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Working Party on Transport Statistics  
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*50th Anniversary of WP.6: "Indicators for Sustainable Transport"*

**ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS OF TRANSPORT STATISTICS**

**Statistics on Road Traffic Accidents in Europe and North America (RAS)**

**Report of the IWG Task Force on Definitions in Road Traffic Accidents**  
**(9 December 1998, Paris)**

Transmitted by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)

**BACKGROUND AND MANDATE**

1. The need for harmonized road accident terminology was expressed during previous meetings of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics (IWG). At the forty-ninth session of the UN/ECE Working Party on Transport Statistics, it was decided to convene a Task Force on Definitions in Road Traffic Accidents in an effort to reach a consensus among various groups on a given set of terms related to statistics on road traffic accidents (TRANS/WP.6/135, para. 49).

**PARTICIPATION IN THE TASK FORCE**

2. The Task Force met in Paris at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on 9 December 1998, hosted by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT). Delegations from four member countries attended as well as officials from the UN/ECE and Eurostat

(see list of participants attached in annex 2). The aim of the meeting was to take note of the relevant initiatives existing in member countries, to present the needs of the IWG and to establish a list of required terms with their corresponding harmonized definitions.

### **ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE TASK FORCE**

3. The presentation of relevant initiatives in use in each of the participating countries showed the diversity of definitions and the difficulty in harmonizing terminology in this area and using the agreed terms on an international level.

4. CARE, which is divided in 2 parts, CARE and CARE PLUS, is a forum for an exchange of information on national accidents. Unfortunately, disaggregated data was not considered useful for harmonization purposes, and there was a need to find a procedure to be able to compare results. This is the task that CARE + is trying to fulfil. The most progress in the harmonization process has been made within the framework of the CARE + program. CARE +1 consists of a selection of 25 variables and 100 values, which are comparable among the EU 15 member states. CARE +2 is a project working on procedures to establish common definitions on more variables.

5. The IWG list of definitions issued on 31 October 1998 was the base document for discussions among participants. During the Task Force, each term on that wish list was discussed and analysed, and participants agreed on a series of modifications, as reflected in annex 1 of the present document.

6. The original IWG wish list did not include definitions for certain terms, including: inside built up areas, outside built-up areas, daylight, twilight, darkness, road surface conditions (wet, dry...), and accidents between different modes of transport, but definitions were added for all of these except the last following a subsequent session of the IWG (1-2 June 1999, Geneva).

7. Furthermore, for the eventual chapter on road traffic accident definitions planned for the third edition of the Glossary of Transport Statistics, it was agreed that sub-headings should be added to clarify "general terms" and "types of accidents", as well as to modify the order of the sequence of some defined terms such as "person injury."

8. The Working Party may wish to consider the agreed definitions as contained in annex 1, and decide whether the time is ripe for these definitions to be included in the third edition of the Glossary for Transport Statistics.

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Annex 1

**DRAFT: NOT FOR CIRCULATION**

**GLOSSARY FOR TRANSPORT STATISTICS**

DRAFT Chapter on Road Traffic Accidents,  
(Proposed for inclusion in forthcoming third edition, 2000)

Finalized by the Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics (1-2 June 1999, Geneva)  
following the work of The Task Force on Definitions on Road Traffic Accident Statistics  
(9 December 1998, Paris)

**B. Road Transport**

**VII. ACCIDENTS**

**01. Injury accident**

Any accident involving at least one road vehicle in motion on a public road or private road to which the public has right of access, resulting in at least one injured or killed person.

*Included are: collisions between road vehicles ; between road vehicles and pedestrians; between road vehicles and animals or fixed obstacles and with one road vehicle alone. Multi-vehicle collisions are counted as only one accident provided that the successive collisions happen at very short intervals. Injury accident excludes accidents incurring only material damage*

**02. Fatal accident**

Any injury accident resulting in a person killed.

**03. Non-fatal accident**

Any injury accident other than a fatal accident.

**04. Casualty**

Any person killed or injured as a result of an injury accident.

**05. Person killed**

Any person killed immediately or dying within 30 days as a result of an injury accident.

For countries that do not apply this definition, conversion coefficients are estimated so that comparisons on the basis of the 30 day-definition can be made. For example, these coefficients were in 1997:

France 1.057 Italy 1.03 Latvia 1.08 Portugal 1.3 Turkey 1.3

**06. Person injured:**

Any person not killed, but who sustained an injury as result of an injury accident, and needing medical treatment.

**07. Person seriously injured:**

Any person injured who was hospitalized for a period of more than 24 hours.

**08. Person slightly injured:**

Any person injured excluding persons seriously injured.

**09. Driver**

Any person involved in an injury accident who was driving a road vehicle at the time of the accident.

**10. Passenger**

Any person involved in an injury accident, other than a driver, who was in or on a road vehicle, or in the process of getting in or out of a road vehicle.

**11. Pedestrian**

Any person involved in an injury accident other than a passenger or driver as defined above.

*Included are occupants or persons pushing or pulling a child's carriage, an invalid chair, or any other small vehicle without an engine. Also included are persons pushing a cycle, moped, rollerskating, skateboarding, skiing or using similar devices.*

**12. Accident between road vehicle and pedestrian**

Any injury accident involving one or more road vehicle and one or more pedestrian.

*Included are accidents irrespective of whether a pedestrian was involved in the first or later phase of the accident and whether a pedestrian was injured or killed on or off the road.*

**13. Single road vehicle accident**

Any injury accident in which only one road vehicle is involved.

*Included are accidents of vehicles trying to avoid collision and veering off the road, or accidents caused by collision with obstruction or animals on the road. Excluded are collisions with pedestrians and parked vehicles.*

**14. Multi-vehicle road accident**

Any injury accident involving two or more road vehicles.

The following types of injury accidents involving two or more road vehicles are:

**(a) Rear-end collision:** collision with another vehicle using the same lane of a carriageway and moving in the same direction, slowing or temporarily halted due to traffic conditions.

*Excluded are collisions with parked vehicles.*

**(b) Head-on collision:** collision with another vehicle using the same lane of a carriageway and moving in the opposite direction, slowing or temporarily halted due to traffic conditions.

*Excluded are collisions with parked vehicles.*

**(c) Collision due to crossing or turning:** collision with another vehicle moving in a lateral direction due to crossing, leaving or entering a road.

*Excluded are collisions with vehicles halted and waiting to turn which should be classified under (a) or (b).*

**(d) Other collisions, including collision with parked vehicles:** collision occurring when driving side by side, overtaking or when changing lanes; or collision with a vehicle which has parked or stopped (not as a result of traffic conditions) at the edge of a carriageway, on shoulders, marked parking spaces, footpaths or parking sites.

*The constituent element for classification of accidents between vehicles is the first collision on the carriageway, or the first mechanical impact on the vehicle.*

**15. Accidents with drivers reported under the influence of alcohol or drugs.**

Any injury accident where the driver is reported to be under the influence of alcohol according to national regulations.

**16. Within built up areas:**

“Area with entries and exits designated by appropriate traffic signs.”

**17. Outside built up areas:**

“Any areas excluding areas with entries and exits designated by appropriate traffic signs.”

**18. Daylight:**

“Should be accepted as reported by the police or other authorities based on sunrise + 30 minutes.”

**19. Darkness:**

“Should be accepted as reported by the police or other authorities based on sunset + 30 minutes.”

**20. Twilight (or unknown):**

“Should be kept as a residual category covering cases where daylight conditions were very poor and where no information on light conditions was available.”

**21. Dry road surface:**

“A road surface not covered by water, snow, ice or other substances (oil, chemicals, earth, etc.).”

**22. Other road surface:**

“Any other road surface other than a dry road surface.”

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Annex 2

**Task Force on Definitions in Road Traffic Accidents  
(9 December 1999, Paris, hosted by ECMT)**

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