

Trans-European road network : minimum safety requirements for tunnels

2002/0309(COD) - 30/12/2002 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to propose minimum safety requirements for tunnels in the Trans-European Road Network.

CONTENT : the proposed Directive establishes preventive measures and measures that provide a minimum level of safety in the event of accidents in tunnels in the Trans-European Road Network. It shall apply to all tunnels on the Trans-European Road Network with lengths of over 500 m, whether they are in operation, under construction or at the design stage. The following objectives have been set for reaching the optimal level of safety in road tunnels: - Primary objective: prevention (to prevent critical events that endanger human life, the environment and tunnel installations). - Secondary objective : reduction of possible consequences (concerning events such as accidents and fires) by providing the ideal prerequisites for enabling people involved in the incident to rescue themselves; allowing immediate intervention of road users to prevent greater damage; ensuring efficient action by emergency services; - protecting the environment; limiting material damage. In order to reach these objectives, the Directive proposes to establish: - organisational requirements : the Commission proposes to harmonise the organisation of safety at national level and to clarify the different roles and responsibilities. In particular, the Commission proposes that each Member State should appoint an Administrative Authority seconded by an Inspection Body. In most cases, Member States will have the possibility of appointing existing administrative services as Administrative Authorities for the purposes of the present Directive. Responsibility for safety in each tunnel will lie with the Tunnel Manager and the responsibility for control with the appointed Safety Officer; - technical requirements : the level of safety in tunnels is influenced by a variety of factors which can be put under the following four main headings: Infrastructure; Operation; Vehicles; Road users. Requirements aimed at reinforcing safety in road tunnels will be established for each group.