

**Feasibility of an
United Nations Round Table on the Global Harmonization of
Regulations, Codes & Standards (RC&S) for Gaseous Fuels & Vehicles**

Transmitted by the experts from ENGVA and ISO

Introduction.

As the result of a presentation by the International Association for Natural Gas Vehicles (IANGV) and the European Natural Gas Vehicle Association (ENGVA) at its meeting in March 2004, WP.29 recognized the importance of harmonization of international standards on gaseous fuels, but was of the opinion that it is not in the scope of Agreements administered by WP.29. WP.29 agreed to consider the possibility of organizing a Round Table on the subject and requested that ENGVA prepare a paper in conjunction with ISO for consideration at the next GRPE session.

WP.29 itself made a decision recently at its 131st session in November 2003 to use only references to international standards in the regulations instead of reproducing them in extenso. This is a positive step in the direction of global harmonization.

Worldwide harmonization already has some strong supporters. At the Evian Summit in June 2003, the G8 recognized the need to accelerate the development of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies and simultaneously to develop international codes and standards. Also, at the Global Automotive Industry meeting in September 2002 in Paris, the top executives of leading car manufacturers saw the need to develop a Global Technical Regulation (GTR) for hydrogen vehicles. Further, in October 2003 in Tokyo, these executives met again and agreed to push for harmonization of global safety and environmental standards.

It is well recognized that global harmonization of regulations, codes and standards (RC&S) is a key factor in the early introduction of hydrogen and fuel cells technologies into the market. The natural gas vehicle industry already has over 3 million vehicles in the world market and, thus, it already has a nearly completed suite of RC&S. However, the rapid development of the natural gas vehicle industry in the last two decades has resulted in a need to harmonize existing RC&S developed in different countries and by different organizations.

Scope.

The scope of the Round Table will cover global harmonization of RC&S for gaseous fuels, which includes natural gas and hydrogen vehicles for transportation applications.

Participants of the Round Table.

To be effective, the organizers of the Round Table should form a High Level Group on natural gas, hydrogen and fuel cell activities with participants representing:

- Members of WP.29, including NGOs such as the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA), ENGVA/INGVA, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
- Automotive and Infrastructure companies from Europe, Japan and the US.
- Global organizations such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the International Association for Hydrogen Energy (IAHE) and the International Energy Agency (IEA).

As we are also working on gaseous fuels, we need to work in close conjunction with the UN ECE–Energy group and seek their support.

It is recommended that Mr. Bernard Gauvin, the Chair of GRPE and Vice Chair of WP.29 be invited to chair the Round Table. If this is not possible, an independent facilitator could be invited to help the discussion and output.

Goals.

The Round Table will provide a forum for discussing the problem of lack of harmonization and articulating the need for global harmonization based on actual experience. Harmonization strategies will be discussed with the purpose of reaching an agreement on a path forward process for advancing harmonization of RC&S for gaseous fuels and vehicles.

Harmonization strategies.

The ENGVA/IANGV proposal and the Global Cooperation Group (GCG) process will be presented as possible harmonization strategies. The ENGVA/IANGV proposal was presented at the 47th session of the GRPE on 16 January 2004 (see informal doc. No. GRPE-47-2). The **GCG** is an organization, with broad experience in consensus building, which has been involved in the global harmonization of RC&S in the field of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies since 2002. Recently, the GCG has been involved in the harmonization of the SAE J2600 and ISO/DIS 17268.

Conclusions of the Round Table

The conclusions of the Round Table will be presented in the form of recommendations to WP.29 regarding vehicles and to pertinent bodies regarding fuels. These recommendations should include a process for advancing harmonization of RC&S for gaseous fuels and vehicles along with a draft action plan. The plan would include milestones such as a standards gap analysis and identification & prioritization of harmonization issues.

This briefing paper was prepared jointly by ENGVA, IANGV, and ISO as an informal document, accompanied by a draft agenda for the United Nations World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (Working Party 29) and its Working Party on Pollution and Energy (GRPE). For more information, please contact

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**ROUND TABLE ON THE GLOBAL HARMONIZATION OF
REGULATIONS, CODES & STANDARDS (RC&S) FOR GASEOUS FUELS**
Palais des Nations, to be determined

Programme

OPENING	Mrs Brigita Schmögnerová, Executive Secretary of the UNECE
HARMONIZATION NEEDS – Market forces	
Automotive Industry Perspective - US, EU, Japan	OICA
Infrastructure Industry Perspective - US, EU, Japan	WBCSD
GRPE, Informal Group Perspective	Mr. Christoph Albus
ISO/IEC Perspective	ISO representative
HARMONIZATION STRATEGIES	
ENGVA/INGVA proposal	Mr. Jeffrey Seisler
Global Cooperation Group proposal	Mr. Randy Dey
Other	
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS – ACTION PLAN	
CONCLUSIONS – RECOMMENDATIONS TO WP.29	Mr. Bernard Gauvin, Vice Chairman of WP.29 and Chair of GRPE
CLOSING OF THE ROUND TABLE	Mr. José Capel Ferrer, Director of the UNECE Transport Division