

Road safety: anchorages of safety belts (amend. Directive 76/115/EEC)

2003/0136(COD) - 20/06/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend Council Directive 76/115/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to anchorages for motor vehicles safety belts with a view to imposing the fitting of safety belts in motor vehicles other than passenger cars from 1 July 2004. **CONTENT** : the following Directives concern the installation of safety belts in relation to vehicles : - Council Directive 77/541/EEC, as last amended by Commission Directive 2000/3/EC, on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to safety belts and restraint systems on motor vehicles; - Council Directive 76/115/EEC, as last amended by Commission Directive 96/38/EEC, on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to anchorages for motor-vehicles safety belts (COD/2003/0136); - Council Directive 74/408/EEC, as last amended by Commission Directive 96/37/EC, relating to motor vehicles with regard to the seats, their anchorages and head restraints (COD/2003/0128). With a view to the compulsory installation of safety belts in all vehicles, the Commission is proposing to amend the three Directives simultaneously. They should be adopted at the same time and be implemented at the same time. Safety belt anchorages intended for heavy-duty vehicles including buses and coaches cannot, for technical reasons, be fixed into the body structure of the vehicle, as is usually the case for passenger cars, and are fixed to the seats. For this reason, compliance with the three Directives in combination is required since safety belts and/or restraint systems have to be securely attached to reinforced and standardised anchorages, installed in the vehicle in such a way as to allow the correct wearing of the belts. Moreover, the forces exerted on the belt by the human body in the case of an impact are transferred to the seat anchorages, reason why their strength should be checked under combined loads. The main points of the proposal are as follows: - the proposal defines the vehicles of category M2 and M3 taking into account Directive 2001/85/EC on buses and coaches. This approach provides the appropriate means to operate a distinction between city-buses, inter-city buses and travel coaches. - the proposal includes three dates : - 1st January 2004: the date from when Member States have to accept vehicles approved in accordance with the amending Directive; - 1st July 2004: the date from when new types of vehicles belonging to the concerned categories have to fulfil the requirements of the Directive; - 1st January 2006: the date from when all new vehicles belonging to existing types have to comply with the Directive.