

GOVERNEMENT STATUS REPORT - POLAND

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INTRODUCTION

The following report contains information on the progress achieved in Poland with regard to chosen aspects of road traffic safety since the time of 17th ESV Conference (Amsterdam, 2001). This period is generally characterised as the continuation of an intensive work towards effective implementation of EU legal instruments in all aspects of our life. Traffic safety is also involved in that effort at all its main system fields taking into account priorities drawn from accident statistics.

THE PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF VEHICLE RELATED FACTOR

In fulfilling of the European Treaty schedule the consecutive corrections and additions had been endorsed in Polish law. The new 12 ECE 1958 Geneva Regulations were added last year (Dec 2002) to our type approval system, which since November 1999 is unified with the latest versions of three main framework EU Directives (70/156 motor vehicles, 74/151 – agricultural tractors and 92/61 – motorcycles and mopeds). The legal procedure of accession to next 6 Regulations is now in progress and we hope this will result of total 91 ECE Regulations applied in Poland by the end of 2003. It does not mean however that at the above date we will complete the unification to EU in the field. According to the internal activity schedule agreed with European Commission the full harmonisation of Polish technical vehicle requirements is to be reached by the date of accession whatever it would be. It is to be stressed that the waste majority of important safety and environmental items regarding motor vehicles are already in force. Moreover there is also a lot of action in the research and testing domestic third party laboratories harmonising their quality systems to European Standards. Poland had almost completed internal procedures regarding our accession to 1998 Global Agreement recognising that as an effective way to harmonise world-wide the important vehicle technical requirements. In consequence we continue our participation in IHRA initiative and have started membership of EEVC from the beginning of 2003. For the beginning we intend to join two Working Groups of EEVC i.e. WG 18: Car Child Occupant Safety and WG 19: Active-Passive Safety Interaction. It is also to be mentioned

the beginning of international cooperation of Polish biomechanical laboratories in the frame of EVPSN.

With regard to the system of periodic technical inspection of in-use vehicles we are also in the process of permanent improvements to its quality and objectivity of checks. The PTI checking equipment is currently under obligatory certification and we started with the continuous training of PTI inspectors. In the result of more stringent requirements regarding the personnel qualification and equipment quality the number of PTI stations had dropped down of some 25% since 1995, while the rate of traffic accidents due to bad technical state of vehicle gone down about 50%. Moreover, there are already around 600 stations of highest technical level having the care agreement with Motor Transport Institute on the base of which they receive latest available data and information regarding professional items. The decision on the accession of Poland to the UN 1997 Agreement on the international PTI had been taken and is to be finalised in 2003.

THE PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RELATED FACTOR

From the accident statistics it still appears that in the majority of cases the human behaviour is the reason of road accident. Two main road users – drivers and pedestrians are sharing this fatal record in the rate 3.5 to 1 being involved as casual factor in more than 95% of accidents. Our National Road Safety Council pays the greatest attention to the problem but had, by now, succeeded in limited number of fields. The most important result was achieved in reducing the rate of accidents caused by drunken road users of around 18% during last 4 years. This is however far not satisfactory and caused new, more stringent legislation which went in force since December 2001. First months of this law showed, according to police random check information some 10% drop of number of drunken drivers on our roads (not necessarily involved in accidents). It is really easy to be understood as the new legal penalty starts from half a year of imprisonment and two years of driving license withdrawal.

The other activity on the field of human factor realised in last 5 years was direction on road education of children, promotion of safety of non

protected road users (III UN Road Safety Week), improvements of driver training and scientific co-operation in SARTRE 3, IRTAD and BEST-BOB programmes. Our latest traffic code enlarged also by 1 month the season of mandatory use of lights in daytime and precise in a better way, more close to the one commonly used in EU, the “right side priority” rules.

THE PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF ROAD RELATED FACTOR

At this field we noticed some progress but rather far from our expectation. We have by now 300 km of classified motorways only, which is estimated as less than 10% of average in EU countries. Fortunately there are signs of spring in the form of finalisation of agreements between authority and two main road private investors. During last five year period the road maintenance service managed to improve some 22% of Polish existing road network classified as „national” (46 000 km in total). Taking

into account more or less stabile growths of number of vehicles on the roads it seems far not enough. This item is however strongly related to private investors and local authorities (traffic control solutions) and still needs more careful attention of economy rulers.

CONCLUSION

The overall road traffic safety in Poland seems to be improved during last 2-year period on the base of statistic data given below. But improved does not mean good in comparison to our society need. We hope that Polish participation in ESV, IHRA, UN ECE and EEVC Working Groups as well as expecting support of EU Commission in the Framework 6 goals will result in optimal use of our limited resources.

I would like to wish all of you a good co-operation and fruitful exchange of knowledge in this very important part of everyday life – road traffic safety and vehicle safety.

Table 1. Accident Data¹ in Comparison with the Vehicle Stock and Population in Poland in the Period 1993-2002²

Year	No. of accidents	No. of fatalities	No. of injured	No. of vehicles (thousands)	No. of passenger cars (thousands)	Population (thousands)	Fatality factor (No. of fatalitie/1 mln of inhabitants)	Accident severity factor (No. of fatalities/100 of accidents)	No. Of passenger cars/1000 inhabitants
1993	48 901	6 341	58 812	10 438	6 771	38 505	16	13	176
1994	53 647	6 744	64 573	10 858	7 153	38 581	17	13	185
1995	56 904	6 900	70 226	11 186	7 517	38 609	18	12	195
1996	57 911	6 359	71 419	11 766	8 054	38 639	16	11	208
1997	66 586	7 310	83 169	12 284	8 533	38 650	19	11	221
1998	61 855	7 080	77 560	12 709	8 891	38 661	18	11	230
1999	55 106	6 730	68 449	13 169	9 283	38 654	17	12	240
2000	57 331	6 294	71 638	14 106	9 991	38 644	16	11	259
2001	53 799	5 534	68 194	14 724	10 503	38 632	14	10	272
2002	53 518	5 825	67 446	15313*	11028*	38644*	15*	11	285*

*Estimate

¹ Source: Accident Records filled by the Traffic Police

² Prepared by Road Traffic Safety Centre

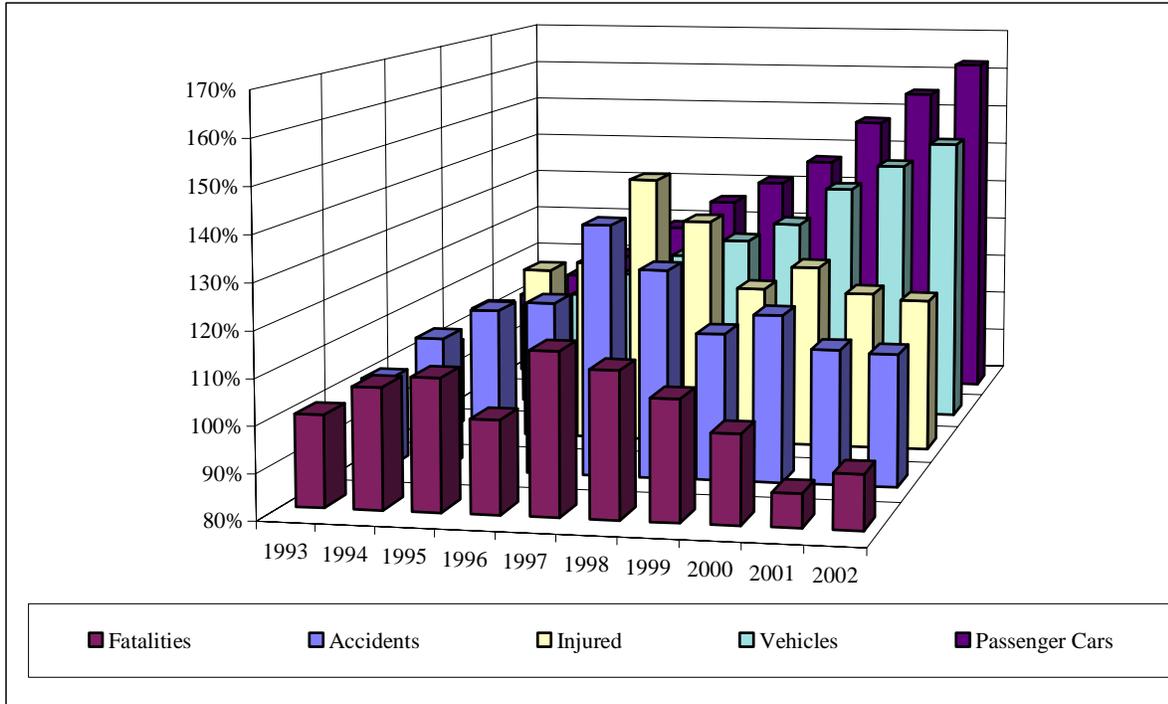


Figure 1. Road Accidents and Vehicle Stock Percentage in Poland in the Period 1993-2002 (1993=100%)