

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(81) 510 final

Brussels, 11th September 1981

AMENDMENT TO THE PROPOSAL OF A COUNCIL DIRECTIVE ON "WEIGHTS
AND CERTAIN OTHER CHARACTERISTICS (NOT INCLUDING DIMENSIONS)
OF ROAD VEHICLES USED FOR THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS"

(presented by the Commission to the Council pursuant to
the second paragraph of article 149 of the EEC Treaty)

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EXPLANATORY NOTE1. INTRODUCTION

The Commission published its new proposal on the weights and certain other characteristics (not including dimensions) of road vehicles used for the carriage of goods in January 1979 (1). The Economic and Social Committee gave its opinion in January 1980 (2) and the European Parliament on 7 May 1981. In the light of these opinions and following some additional technical work undertaken at the request of the Council's Working Group on Transport in July 1980, the Commission has decided to amend its proposal as provided for in Article 149 of the EEC treaty. The original proposal and the attached amendments relate only to the weights and certain other technical characteristics of commercial vehicles ; the proposals concerning the dimensions of vehicles, which are already broadly agreed between Member States, have been retained from the Commission's previous proposal on vehicle weights and dimensions (3).

2. GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT

Both the Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament proposed that the maximum weight should be limited, in the first instance at least, to 40 tonnes instead of 44 tonnes as proposed by the Commission.

The Commission therefore proposes that the maximum authorised weight of vehicles under this Directive should be limited to 40 tonnes.

It is also proposed that five years after the adoption of this Directive the Commission, at the request of the Council, will prepare a special report on the results of its implementation and on any developments in the transportation field which may affect its provisions.

(1) COM(78)728 final of 4 Jan. 1979

(2) CES 87/80 of 31 Jan. 1980

(3) OJ No. C 90/25 of 11.09.1971

3. PRIOR CONSULTATION

The other amendment requested by the Parliament was that the Member States should inform instead of consult the Commission in cases where they exclude vehicles from unsuitable routes and areas. The Commission considers that, having regard to the content of Article 7, such a provision will not create any difficulties and can therefore be accepted.

4. LOADING OF AXLE GROUPS AND GROSS WEIGHT IN RELATION TO WHEEL BASE

In its opinion the Economic and Social Committee drew attention to the need to permit tandem axles to carry 20 tonnes : "The Committee proposes raising to 20 tonnes the maximum load for tandem axles with a spacing of more than 2 metres"... This question was tackled in the analysis undertaken by the Commission, with the aid of experts from motor vehicle and trailer manufacturers (1) and Member Governments, on the spacing of axle groups in relation to axle weight and on Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) in relation to wheelbase. It was concluded that in order to limit bridge loadings a 20-tonne tandem would be acceptable at a minimum spacing of 1.8 m. Additional rules, based on the same analysis, prescribe weight limits for tandems or tri-axles for different axle spacings.

To provide better control of bridge loadings the proposal also lays down the maximum authorised weight in relation to wheelbase, by introducing limits of 5 tonnes/metre for rigid motor vehicles and trailers and 4 tonnes/metre for articulated vehicles.

5. DETAILED AMENDMENTS TO THE PROPOSAL COM(78)728 of 4 JANUARY 1979

Article 2 - For reasons of clarity a definition of "maximum train weight" has been included. Its absence might have caused some uncertainty since the expression would otherwise appear for the first time in Article 4.1.a)(v).

(1) Doc. 566/VII/80-EN (3.2.1981) and
Doc. 567/VII/80-FW (3.2.1981)

Article 4 - In paragraph 1.a) (iii) and 1.b) the term "group of axles" has been added ; in this way the inclusion in Annex II of detailed rules on axle spacing and axle loading is indicated in this Article which describes the form of the plate.

- In paragraph 2 a more realistic date has been inserted.

Article 5 - In paragraph 1.c) it has been clarified that the rule of 5 % applies to individual axles only and not to the maximum authorised weight of tandems or tri-axles.

- In paragraph 1.e) a minor change is introduced for reasons of clarification.

- In paragraph 2 the procedure to be followed by Member States for raising the ratio of the load on the driving axle to the total laden weight of the vehicle from 20 % to 25 % has now been indicated.

Article 7 - To comply with Parliament's request the proposal provides for an information procedure instead of consultation in cases of where vehicles are excluded from unsuitable routes and areas or because of the carriage of dangerous goods.

Article 8 - In paragraph 2 a more realistic date has been inserted for the entry into force of this Directive.

- A new paragraph 3 has been inserted which requires the Commission to prepare a special report on the implementation of this Directive five years after its adoption by the Member States.

Annex I - In paragraph 1.2 the new permissible weight of 20 tonnes for groups of two axles (tandems) is used.

- In paragraph 1.3. the maximum authorised weight of combined vehicles, where the motor vehicle has 3 axles, is reduced to 40 tonnes from 44 and 42, when the trailer or semi-trailer has 3 or 2 axles.
- In paragraph 3 the obligation to reduce the maximum authorised weight where this could cause overloading of bridges has been omitted because new specific rules have been introduced for this purpose.
- A new paragraph 4 lays down the maximum authorised weight in relation to wheelbase for rigid motor vehicles, trailers and articulated vehicles.

Annex II - In paragraph 3, new detailed rules have been introduced for the relationship between axle weight and axle spacing for tandem axles.

- In paragraph 4, new detailed rules have been introduced for the relationship between axle weight and axle spacing for tri-axles.

Annex III - In paragraph 1, reference is made to the latest legislation on noise.

6. CONCLUSION

In the light of the views expressed by the Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament it is proposed to reduce the maximum authorised weight for vehicles to 40 tonnes, instead of the 44 tonnes originally proposed.

The Commission considers that, taken together with the other amendments, its modified proposal will ensure that vehicles permitted under the Directive would not impose more severe loading on the infrastructure (roads and bridges) than the existing vehicle fleet.

Article 1 unchanged

Article 2

In this Directive,

- a "combined vehicle" means either a rigid motor vehicle coupled to a draw-bar trailer or an articulated vehicle consisting of a tractive unit coupled to a semi-trailer,
- a "motor vehicle" means either a rigid motor vehicle or a tractive unit for an articulated vehicle

Article 2

beginning of the text unchanged, but the following definition is added :

- The "maximum train weight" of a motor vehicle is the maximum laden weight of a vehicle combination which may be taken in charge by that motor vehicle, as determined in accordance with Annex I, paragraph 2.

Article 3 unchanged

Article 4

Paragraph 1a(iii)

(iii) The maximum weight for each axle of the vehicle

Article 4

Paragraph 1a(iii)

(iii) The maximum weight for each axle and group of axles of the vehicle

Paragraphs 1a(i) and 1a(ii) unchanged

Paragraphs 1a(iv) and 1a(v) unchanged

Paragraph 1 (b)

The maximum authorized weight, the maximum weight for each axle and the maximum train weight entered on the plate shall not exceed the limits specified in Annexes I and II

Paragraph 1 (b)

The maximum authorized weight, the maximum weight for each axle and group of axles and the maximum train weight entered on the plate shall not exceed the limits specified in Annexes I and II

Paragraph 2

On the basis of a proposal from the Commission, the Council shall, before 1 January 1980, adopt measures on the form of the plate referred to in this Article

Paragraph 2

On the basis of a proposal from the Commission, the Council shall, before 1 July 1982, adopt measures on the form of the plate referred to in this Article

ANNEX I, paragraph 1.1 unchanged

Paragraph 1.2.

1.2. Vehicles forming part of a combined vehicle

- motor vehicle with two axles 17 t.
- motor vehicle with three axles 24 t.
- trailer with two axles 18 t.
- trailer with three axles 24 t.
- semi-trailer (axle loading)
- with two axles 18 t
- with three axles 24 t.

1.3. Combined vehicles (articulated vehicles and road trains)

- motor vehicle with two axles
- + trailer or semi-trailer
- with two axles 35 tonnes
- with three axles 40 tonnes
- motor vehicle with three axles
- + trailer or semi-trailer
- with two axles 42 tonnes
- with three axles 44 tonnes

Paragraph 2 unchanged

Paragraph 3

3. Maximum weight technically admissible

Where the vehicle is not constructed to carry the maximum authorized weight specified in section 1 of this Annex, or where the axle spacing could cause overloading of bridges, the maximum authorized weight shown on the plate specified in Article 4 shall be reduced accordingly

Paragraph 1.2.

1.2. Vehicles forming part of a combined vehicle

- motor vehicle with two axles 17 t.
- motor vehicle with three axles 24 t.
- trailer with two axles 18 t.
- trailer with three axles 24 t.
- semi-trailer (axle loading)
- with two axles 20 t.
- with three axles 24 t.

beginning of the paragraph unchanged

- motor vehicle with three axles
- + trailer or semi-trailer
- with two or more axles 40 tonnes

Paragraph 3

3. Maximum weight technically admissible

Where the vehicle is not constructed to carry the maximum authorized weight specified in paragraph 1 of this Annex, the maximum authorized weight shown on the plate specified in Article 4 shall be reduced accordingly.

New Paragraph 4

4. Maximum authorized weight in relation to wheelbase

4.1. The maximum authorized weight in tonnes of an individual rigid motor vehicle or draw-bar trailer (W) shall be no more than five times the distance in metres between the centres of the outside axles of the vehicle (L)

- : 4.2. The maximum authorized weight in tonnes of
 a semi-trailer (W) shall be no more than
 4 (L + 3) - 7, where L is the distance in
 metres from the axis of the king-pin to
 the centre of the rear axle of the semi-
 trailer

ANNEXE II, paragraphs 1 and 2 unchanged

Paragraph 3

3. Where the axle spacing is less than
 2.0 metres, the sum of the maximum axle
 weights of a tandem axle shall not
 exceed 18 tonnes

Paragraph 3

3. The sum of the axle weights of a tandem axle
 shall not exceed :
- 11 tonnes if axle spacing (L) is less than
 1.0 metre ($L < 1.0$)
 - 16 tonnes if axle spacing (L) is less than
 1.3 metres ($1.0 \leq L < 1.3$)
 - 18 tonnes if axle spacing (L) is less than
 1.8 metres ($1.3 \leq L < 1.8$)
 - 20 tonnes if axle spacing (L) is 1.8 metres
 or more ($1.8 \leq L$)

Paragraph 4

4. The sum of the axle weights of a tri-axle
 shall not exceed 24 tonnes

Paragraph 4

4. The sum of the axle weights of a tri-axle
 shall not exceed :
- 21 tonnes, where the spacing between the
 individual axles is less than 1.3 metres
 - 24 tonnes, where the spacing between the
 individual axles is 1.3 to 1.4 metres

Paragraphs 5 and 6 unchanged

Annex III

Paragraph 1

1. Noise

The permissible sound level and
 the exhaust system motor veh-
 icles.

Directive Official Journal Reference

Council Directive 70/157/EEC L 42/16 23.02.1970

Commission Dir- 73/350/EEC L321/33 22.11.1973
 ective

Council Directive 77/212/EEC L66/33 12.03.1977

Paragraph 1

beginning of the text unchanged,
 but add following reference to
 a new directive :

Commission Directive

81/334/EEC L131/24 18.05.1981

remainder unchanged