



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 January 2017

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

Seventy-fourth session

Geneva, 21-24 March 2017

Item 5 (c) of the provisional agenda

Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (R.E.1):

Amendment proposals on distracted driving

Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (R.E.1)

Amendment proposals on distracted driving

Submitted by the France, Italy and the Russian Federation

Summary

This document submitted by France, Italy and the Russian Federation proposes amendments to the Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (R.E.1), section 1.5 - Use of mobile phones.

1.5 Use of mobile phones and other communication devices

1.5.1 Context

Mobile phones and other communication devices can be used in a motor vehicle for various purposes, such as notifying the emergency services in the event of an accident; telephoning a breakdown mechanic, etc.; and, making use of the numerous possibilities for stopping inside and outside built-up areas and on motorways.

All the studies have shown that there is a link between using a mobile phone or other communication devices while driving and the increased risk of an accident. Recent studies have shown that the basic problem is that the driver takes his/her eyes off the road for a rather long time irrespectively of the source of distraction, which is comprised of three elements:

- (a) Visual (Attention of the driver away from monitoring traffic).
- (b) Manual (Driver cannot properly control the vehicle whilst he or she is manipulating the mobile phones or other communication devices).
- (c) Cognitive (Attention of the driver away from the task of controlling the vehicle).

While at the wheel, a driver needs to pay constant attention to the road and to the traffic; and to make no gestures that may diminish his/her control of the vehicle; or to hinder any driving manoeuvres. The driver must at all times be capable of performing easily and instantly the necessary manoeuvres dictated by the circumstances. Using or even holding a mobile phone or other communication device can easily prevent a driver from performing these tasks correctly and safely. For this reason, legislation in many countries prohibits and punishes the use of a hand-held phone and other communication devices, while nevertheless tolerating the use of hands-free mobile phone kit. Even in this case, however, some national laws make the driver liable in the event of an accident. And, in fact, the risk of an accident increases even when a hands-free phone or other communication device is used, since a major part of the driver's attention is taken up by the telephone conversation. For example, drivers tend to look less frequently in the rear-view mirror or to the sides; pay less attention to the various road signs, and to pedestrians, particularly in town, etc.

1.5.2 Recommendations

1.5.2.1 While driving a vehicle

To avoid the risk of such accidents, Contracting Parties should at least prohibit the use by drivers of hand-held phones in a moving vehicle, as is already provided for under the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968 (article 8). In addition, it should be recommended that drivers observe the following rules:

- (a) Drivers should switch off their phones and other communication devices before moving off and leave them on voicemail;
- (b) Whilst driving, drivers should refrain from viewing messages and other information on display of phone and other communication devices;
- (c) Drivers should stop in an appropriate place if they wish to use a mobile phone or other communication devices, or if they wish to listen to or read any messages received. However, they should never stop in a dangerous place, such as the hard shoulder of a motorway.

These recommendations should be accompanied by information campaigns, if possible in partnership with the various phone operators. Such campaigns could adopt appropriate slogans, e.g. "Drive or phone, but NEVER both, you choose". The idea is to increase the

awareness of drivers about the importance of respecting these rules, both for their own safety and also for the safety of other road users.

It is noteworthy that research has also shown that many drivers consider the use of mobile phones and other communication devices to be so important that they completely ignore the associated increase in accident risk. Moreover, it seems that individual drivers have difficulties in understanding an increase in risk level, which of course is normally statistically very low in individual cases. This is partly because of the difficulty of demonstrating that the use of a mobile phone or other communication devices while driving poses a specific risk in any particular set of circumstances.

1.5.2.2 Facilitating the investigation related to an accident

It should be recommended that users of mobile phones and other communication devices ensure that the names of the person or persons to be contacted in the event of an accident are clearly indicated in the list of names stored in their phone or other communication device. This would help authorized personnel in emergency services and authorized personnel from wasting time trying to locate such contacts. For example, in some countries, it is becoming common practice to recommend that users of mobile phones and other communication devices should indicate the name of the person to be contacted in the event of an emergency by using the internationally recognized acronym ICE (In Case of Emergency), or, if there are several people, ICE1, ICE2, ICE3, etc.
