Trans-European transport network: electronic road toll systems, widespread introduction and interoperability

2003/0081(COD) - 23/04/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to present a proposal for a Directive on the widespread introduction and operability of electronic road toll systems in the Community. CONTENT : this Directive was announced in the White Paper European transport policy for 2010: time to decide. It lays down the conditions necessary for a European electronic toll service to be put in place as soon as possible on all parts of the road network subject to tolls. This service will be based on the principle of "one contract per customer, one box per vehicle". The Directive does not deal with road-charging policy as such and does not prejudge possible future road-charging policy options. On the contrary, the technical solutions adopted mean that all the policies currently planned at EU and Member State level can be implemented. And by ensuring the interoperability of toll systems in the internal market, the Directive will facilitate the implementation of a Europewide infrastructure-charging policy. The recommended technologies can cover all types of infrastructure (motorways, roads, bridges, tunnels, etc.) and vehicles (HGV, light vehicles, motorbikes, etc.). In order to achieve this objective, a European electronic toll service is to be created. This service must ensure the interoperability, for users, of the electronic toll systems that have already been introduced at national and regional level by the Member States and of those to be introduced in the future throughout the EU's territory. The service will be independent of the level of charges and their purpose. It concerns only the method of collecting tolls or fees. The benefits will be: reduced congestion, increased traffic flow and a reduced number of cash transactions at toll posts. The proposals will aid the development of the information society by linking microwave, GNSS satellite location and GSM/GPRS mobile phone technologies. A single European electronic toll service is proposed. This will enable users to subscribe through the operators of any parts of the networks. Operators of charging systems must be able to provide the service from 1 January 2005 to all vehicles over 3.5 tonnes or carrying over 9 people and from 2010 for all other classes of vehicle. The service will include agreement amongst the operators and provide for service functions, quality and quantity, and eventual technical harmonisation. It will mean a guarantee of interoperability and will take account of technological advances. There will be special provision for occasional users and other eventualities. A regulatory committee will assist the Commission. It will handle all the necessary details to launch the service, including the choice of the technologies on which the service will be based. In addition: - the new electronic toll systems must use one of the following technologies: satellite positioning; mobile communications using GSM-GPRS standard; 5.8 GHz microwave technology. - after 01/01/08, all new systems brought into service as part of the European electronic toll service will only use satellite positioning and mobile communications technologies; - the 5.8 GHz technology must have been abandoned by 01/01/12.