Road transport: maximum authorised dimensions and weights for certain road vehicles

2013/0105(COD) - 29/04/2015 - Final act

PURPOSE: to improve the aerodynamics of vehicles and their energy efficiency, while continuing to improve road safety.

LEGISLATIVE ACT : Directive (EU) 2015/719 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 amending Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic

CONTENT: The main objective of the Directive is to **make HGVs and buses greener and safer** by authorising weights and dimensions which exceed current limits in certain cases and under determined conditions, where improvements were not feasible with the limitations set out by the Directive 96/53/EC in its previous version.

Improve aerodynamism: the Directive makes provision for granting **derogations** on vehicle length so as to allow rear flaps to be attached to the vehicle or the front of the vehicle to be redesigned to create a more aerodynamic shape. It aims to allow the installation of such devices as soon as the necessary amendments to the technical requirements for type approval of the aerodynamic devices are transposed or applied and the Commission has adopted **implementing acts** laying down the operational rules for the use of such devices.

In the same way, in order to **improve the aerodynamic performance of cabs,** maximum lengths of lorries may be exceeded provided that their cabs deliver improved aerodynamic performance, energy efficiency and safety performance.

Aerodynamic devices exceeding 500 mm in length and motor vehicles equipped with cabs that improve their aerodynamic performance, where such vehicles exceed the limits set by Directive 96/53/EC, are to be **type approved** before being placed on the market.

Clean fuels: the Directive promotes the use of clean fuels by authorising a **weight increase of one tonne** for alternatively fuelled vehicles, to take account of the weight required for the alternative fuel technology.

Containerisation and facilitating intermodal transport operations: in the area of containerisation, 45-foot containers are increasingly being used. Such containers are transported by all modes of transport. The Directive provides for:

- an increase of **15cm** for vehicles engaged in the transport of 45-foot containers that are part of an intermodal transport operation;
- the circulation of three-axle motor vehicles with two- or three-axle semi-trailers will be allowed up to a total authorised weight of **44 tonnes**;
- two-axle motor vehicles with three-axle semi-trailers transporting containers or swap bodies of a length of up to 45 feet will be allowed in intermodal transport operations up to a total authorised weight of **42 tonnes.**

Buses: the Directive authorises **an additional tonne** for buses, in order to take account of the increase in the weight of passengers and their luggage.

Provisions regarding application: Member States should, by 27 May 2021, take specific measures to **identify vehicles** or vehicle combinations in circulation that are likely to have exceeded the relevant weight limits and that should therefore be checked. Such identification may be carried out by means of **weighing mechanisms** built into the road infrastructure, or by means of **on-board sensors** in vehicles that communicate data remotely to the relevant authorities.

Every year, each Member State should perform an appropriate number of vehicle weight checks that should be **proportionate to the total number of vehicles inspected** each year in the Member State concerned.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 26.5.2015.

TRANSPOSITION: 7.5.2017.

DELEGATED ACTS: the Commission may adopted delegated acts in order to update the list of alternative fuels included in the Directive in light of the latest technological developments. The power to adopt such acts is conferred on the Commission for a **period of five years (which may be tacitly extended) from 26 May 2016.** The European Parliament or the Council may raise objections to a delegated act within two months of the date of notification of that act (which period may be extended for two months). If Parliament or Council raise objections, the delegated act will not enter into force.