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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations

Working Party on General Safety Provisions

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Geneva, 20 - 23 October 2009

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

REGULATION No. 34
(Prevention of fire risks)

Proposal for draft amendments to Regulation No. 34

Submitted by the expert from the International Organization of
Motor Vehicle Manufacturers */

The text reproduced below was prepared by the expert from the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) in order to exempt diesel propelled vehicles from expensive measures to avoid hazards due to static electricity. The modifications to the current text of the Regulation are marked in bold or strikethrough characters.

*/ In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2006-2010 (ECE/TRANS/166/Add.1, programme activity 02.4), the World Forum will develop, harmonize and update Regulations in order to enhance performance of vehicles. The present document is submitted in conformity with that mandate.

A. PROPOSAL

Paragraph 5.11., amend to read:

"5.11. **Except in the case of fuel tanks containing diesel fuel, The fuel tank tanks and their** ~~its~~ accessory parts shall be designed and installed in the vehicle in such a way that any ignition hazard due to static electricity shall be avoided.

If necessary, measure(s) for charge dissipation shall be provided.

The manufacturer shall demonstrate to the technical service the measure(s) which guarantee(s) the fulfilling of these requirements."

B. JUSTIFICATION

Paragraph 5.11. was last amended in 2004 (document ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRSG/2003/7) at the eighty-fourth session of the Working Party on General Safety Provisions (GRSG). The purpose of this amendment was to take into account the potential danger showed in a few instances when fire began on some gasoline fuel propelled vehicles by sparks initiated by electrostatic charges. The wording included the expression "if necessary" in order to allow the approval authorities to request technical measures, depending on their assessment of the danger.

At that time, it was considered by the vehicle manufacturers that such wording would be of no consequence for the design of diesel fuel tanks, because, to the manufacturers' knowledge, no fire had ever been reported due to the electrostatic charging of diesel fuel tanks. Diesel fuel has a Minimum Ignition Energy higher than gasoline.

Unfortunately, it appears that there is a variety of interpretations among Approval Authorities regarding this provision. Some Authorities ask vehicle manufacturers to fit an electrical link between the tanks and the chassis, even in the case of diesel fuel, whereas others consider there is no danger at all and consequently do not ask anything.

This is the reason why OICA proposes to clarify that tanks for diesel fuel are not targeted by paragraph 5.11.

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