



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRRF/2009/29  
3 July 2009

Original: ENGLISH  
ENGLISH AND FRENCH ONLY

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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations

Working Party on Brakes and Running Gear

Sixty-sixth session

Geneva, 15-17 September 2009

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

REGULATION No. 55  
(Mechanical couplings)

Proposal for amendments to Regulation No. 55

Submitted by the expert from Germany \*/

The text reproduced below was prepared by the expert from Germany to insert into Regulation No. 55 a provision to attach a secondary coupling device to an unbraked O<sub>1</sub> trailer. The proposal is based on ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRRF/2009/13. The modifications to the existing text of the Regulation are marked in bold and strikethrough characters.

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\*/ In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2006-2010 (ECE/TRANS/166/Add.1, programme activity 02.4), the World Forum will develop, harmonize and update Regulations in order to enhance performance of vehicles. The present document is submitted in conformity with that mandate.

A. PROPOSAL

Paragraph 2.1., amend to read:

"2.1. "mechanical coupling devices and components means" all those items on the frame, load-bearing parts of the bodywork and the chassis of the motor vehicle and trailer by means of which they are connected together to form the combination of vehicles or the articulated vehicles. **It also includes a secondary coupling device as defined in paragraph 2.16.** Fixed or detachable parts for the attachment or operation of the mechanical coupling device or component are included."

Insert a new paragraph 2.16., to read:

"2.16. "Secondary coupling device" means a chain, wire rope, etc., fitted to a Class B coupling head, capable in the event of separation of the main coupling, of preventing the trailer drawbar from touching the ground and providing some residual steering action on the trailer."

Annex 5, insert new paragraphs 13. to 13.2., to read:

"13. **SECONDARY COUPLING DEVICES**

13.1. **Secondary coupling devices are intended to be fitted on specific O<sub>1</sub> trailers which are not fitted with a braking system.**

13.2. **Secondary coupling devices may be fitted with a suitable fastening method at either end which permits easy fitment to the trailer and to the attachment points of towing brackets as stated in paragraph 1.5. of this annex."**

Annex 6, insert new paragraphs 3.11. to 3.11.1., to read:

"3.11. **Secondary coupling devices**

3.11.1. **The technical service shall ensure that the strength of the secondary coupling device shall prevent the drawbar of the trailer, when loaded to its technically permissible mass, from touching the ground if the main coupling separates."**

Annex 7, insert new paragraphs 1.6. and 1.6.1., to read:

"1.6. **Attachment of secondary coupling devices**

1.6.1. **The attachment of the secondary coupling to the trailer and the towing vehicle may prevent the drawbar of the trailer, when loaded to its technically permissible mass, from touching the ground if the main coupling separates and provide residual steering of the trailer."**

B. JUSTIFICATION

The proposal is a result of a discussion of the German "Special Working Group for Couplings". The national experts have examined all advantages and disadvantages of the draft proposal prepared by the expert from the United Kingdom with following conclusion.

Generally, Germany does not see the need for "Secondary Coupling Devices", because there are currently, either in the national law or in EU law, no provisions for those devices. Furthermore, Germany does not see a real benefit for road safety for these secondary coupling devices, because the German accident data do not support a need for action.

In the case that other Contracting Parties have historical national law and design practices, it should be permitted to grant a type approval for a coupling device including a secondary coupling device.

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