



Road Safety Conference Belgrade - 1st July 2012

Report of the FIM Director of Public Affairs - developments in Brussels

“BRUSSELS” REALLY MEANS A LOT MORE THAN JUST THE CITY AND THE EU INSTITUTIONS THAT ARE BASED THERE. MUCH OF THE WORK TAKES PLACE IN NATIONAL CAPITALS AND IS ALSO AFFECTED (AS THIS REPORT SHOWS) BY THINGS THAT TAKE PLACE IN OTHER PLACES - GENEVA INCLUDED. THIS IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT CHALLENGES WE ARE DEALING WITH TODAY.

Trial and Enduro machines



As I have reported before we have lobbied for the following with trial and enduro motorcycles.....

- (1) To retain the previous definitions in respect of fuel capacity etc.
- (2) No application by law of “anti lock braking systems.”
- (3) Continued status as “street legal” so that competitors can move on public roads between sections of a competition.

So far in the legislative process this has not proved controversial. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have been supportive.

The process is now moving to the European Council of Ministers. - Again, so far the situation appears to be good with the issue being accepted there as well. But! We must continue to monitor the situation as the process is far from complete.....



Anti lock braking systems on small motorcycles and scooters:



Opinions on this are divided both in the EU Parliament and in the EU Council of Ministers. The original proposal was for anti lock braking systems on machines over 125cc. For small machines a combined braking system would be acceptable.

Some deputies in the EU Parliament favour more use of ABS. The market place may decide the issue before the law does in 2017. Indian

manufacturer TVS is already applying ABS technology to quite small machines - such as the 180cc motorcycle show in the picture.

Problem with the A2 category driving licence due to come into force in 2013 - problem solved:



At the United Nations in Geneva the Russian Federation questioned the new "A2" category of licence for riders of motorcycles of 35kW maximum power output. Unlike "A" and "A1" "A2" is not recognised under the Vienna Conventions.

Russia was concerned this would lead to problems with riders travelling outside the EU countries and also outside of Switzerland and Norway. FIM made representations to the EU Commission in a letter to Vice President Siim Kallas saying:

"We look to the authorities for a speedy solution. If this problem had arisen in relation to commercial vehicles, we are confident work would be going on now to solve it. The fact that these issues concern motorcycle and scooter riders is no reason for not attending to the problem as a matter of urgency."

In 2012 the EU Commission - via Mr Szabolcs Schmidt the new Head of Road Safety - made the following declaration to the United Nations ECE Working Party One.

The EU has declared that licence category "A2" is a sub category of "A" and so riders can feel confident of travelling outside the EU and EEA countries if they wish to. This problem has therefore been solved to our satisfaction.



Application of the Driving Licence Directive in 2013:

It is a matter of regret that some countries (e.g. Sweden) are overcomplicating the provisions of the new law.

Between licence stages the law provides for additional testing OR training. Not both! Despite this the EU refuses to challenge this "over interpretation."

The following comments have been relayed by us to the EU Commission on this subject:

M. Jacques Compagne of ACEM has shared with us a recent letter from the Head of the Road Safety Unit concerning this issue. I am dismayed to read that the Commission is of the opinion that Member States seeking to impose both training and testing for progressive access are complying with EU law. This aspect of the legislation is evident in the wording of Article 7c, where the rider moving to a higher category is entitled to flexibility via the wording "or" and whereby Member States should not be allowed to act to the contrary by replacing this word with the meaning of the word "and."

This text was discussed for years and at no time that we can recall did the Commission ever suggest this interpretation until now. This is not a minor matter. We have seen the effects with the existing Directive of Member States misinterpreting EU Directives. For example, although they are both common law jurisdictions, the Republic of Ireland was able to enforce the current Directive at almost no cost to riders. The UK, on the other hand, has spent around £400 million on special test centres, simply because the UK government interpreted the requirement for braking and swerving exercises to be combined and also completed in a very specific manner. None of this is required by the Directive. Domestic criticism of this was of course met by the UK authorities "blaming Brussels".

There is little the Commission can do if a Member State insists on this level of "gold plating". In the case of the Driving Licence Directive, however, the aim is to bring some harmony across the EU - not to promote differences! The FIM is of the opinion that the Commission should be giving robust guidance to Member States, not encouraging this type of excessive law making. We respectfully ask that the Commission look again at this legal advice in light of the clear wording of the Directive.

I regret to advise you all that there is little we can do from the centre. These are exactly the type of issues that can only really be confronted at national level - FMNs must address this type of issue with their national transport ministers.

When a transport minister says, "Oh I have no choice! This is all decided by Brussels....." then they must be challenged.



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German politicians, officials and leaders of the motorcycle industry in Geneva - June 2012:



From the CONU (and also the FIM CAP) Jesper Christensen can be seen on the right hand side meeting the German visitors to the United Nations. The visitors were in Geneva to meet with the UN Office for Sport. It was a good opportunity for us to meet them - all keen riders as the photograph shows.

From FIM Brigitte Zufferey was able to speak to delegates about her work with the FIM's CFM.

FIM Experienced Rider Training Symposium - Sweden 2013:

After the 2011 edition in Canada this event returns to Europe in 2013.



As ever I am always at your disposal for any assistance I can give to your FMN.

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