helmets compulsory, wherever possible.
- Technical standards for helmets and eye shields.

6.6 Town planning and traffic engineering

Here the recommendations include:

- Improving safety by segregating traffic and having separate lanes for two-wheelers.
- Making left-hand turns easier and safer for two-wheelers by special arrangements at intersections.
- The urban planning function should be extended, as a basic principle, to take two-wheelers into account, in particular by developments to the existing road network.

6.7 With regard to scientific research the following recommendations are made:

- Identification of the special risks of the various two-wheeler groups on the basis of statistical data.
- Development of a graded licensing system for these groups.

7. After consideration and evaluation of the foregoing points contained in the OECD Road Research reports that are referred to, the Resolution is submitted to Ministers of Transport for approval.