

ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCILCONSEIL  
ECONOMIQUE  
ET SOCIALE/CONF.8/C.III/SR.18Rev.1  
21 November 1949

## UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ROAD AND MOTOR TRANSPORT

## COMMITTEE III ON ROAD TRAFFIC

## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on  
Wednesday, 7 September, 1949 at 10 a.m.CHAIRMAN: Mr. MELLINI (Italy)  
SECRETARY: Mr. AMBROZEKContents:DRAFT PROVISIONS FOR INSERTION IN A CONVENTION  
ON ROAD AND MOTOR TRANSPORT PREPARED BY THE  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (Item 4 of the  
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CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT ARTICLES FOR INSERTION IN A CONVENTION ON ROAD AND MOTOR TRANSPORT PREPARED BY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (Item 4 of the Conference Agenda) (Document E/CONF.8/3)  
(continued)

Annex 4 (continued)

Annex 46

Mr. BLOM-ANDERSEN (Denmark) submitted the proposal of the delegations of the Scandinavian countries that paragraph 2 of Article 46 of Annex 4 submitting that; on the one hand, sound signals were frequently inaudible inside a closed car, whereas, on the other hand, they constituted a nuisance for those who dwelt in the immediate neighbourhood of level crossings. The question of the co-existence of sound and light signals could safely be left to local highway authorities.

Mr. ZACH (Czechoslovakia) referring to paragraph 1, proposed that the automatic light signal should be mounted on the same post as the St. Andrew's Cross. Such an addition would both complete the warning, and conform to general railway practice.

Mr. FLUMEZ (Switzerland) supported the proposal of the representative of Czechoslovakia. With regard to the phrase at the end of paragraph 1 reading: "any possibility of mis-interpreting the signal", he pointed out that the methods adopted for preventing level crossing accidents differed greatly from country to country, and that no system so far devised could claim 100% efficiency. It therefore seemed to him necessary to render the provision in the last sentence of paragraph 1 more flexible, and he proposed substituting for the phrase he had quoted the phrase, "to protect road users from the danger of collision with a train".

Turning to paragraph 2, he wondered whether the substitution of the sentence "The aforementioned flashing red light may be accompanied by a sound signal" for the text in the ECE draft would satisfy the Scandinavian delegations.

Mr. BLOM-ANDERSEN (Denmark) accepted the suggestion of the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. BRUNE (Union of South Africa) also supported the representative of Switzerland.

The Committee adopted the Swiss proposal to reword Paragraph 2 as follows "The aforementioned flashing red light may be accompanied by a sound signal"

Mr. PETIT (Belgium) proposed that the automatic red flashing light and the St. Andrew's Cross should be kept separate, but close to the level crossing, since in certain lights it was difficult to make out whether or not a red light was functioning.

Mr. THIROT (France) supported the proposal of the Czechoslovak representative, since, in the interests of the road user he considered it desirable that nothing be done that would in any way tend to divide his attention. He added that the International Railway Union, at its meeting in May 1949, had expressed the hope that the present Conference would adopt as a level crossing signal the flashing red light and the St. Andrew's Cross mounted on the same post.

Mr. PETIT (Belgium) said he would not press his point.

The Committee unanimously agreed to make provision in Article 1 for the co-existence of the automatic signal and the St. Andrew's Cross on the same standard, subject to suitable drafting changes.

Mr. THIROT (France), referring to the amendment proposed by the representative for Switzerland in respect of the last sentence of paragraph 1. submitted that, in his view, the Swiss proposal overlooked the real aim of the original text, namely, that if the signal was out of order, the road user should be made aware of the fact. The original text should therefore be retained as it provided for the immediate danger of mis-interpretation of the absence of the signal.

Mr. van NEMERT (Netherlands) stated that his delegation accepted the original text, and pointed out that in a letter dated 4 July 1949, addressed to Governments by the International Railway Union and commenting on the ECE draft, no observations had been made on Article 46, so that it could be presumed that that organization was in agreement with the ECE text.

Mr. ZICH (Czechoslovakia) supported the representative of France.

Mr. HIRZEL (Switzerland), supporting his delegation's proposal, said that, whereas luminous signals at level crossings had in the very nature of things to be robust, their mechanism was nevertheless very delicate, and that the more delicate the apparatus, the more liable it was to break down. So far no system had been devised that guaranteed anything approaching 100% efficiency, and until a fool-proof system was invented, it would be preferable to leave countries free in that respect. To impose the adoption of a positive indication of danger on a country like Switzerland, where a satisfactory system, including a luminous cautionary signal to train drivers, was already in use, would entail considerable expense without the compensating certainty that the new system would be an improvement on the old one.

With regard to the letter from the International Railway Union, he was informed that at the meeting at which the Resolutions referred to in that letter had been adopted, all representatives present had agreed to leave countries free to take whatever measures they thought best to secure maximum safety.

Mr. TAYLOR (United Kingdom) appreciated the point of view of the Swiss representative, but believed that, to meet his objections, it would be sufficient to re-word the text so as to lay emphasis on the need for taking all possible measures to reduce accidents to an absolute minimum.

Mr. ELM-ANDERSEN (Denmark) said that, although he did not consider the amendment proposed by the representative of Switzerland necessary, he was not opposed to it.

Mr. THIROT (France) was prepared to accept the Swiss proposal if it met with the general agreement of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that, whereas the English text was clear and should satisfy the representative of Switzerland, the French text required revision to bring it more closely into line with the sense of the English text.

The Committee unanimously agreed to replace the words "celui-ci ne puisse provoquer d'interprétation erronée" in the French text by the phrase "ce dernier ne puisse donner lieu à une interprétation erronée".

The Committee unanimously adopted Article 46 subject to the above three amendments.

#### Article 47

The Committee unanimously adopted Article 47

At the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, Mr. von HEMERT (Netherlands) read out the letter of 4 July 1949, addressed by the International Railway Union to Governments, following its meeting of May 1949, on the subject of level crossing signals. Representatives at that meeting, with the exception of the representative of Sweden, had considered that the provisions in the ECE draft for level crossing signals were entirely satisfactory. Nevertheless, and again with the exception of Sweden, it had been thought desirable to make certain observations on the ECE draft. The Union recommended: first, that the St. Andrew's cross should be placed on the same standard as the automatic signal, close to the level crossing; secondly, that it should be permissible to display the St. Andrew's cross on a rectangular sign plate; thirdly, that the term "light yellow" should be used instead of "light colour"; and, finally, that advertising signs with red or green lighting should not be allowed near a level crossing.

The CHAIRMAN observed that those points had already been considered by the Committee.

The meeting rose at 12.15.p.m.