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PROPOSAL FOR DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO REGULATION No. 48

(Installation of lighting and light-signalling devices)

Transmitted by the Expert from
International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA)

Note: The text reproduced below was prepared by the expert OICA in order to eliminate from the Regulation the provisions, which require for supplementary rear lamps (i.e. direction-indicator lamps, stop lamps and position lamps) a minimum vertical distance of 600 mm from the mandatory lamps.

Note: This document is distributed to the Experts on lighting and light-signalling only.

GE.01-22808

A. PROPOSAL

Paragraph 6.5.4.2.4., concerning rear direction-indicator lamp, amend to read:

"6.5.4.2.4. If optional lamps are installed, they should be symmetrical about the median longitudinal plane of the vehicle."

Paragraph 6.7.4.2.1., concerning stop lamp, amend to read:

"6.7.4.2.1. For S1 or S2 category devices: above the ground, not less than 350 mm nor more than 1,500 mm (2,100 mm if the shape of the bodywork makes it impossible to keep within 1,500 mm and if the optional lamps are not installed. If the optional lamps are installed, they should be symmetrical about the median longitudinal plane of the vehicle)."

Paragraph 6.10.4.2., concerning rear position lamp, amend to read:

"6.10.4.2. In height: above the ground, not less than 350 mm nor more than 1,500 mm (2,100 mm if the shape of the bodywork makes it impossible to keep within 1,500 mm and if the optional lamps are not installed. If the optional lamps are installed, they should be symmetrical about the median longitudinal plane of the vehicle)."

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B. JUSTIFICATION

In Supplement 2 to the 02 series of amendments to Regulation No. 48 (see Revision 2 of the Regulation, or document TRANS/WP.29/698) the possibility to install supplementary rear direction-indicator lamps, stop lamps and position lamps was introduced.

As earlier mentioned, supplementary rear signalling lamps are installed on heavy motor vehicles and trailers in some European countries. As far as it is known, this practice has never been perceived as a threat to road safety, quite on the contrary it will obviously give added safety in case of dirty and/or broken tail lamps. It would also allow the replacement of the light source to at a time and place more suited to maintenance than at the roadside.

The initiative to permit supplementary signalling lamps on selected N and O category vehicles (TRANS/WP.29/698) was above all, intended to legalize an already existing users' practice affecting many vehicles now in use on European roads.

However, an additional prescription for a minimum separation distance of 600 mm to such supplementary signalling lamps is a threat to this initiative. Due to various other dimensional requirements for rear lighting installation, there are few possibilities to install supplementary rear lamps at a 600 mm vertical separation distance.

It should also be remembered that affected heavy trucks and trailers may have a substantial rear overhang; the distance from the rearmost axle centre to the rearmost part of the vehicle may reach or even exceed three meters. This fact, together with the need to achieve sensible clearance angles at the rear of the vehicle, further minimizes the available projected area on which to install rear lighting on these vehicle categories.

Another important factor is the varying bodywork configurations used on heavy vehicles. Contrary to for example buses, most trucks and trailers have a limited rigid vertical rear structure suitable for installation of rear lighting. On many bodywork types the available area for installation of rear lighting may therefore be incompatible with added requirements for a 600 mm separation distance.

Finally, it seems like a reverse burden of proof that OICA should have to justify the deletion of an added requirement like this.
