

Transmitted by the expert from Germany

Informal document No. **GRSG-99-23**
(99th GRSG, 19-22 October 2010
agenda item 6)

Establishing an Informal Group on Plastic Glazing

(Introduction of plastic glazing for windscreens and laminated windows other than windscreens in Regulation No. 43)

At the 98th GRSG session Germany proposed to set up an informal group on the introduction of plastic glazing into Regulation No. 43. Several GRSG experts expressed their wish to contribute in setting up Terms of References for this informal group. Experts were invited to send their comments to the expert of Germany.

To enable starting the work on a clear basis, a pre-meeting devoted to the establishment of terms of reference and rules of procedure for this informal group on plastic glazing, based on the comments received to date, was held on 06 October 2010 at the OICA offices in Paris (France).

The minutes of this meeting can be found in Annex 1 to this document.

The discussion of the experts at the pre-meeting showed that further work has to be performed before plastic glazing for windscreens and laminated windows other than windscreens can be introduced in Regulation no. 43.

Therefore Germany proposes that GRSG recommends to WP.29 the establishment of an informal group with a timeframe of three years, with Terms of References, Rules of Procedure and Time schedule according to the ones indicated in the informal documents Nos. GRSG-99-24 and GRSG-99-25.

ANNEX 1

Welcome and Adoption of the Agenda

After the explanation of the intention of the pre-meeting and the introduction of the present experts the agenda was adopted.

Objective of IG on Plastic Glazing

It was pointed out by the chairman that the informal group should concentrate on developing annexes to UNECE R43 in order to give the possibility of approving plastic windscreens and laminated plastic windows other than windscreens. The informal group should primarily inspire from existing standards and test methods which are already applied by industry to measure certain characteristics of the plastic material and which identify it as a safe product for use as windscreens and windows on motor vehicles. The experts confirmed that establishing a new ISO standard on test procedures for plastic glazing is not the preferred approach. The time scale would be too long to be in line with the schedule of the IG and it would therefore be questionable to start the work of IG immediately.

The experts in addition agreed that the IG concentrates on the plastic glazing itself rather than additional items like e.g. a general revision of Regulation no. 43.

Presentations

There were two comments by Japan and France on the Terms of Reference.

The presentation given by Japan pointed out the higher abrasion and scratch resistance and higher chemical resistance of the widely used glass sheets in comparison with the lower respective values for plastic glazing. Japan mentioned the concerns expressed by experts at the three last GRSG meetings and it was pointed out that the IG has to pay attention in its work to develop a regulation which shows that plastic windscreens and laminated plastic windows other than windscreens are safety glazing.

Concerning abrasion the use of other tests than the Taber test was discussed. It was well understood that new tests and test results on plastic should be made transparent by the IG. The possibility of a chemical resistance test after abrasion was also considered.

It was reminded that in the existing UNECE R43 there are already annexes for plastic windows other than windscreens and plastic double glazing. This fact has to be considered by the IG. It was concluded that the informal group has to find suitable tests to ensure safety of plastic windscreens and of laminated plastic windows other than windscreens based on performance requirements.

The French position was given by email because of the absence of their experts.

France pointed out that UNECE R43 should be updated in order to include:

- an evolution of the test equipment characteristics, due to the change of the characteristics of the abrasion devices (Taber abrasion test);
- adapting the test method to the weaknesses and characteristics of the new products, e.g. windshields with integrated demist/defrost and wipers;
- a clarification of the installation requirements in order to avoid drift or divergence of interpretations. It occurred in the past that some vehicles equipped with plastic panes were approved with no weather test nor head form impact tests.

The experts committed to review the necessity to include the above concerns from France in the Terms of Reference at a later stage.

Discussion

As a result of the presentations and discussions the draft Terms of Reference were improved with the addition of a Paragraph 1b. Paragraph 3 was slightly amended and paragraph 4 was deleted as considered unnecessary.

The Time Schedule was revised in Phase 2 in order to include the proposal from some Contracting Parties to add provisions for chemical and durability tests.

The Rules of Procedure were accepted in the given form.

Documents for GRSG session

The documents to be tabled at the 99th GRSG session will be the Terms of References, the Rules of Procedure and a proposal to establish the Informal Group including the minutes of this pre-meeting.

Any other Business

The chairman pointed out that Germany would offer to chair the IG. The secretariat would be taken over by OICA.

The date for the 1st meeting of the Informal Group could be scheduled for 18 and 19 January 2011 at the OICA offices in Paris starting on 10:00 am the first day and finishing at around 4:00 pm the second day. Some experts expressed the wish of holding some of the meetings in the margin of the GRSG meetings because of time saving and traveling costs reduction. China expressed the wish to consider the ability of Webex conferences.
