

Proposal for the 03 series of amendments to UN Regulation No. 55 (Mechanical couplings)

Submitted by experts from Austria and the Netherlands *

The text reproduced below was jointly submitted by Austria and the Netherlands to amend UN Regulation No. 55. It clarifies the need to have a support device for centre axle trailers, independent of the type of coupling device. The modifications to the current text of the UN Regulation by document ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRSG/2023/18 are marked in “bold black“ for new or strikethrough for deleted characters. The modifications made by this document are marked in “**(bold) blue**” for new or strikethrough for deleted characters.

* In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2023 as outlined in proposed programme budget for 2023 (A/77/6 (Sect. 20), table 20.6), the World Forum will develop, harmonize and update UN Regulations in order to enhance the performance of vehicles. The present document is submitted in conformity with that mandate.

I. Proposal

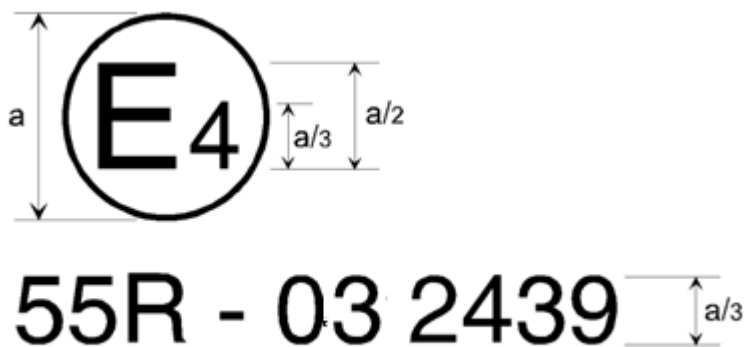
Insert new paragraphs 13.6. to 13.10., to read:

- "13.6. As from the official date of entry into force of the 03 series of amendments, no Contracting Party applying this Regulation shall refuse to grant or refuse to accept type approvals under this Regulation as amended by the 03 series of amendments.
- 13.7. As from 1 September 2025, Contracting Parties applying this Regulation shall not be obliged to accept type approvals issued to the preceding series of amendments to this Regulation.
- 13.8. Notwithstanding paragraph 13.7., Contracting Parties applying this Regulation shall continue to accept type approvals of mechanical coupling devices and components issued according to the preceding series of amendments to this Regulation.
- 13.9. Notwithstanding paragraph 13.7., Contracting Parties applying this Regulation shall continue to accept type approvals issued according to the preceding series of amendments to this Regulation, for the vehicles which are not affected by the changes introduced by the 03 series of amendments.
- 13.10. Contracting Parties applying this Regulation shall not refuse to grant type approvals according to any preceding series of amendments to this Regulation or extensions thereof."

Annex 3, amend to read:

"Annex 3

Example of an arrangement of the approval mark



a = 8 mm minimum

The mechanical coupling device or component or vehicle bearing the approval mark shown above is a device or component approved in the Netherlands (E 4), under approval number 2439, meeting the requirements of the 03 series of amendments to this Regulation.

... "

Annex 7, paragraph 1.4. to 1.4.3., amend to read:

- "1.4. Attachment of ~~drawbar eyes~~ **coupling devices** and drawbars on trailers.
- 1.4.1. Drawbars for centre axle trailers shall have a support device which is adjustable in height if the bearing mass at the ~~drawbar eye~~ **coupling device** on the trailer exceeds 50 kg, when the trailer is uniformly loaded to its technically permissible maximum mass.
- This requirement shall not apply in the case of trailers designed for special operations where they are normally only separated in a workshop (i.e. Class T couplings) or when loading and unloading in specifically designed operating areas.**
- 1.4.2. When attaching ~~drawbar eyes~~ **coupling device** and drawbar to centre-axle trailers with a maximum mass, C, of more than 3.5 tonnes and more than one axle, the trailers shall be equipped with device for axle load sharing.
- 1.4.3. Hinged drawbars shall be clear of the ground. They shall not fall below a height of 200 mm from the ground when released from the horizontal position. See also Annex 5, paragraphs 5.3. and 5.4."

II. Justification

1. It was noticed that paragraph 1.4 of Annex 7 only refers to "drawbar eyes", whereas typical centre axle trailers come with different types of coupling devices, e.g. Class D or Class B.
2. The necessity to have a support device adjustable in height shall not depend on the type of coupling device: for the user, it will require the same effort to connect a centre axle trailer equipped with a towing eye or e.g. a coupling head.
3. It has been the general understanding for most of the contracting parties and their Technical Services involved that a support device was also required for other types of coupling devices than just drawbar eyes. It was noticed though while discussing this subject in the Type Approval Authority Meeting of May 2023, that not all attendees shared the same opinion. Therefore, it may happen that centre axle trailers are available on the market without support device, which is why a new series of amendments including transitional provisions is proposed to solve this.
4. **Note on special type of coupling device class T added as well as for the condition that loading and unloading only takes place in specifically designed operating areas, in line with paragraph 1.5.2.**