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Brussels, 27 November 2009

IRU Resolution on the DEVELOPMENT AND TRIALS OF HARMONISED EMS VEHICLE COMBINATIONS ACROSS THE EU

*adopted by the IRU Goods Transport Liaison Committee
in Brussels on 1 October 2009*

IRU Resolution on the development and trials of harmonised EMS vehicle combinations across the EU.

The IRU Goods Transport Liaison Committee to the EU (CLTM), representing goods transport by road in the 27 Member States of the European Union, meeting in Brussels to evaluate the European Commission's initiatives relating to the use of European Modular System (EMS) vehicle combinations across the EU,

Considering that:

On the basis of current trials, the EMS offers a number of advantages in the field of increased efficiency:

- the possibility to carry the same load with fewer vehicles, thus offering better, not more, transport,
- better use of an increasingly limited number of professional drivers,
- more available capacity,
- better inter-changeability with other freight modes, thus promoting co-modality,
- better environmental performance - less fuel consumption and reduced CO₂ emissions,
- higher infrastructure friendliness - reduced road wear for the same payload carried, due to a higher number of axles and reduced weight per axle,

A number of open but surmountable challenges have also been identified which require further examination and testing:

- the impact on road infrastructure, including parking, and bridges
- the impact on the road freight transport market such as price evolution
- the need to install additional safety equipment on EMS combinations
- the need to impose additional training requirements on drivers

Currently, the EMS is only being used and/or tested in a limited number of Member States;

In order to facilitate the use of EMS across the EU, the various combinations as well as transport units and loading equipment in the different Member States need to be harmonised

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and standardised to further promote co-modality, and that in addition to the available theoretical research, more practical tests are urgently required, both national and cross-border, in order to find answers to the remaining challenges and prepare such harmonised rules.

Urgently call upon the European Commission and Member States to:

Facilitate both national and cross-border trials with EMS vehicle combinations to establish whether and which vehicle combinations provide the most advantages and are the safest to operate and what potential infrastructure modifications would be needed to permit their use;

Define harmonised and standardised rules for weights and dimensions which would lead to the use of EMS vehicle combinations across the EU for intra-Community transport to promote co-modality in the EU.

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