

The 1997 Agreement - Possible solutions and the way forward

Current situation:

The 1997 Agreement concerning periodical technical inspections (PTI) of wheeled vehicles entered into force on 27 January 2001 following the sixth country becoming a Contracting Party. Up to now, 12 countries are contracting parties to the agreement (Russian Federation, Estonia, Netherlands, Romania, Hungary, Finland, Bulgaria, Belarus, Albania, Ukraine, Moldova and Kazakhstan) where six of them are members of the European Union. Since this date, the agreement has been amended twice and Rules 1 on PTI on environmental aspects and Rule 2 on PTI on safety related aspects have been introduced. To follow technical progress, the rules annexed to the agreement follow a continuous process of being amended.

During the past decade, several attempts have been made to increase the number of participating countries with focus on the ECE area, while the 1997 agreement is open for accession by all member Countries of the United Nations. However progress is slow as the majority of UNECE countries are also members of the European Union where they have to fully comply with European legislation.

In 2014, the European Union has put in place a revised version of their legislation on PTI, Directive 2014/45/EU on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers. With this new directive additional elements were introduced related to the equipment to be used for PTI, skills and training of personnel performing PTI as well as requirements for supervision and quality control of PTI centers.

Possible solutions:

Following the analysis of the current situation, the following areas for future improvements could be identified:

- Better alignment of the agreement and the annexed rules with the new European legislation. This will have an effect on the content of the existing rules by inter alia including the testing of electronic safety systems into PTI, but also request the consideration of introducing additional elements, preferably by the instruments of new rules namely
 - new Rule 3 on the equipment to be used for PTI,
 - new Rule 4 on skills and training of staff performing PTI and
 - new Rule 5 on supervision and quality control of PTI centers.
- Furthermore, appendix 2 to the 1997 agreement establishing the international technical inspection certificate should be updated and modernized towards the possibility of electronic certificates.

The way forward:

To provide for a proper preparation of the alignment with European legislation, it is deemed necessary to install an informal working group (IWG) on PTI as these new elements might not be covered by the work of the current existing GRs. Furthermore such an IWG would allow PTI experts to participate, as usually they are not well represented in any of the groups dealing with type-approval issues. In addition, providing a platform for discussions on PTI which should result in a consensus on possible amendments to existing rules and on the envisaged new rules would smooth the decision making process within WP.29 and AC.4.
