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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
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agenda item 11)

OTHER BUSINESS

Background Note – Black Spot Management

Transmitted by the European Commission – Directorate E – Inland Transport

The following note has been transmitted for consideration by the Working Party.

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BACKGROUND NOTE

BLACK SPOT MANAGEMENT AND A STANDARDISED ROAD SIGN FOR ACCIDENT BLACK SPOTS

THE 1997 – 2001 ROAD SAFETY ACTION PROGRAMME

In April 1997 the European Commission issued its second multi-annual road safety programme “Promoting Road Safety in the EU”.

This covered the period 1997-2001 and identified more than 60 fields of action classified into 3 broad categories:

1. The gathering and dissemination of information.
2. Initiating supporting measures to avoid accidents with an emphasis on human factors and interface with the environment.
3. Initiating and supporting measures to reduce the consequences of accidents when they occur.

This action programme was discussed by the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee and received comments from governmental and non-governmental experts. In this process the actions identified were generally neither contested nor amended although a general desire for more concrete definitions and prioritisation was expressed.

THE COMMUNICATION OF MARCH 2000

In March 2000 the Commission published a Communication entitled “Priorities in EU Road Safety – Progress Report and Ranking of Actions”.

Using sophisticated multi-criteria analyses, the estimated casualty reduction potential, and a cost-effectiveness assessment, the following measures were given absolute priority at EU level:

1. EuroNCAP research (vehicle crash testing)
2. Black spot management and forgiving roadside design
3. Seat belts and child restraints use campaigns
4. Reduction of alcohol abuse (drink driving)
5. Speed limiters for light vehicles
6. Pedestrian friendly design of vehicles

“BLACK SPOT” EXPERTS GROUP

In April 2000 the Commission convened a meeting of experts to discuss the concept of Black Spots and what measures could be taken to improve them. The meeting concluded that there were considerable differences within member States as to the definition of a Black Spot, and no coherent policy for tackling them.

Given this, the Commission intends to carry out more work on the issue with a view to developing Best Practice Guidelines on the identification and management of Black Spots.

A STANDARDISED “BLACK SPOT” ROAD SIGN

Concurrent with the above-mentioned work, the Commission, on the instructions of the Vice President and Commissioner for Transport, Mrs. Loyola de Palacio, wishes to investigate the possibility of creating a road sign designating an accident Black Spot within the UN/ECE 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals.
