



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

TRANS/WP.1/1999/12
16 July 1999

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
(Thirty-third session, 28 September - 1 October 1999,
agenda item 12)

ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION

Transmitted by the Government of Tajikistan

In response to the Working Party's call for countries in transition to submit information on areas where assistance is needed for improvement of road safety, information has been submitted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, prepared by the Motor Vehicle Inspectorate which under domestic law has special monitoring, supervisory and licensing functions regarding national road traffic safety.

This information summarized by the secretariat is reproduced below. The Working Party may wish to consider it and decide on possible assistance to the Government of Tajikistan in resolving its road safety problems. Some of the documents and information requested have been already made available to the Government of Tajikistan.

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1. As a result of the breakup of the Soviet Union and the resulting independence of the Republic of Tajikistan, many changes have taken place in Tajikistan's economy. In particular, the management of the road transport sector has become very unstable.
2. The old system for ensuring national road traffic safety was among the first to collapse and the State Road Traffic Safety Commission lost its coordinating role, in part because the established links between ministries and departments regarding the control of transport enterprises and other organizations in accident prevention measures were, in principle, destroyed. As all these processes occurred against a background of civil war and the emergence of new and acute problems (rising crime, drug trafficking, armed rebellion, etc.), the problem of road traffic safety has been pushed into the background.
3. Road traffic safety, however, remains a matter of concern for both the public and the Government. In 26,322 road traffic accidents in Tajikistan during the past decade, 5,843 people lost their lives and 29,180 were injured. Although in the last seven years the numbers of road traffic accidents, fatalities and injuries declined, in 1998 the number of road traffic fatalities (377) exceeded the number of persons killed in the armed clashes in Tajikistan. Figures for the first quarter of 1999 again show growth in the numbers of both road traffic accidents and victims of such accidents.
4. A large proportion of road traffic accidents occur in urban centres. In 1998, 38.4% of all accidents occurred in towns or other settlements and 25.6% on main trunk roads. In 1998, one of every two road traffic accidents involved a vehicle hitting a pedestrian (58.7%). The accidents in which vehicles hit pedestrians caused 203 fatalities. Drivers were responsible for 1,156 accidents (84.07% of all registered road traffic accidents).
5. Pedestrians were responsible for 44 accidents (3.20% of the total, which resulted in 8 fatalities and injuries to 36 persons).
6. Accidents involving children and young people appear to be a serious problem and prevention targeted at that group of vulnerable road users is considered as one of the national road traffic safety priorities. In 1998, the accident figures for children and young people under 16 were: 129 fatalities (33.16% of the total) and 488 injuries (30.25%). Minors account for one in three of all road traffic fatalities and one in four of all road traffic injuries. There were 288 road traffic accident victims below the age of 7 (14.38%) and 347 aged between 7 and 16 (17.33%). Of all child road traffic accident victims, 51.9% were pedestrians, 25.24% passengers and 4.53% cyclists.
7. Detailed national road accident statistics are available.
8. Road traffic safety problems therefore are viewed as serious ones that need to be tackled inter alia through efforts to develop a national system for management of road traffic safety activities.
9. Tajikistan has been a party to both the 1968 Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals since 1995. The national Road Traffic Act, also adopted in 1995, has not been long updated and contains weaknesses, and no account has been taken of the considerable experience of the EU countries in the legislative sphere.

10. With regard to the E road network there is a need to carry out a census on these roads in Tajikistan in order to include road traffic data in the UN/ECE publication "Census of Motor Traffic on Main International Traffic Arteries". This activity could be implemented with external/bilateral assistance to Tajikistan following the guidance and recommendations provided in the relevant UN/ECE documents.

11. Recognizing this, the Ministry of Internal Affairs would be grateful for assistance from the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety in further developing legislation in this sphere, including the provision of relevant ECE documents as well as other available road traffic safety related information.

12. The Ministry of Internal Affairs intends to participate in the Third Road Safety Week in the ECE region, and will inform the Working Party at its thirty-third session about road traffic safety rules and regulations and practice and experience regarding implementation of the Vienna Conventions in Tajikistan.
