Road infrastructure safety management

2006/0182(COD) - 19/11/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to improve the management of road infrastructure in the European Union.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Directive 2008/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on road infrastructure safety management

CONTENT: following agreement in 1st reading with the European Parliament, this Directive requires the establishment and implementation of procedures relating to road safety impact assessments, road safety audits, the management of road network safety and safety inspections by the Member States. This Directive applies to roads which are part of the trans-European road network, whether they are at the design stage, under construction or in operation. Member States may also apply the provisions of the Directive, as a set of good practices, to national road transport infrastructure, not included in the trans-European road network, which was constructed using Community funding in whole or in part.

The main points of the directive are as follows :

Road safety impact assessment for infrastructure projects: Member States must ensure that a road safety impact assessment is carried out for all infrastructure projects. This assessment will be carried out at the initial planning stage before the infrastructure project is approved. In that connection, Member States shall endeavour to meet the criteria set out in Annex I.

Road safety audits for infrastructure projects: road safety audits must be carried out for all infrastructure projects. When carrying out road safety audits Member States shall endeavour to meet the criteria set out in Annex II.

Safety ranking and management of the road network in operation: Member States shall ensure that the ranking of high accident concentration sections and the network safety ranking are carried out on the basis of reviews, at least every 3 years, of the operation of the road network. In that connection, they shall endeavour to meet the criteria set out in Annex III. Appropriate signs must be in place to warn road users of road infrastructure segments that are undergoing repairs and which may thus jeopardise the safety of road users. These signs shall also include signs which are visible during both day and night time and set up at a safe distance and shall comply with the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals of 1968.

Safety inspections: safety inspections must be undertaken in respect of the roads in operation in order to identify the road safety related features and prevent accidents. The inspections shall comprise periodic inspections of the road network and surveys on the possible impact of roadworks on the safety of the traffic flow.

Data management: for each fatal accident occurring on roads which are part of the trans-European road network, an accident report must be drawn up by the competent entity. Member States shall endeavour to include in that report each of the elements listed in Annex IV. It was agreed between Parliament and Council that the annexes to the Directive would not be binding and Member States are free to decide which provisions and guidelines to implement. Annexes will be adapted in accordance with the regulatory procedure with scrutiny.

Guidelines, if they do not already exist, must be adopted within 3 years of entry into force of the Directive, in order to support the competent entities in the application of the Directive.

Lastly, in order to improve the safety of roads within the EU are not part of the Trans-European road network, the Commission shall establish a coherent system for the exchange of best practice between the Member States, covering, inter alia, existing road infrastructure safety projects and proven road safety technology.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 19/12/2008.

TRANSPOSITION: 19/12/2010.