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EVALUATION OF THE THIRD ROAD SAFETY WEEK IN THE ECE REGION

Note by the secretariat

The following information has been received from Governments as evaluation of the Third Road Safety Week in the ECE Region.

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AZERBAIJAN

By its decision No. 9-99/1 of 23 December 1999, the Road Safety Commission of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Azerbaijan Republic directed that the Third International Road Safety Week should be observed in Azerbaijan. Pursuant to this decision, all city and district authorities, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and other ministries and departments involved with road safety issues were required to take a series of measures to strengthen efforts to protect the life and health of the most vulnerable categories of road users.

All State institutions and authorities at town, district and village level prepared and implemented the necessary measures to mark Third Road Safety Week. The significance of the event was explained in advance to the public through the press and radio and television broadcasts.

The national Road Safety Week logo was displayed in cities and districts all over Azerbaijan. The Ministry of Internal Affairs replaced and renewed road signs, road markings, traffic lights

and pedestrian crossings. Traffic police patrols were concentrated on squares and in front of pedestrian underpasses at metro stations.

To signal “partnership on the road” during Road Safety Week, motorists used dipped headlights. A postcard displaying the Road Safety Week logo and an excerpt from the Road Traffic Act (pedestrian safety section) was distributed to people in Baku, Sumgait and Mingechaur.

BP Amoco helped to organize a competition for the best drawing on the theme “Three magic road signs” by school-age pavement artists. BP petrol stations in Baku gave out special booklets and badges on the theme of child pedestrian safety. Posters and advertisement hoardings were put up in front of certain schools in Baku urging parents to hold their children’s hands when crossing the road. Glass panel displays on bus shelters were replaced with colour posters reminding motorists to look out for pedestrians.

Road traffic police officers met with students at a number of higher educational establishments in Baku. Supervision was enhanced at level crossings, and railway staff educated pedestrians and motorists on correct procedures. At every stop, bus drivers made an announcement about Road Safety Week and urged passengers to take care when crossing the road.

Throughout Road Safety Week, State television broadcast a highway code class involving secondary-school pupils in the Sabailsky district of Baku, and pupils from school No. 36 in Narimanov district taught children how to cross the road at a specially adapted training ground. Enthusiastic participation was rewarded with coveted gifts.

Members of the Road Safety Commission of the Cabinet of Ministers supervised the various activities organized during Road Safety Week in 31 towns around Azerbaijan. Motor rallies were held in Baku on the final day of Road Safety Week, and the winners received an appropriately themed trophy, certificates and booklets.

The various activities during the week were reviewed on national television by Mr. R. Zeynalov, the deputy chairman of the Road Safety Commission of the Cabinet of Ministers.

As a result of Third Road Safety Week, the number of traffic incidents in Azerbaijan was halved in comparison with a normal week. There were eight times fewer fatalities and three times fewer injuries than usual. Only 19 incidents (1 fatality, 20 injuries) were reported during Road Safety Week in Azerbaijan.

BULGARIA

By a Decision of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria many activities were organized in Bulgaria during Third Road Safety Week. Due to limited budgetary funds, supplementary funds were provided by private companies and NGOs.

The Minister of Transport and Communications was appointed as the patron of the Third Road Safety Week in Bulgaria and he officially opened the Week on national television. The Minister spoke about the importance of road safety and in particular about the aims and tasks of the Third Road Safety Week in Bulgaria. He announced the common target group “Vulnerable Road Users” and the common slogan “Partnership on the Road Increases Safety”.

The activities during the Week were covered by the mass media and in the period 1-7 May the media emphasized the problems of road safety, particularly concerning vulnerable road users.

Posters and blinds with the emblem (logo) and the slogan of the Week were prepared and placed all over the streets. In addition, brochures, postal and other materials were issued and distributed. The ECE brochure was used in the preparation of different advertising materials.

During the Week competitions on cycling and on safety rules were organized for children as well as a "round table" on the safety of vulnerable road users. Television and radio spots were produced and broadcast.

The Third Road Safety Week contributed to the development of the activities of regional authorities in the field of road safety and in particular to the control of road conditions, road signs, markings, the behaviour of road users, etc.

Some of the activities organized within the Third Road Safety Week were prolonged until the end of May, others are expected to continue until the end of the year.

LATVIA

During the Third Road Safety Week in Latvia special attention was paid to young road users:

Quizzes about road traffic rules were published in the magazine "Donald Duck" for pre-school children. An information campaign about traffic rules and duties of cyclists was played on the radio station "Super FM" for young road users between 12-30 years old. Leading national and regional mass media explained in their programmes the object and importance of the UN safety week during the most popular motorist-related programmes "Zebra", "Wheel" (in Russian) "Go Ahead" (for children), "When Engines Run", and "Have a Good Trip".

Special attention was paid to the youngest road users with special instructive classes in 60 pre-school establishments and schools all over Latvia. Besides general safety rules children were instructed in the importance of using reflective material elements in their clothing. During those classes children themselves made those elements by cutting them from high quality reflective materials.

Cyclist holidays and young road user competitions were organized all over Latvia. During the week a record high of 1138 cyclists and moped drivers received licences.

The Road Traffic Safety Directorate organized special awards for the most polite drivers in cooperation with the Road Police.

POLAND

In Poland, one of the major events organized under the Third Road Safety Week in the ECE Region was a competition for primary school children for the best design of a postcard relating to the Week. The participation exceeded expectations: 40 thousand postcards were submitted, which made the work of the jury very difficult. The official award ceremony which took place on 1 June was attended by the Prime Minister of Poland. The award winning projects were printed and an exhibition was organized of the postcards, posters, etc.

Events and activities were also organized by local authorities using the road safety propaganda and promotional materials developed at the national level. They included stickers

("I am not your enemy on the road"), leaflets, folders, etc. A special issue of the quarterly "Road Safety" was published by the Road Safety Centre of the Automotive Transport Institute, a national coordinator for the Week.

A special show on TV was organized with three presentations during the day and in between a day-long discussion with the viewers invited to call a TV hotline number. The response from viewers was, reportedly, beyond all expectations.

Another discussion was organized on the Internet in the form of a "chat" with the Minister of Transport. Those discussions were recorded and are available for analysis. Excerpts are also being published in the national press.

The preliminary evaluation of the activities of the Week is very positive. Further information on the activities organized in Poland will follow.

SLOVAKIA

The Police Force of Slovakia launched from 1-7 May the Third Road Safety Week. In order to carry out tasks and achieve the goals of this Safety Week, a Directive of the President of the Police Force was issued. In accordance with the Directive, particular tasks were given to the Traffic Police Directorate as well as to the regional directorates of the Police Force, which transmitted them to their subordinate bodies.

The Traffic Police Service, which has their deputies in the Working Party for Road Safety of the UN/ECE, and according to law perform their duties of traffic law enforcement, was the main organizer of this safety campaign.

Together with traffic police officers, other stakeholders - governmental organizations, NGOs and business enterprises - took part in implementation of the Week.

Amongst governmental bodies there were basically organizations falling under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transport (technical inspections divisions), of the Ministry of Education (schools), of the Ministry of the Interior (police, Fire Protection Corps), as well as district and municipal councils. NGOs were represented by the Slovak Red Cross and CESMAD. Business enterprises, such as Matador Puchov (tyre producer), the Slovak Insurance Company and Slovdekra, also played an important role in implementation of the campaign.

Widespread publicity of the Third Road Safety Week was arranged through the media, which involved state-owned as well as private newspapers, radios and television. Since the safety campaign was at all levels - national, regional and district - public promotion followed the same structure.

There were 81 articles in newspapers and magazines, 24 radio and 11 television broadcasts (mostly at regional and lower level) devoted to the issue of road safety.

The Traffic Police Service held 1 national inspection and 98 inspections within regional and district jurisdictions. The inspections were basically focused on vulnerable road users and the behaviour of drivers. The results of these inspections were presented immediately in the media. The activities of the Police Force (since other police services were involved as well) included prevention, which was enforced through appropriate measures where necessary. During the Week, 2564 traffic offences were committed and 795 road accidents happened,

which is a decrease of 145 road accidents in comparison with last year. The most common reason was speeding.

In addition to this activity, traffic police officers actively took part in public promotion of the Week through radio and television debates and newspaper articles. They also organized other activities which included debates in schools, competitions (Ride Safely), exhibitions linked with road safety, demonstrations of rescue team activities.

The Third Road Safety Week in Slovakia met its goal, which was to increase the awareness of the general public, prevention and presentation of the Police Force as a body, whose activity aims at the reduction of the negative aspects of traffic.

SWEDEN

On 1 May 2000 a new rule on how drivers shall behave at unguarded pedestrian crossings entered into force. According to the new rule, a driver is obliged to give way to pedestrians who are crossing the street at an unguarded pedestrian crossing or are about to cross the street at such a crossing.

Beginning in April a vast campaign was launched. The aim of the campaign was to give information about the new rule but also to stress the exposed position of pedestrians on the road. The campaign was not formally linked to the Third Road Safety Week, but its aims fall within the target of the week. It is therefore worth mentioning that the campaign was a success. According to an evaluation of the campaign carried out in mid-May, 97 per cent of the population was aware of the new rule.

UKRAINE

An initial assessment of measures to mark Third Road Safety Week (1-7 May 2000) was conducted by the Ministry of Transport at a special meeting. It was agreed on the whole that these measures had been a success: suffice it to say that there were no road traffic incidents at enterprises under the Ministry's jurisdiction during this period. A fuller report on these measures will be forwarded when the relevant data has been collated.

In addition, a Transport Safety Commission headed by the Deputy Minister of Transport has been established under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport. The Commission considers and takes decisions on safety issues regarding all modes of transport, including those referred to above.
