

Feedback by the GRBP Experts on the Draft Resolution on Road Surface Labelling

(ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/2019/2 by the Netherlands)

Background

- GRBP at its 69th session discussed possible progress with the issue of development of the gradation of road surfaces proposed in the Draft Resolution on Road Surface Labelling submitted by the Netherlands (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/2019/2 – update of the previous proposals)
- WP.29 at its 176th session in November 2018 encouraged GRBP to consult the road construction administrations, to continue work on this issue, and to report back to WP.29 in due course (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/1142, para. 69)
- GRBP Chair had requested the GRBP experts to communicate this matter to the appropriate national/regional administrations responsible for road construction/operation in their countries/regions, as well as to the road construction/maintenance organizations asking them to inform about its usefulness of this proposal (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/67, para. 28)
- GRBP Vice-Chair was appointed to collect the received information on this matter, consolidate it and report back to GRBP at its next 70th session in September 2019

Questionnaire to help the experts

- Is the content of the document (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/2019/2) helpful? To which extent?
- Would your country/organization be in favor of implementing the provisions of this document? How much time would be needed for that, according to your estimation?
- Does this document need more development? To which extent?
- How do you see the prospects for the further development of this document?
- Would you be interested in further discussions on development/implementation of the provisions of this document? Would you be ready to arrange a meeting/technical conference for further discussions of the subjects related to this document?
- Any other views related to this document?

Feedback received from:

- Russian Federation (2 Nov. 2018)
- Switzerland (8 Feb. 2019)
- Austria (29 May 2019)
- France (5 June 2019)
- Finland (25 June 2019)
- United Kingdom (28 June 2019)
- Norway (1 July 2019)
- No feedback from countries outside Europe

Important remarks by Austria

- The scope of GRB is determined by the "Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations" (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/690/Rev.1) is "to develop noise requirements for vehicles". For that reason any regulations or definition of requirements concerning pavement characteristics fall outside the scope of GRB (with the exception of definition of the test track for drive-by noise measurement).
- Methods for the measurement and assessment of road surface characteristics and pavement lifespan are currently developed and dealt with in specialized CEN and ISO standardization committees (e.g. CEN/TC 227/WG 5). These committees are open to participation and proposals according to the CEN and ISO rules and are attended by representatives from national road administrations and transport ministries, pavement industry representatives, national pavement experts and other interested stakeholders. There is no reason for or added benefit in duplicating work already performed in these organizations or committees

Is the content of the proposal (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/2019/2) helpful? (1)

- RUS: Yes, it may help improving quality of road surfaces. However, some conclusions made in the proposal are not relevant for the Russian conditions due to different road construction material, assessment criteria, causes of road surface wear and climatic conditions
- CH: Actually, the present draft offers no added value or benefit in the current environment of road construction. In Europe harmonization in road construction is still not achieved today. There are many different grip measuring instruments with different measuring methods based on technical specifications at European level. These devices cannot be compared with each other. Although this has been tried, it has not been possible to harmonize this for years (the subject has been around for over 20 years!). At the moment, it is therefore impossible to create a uniform label for road surfaces.
- F: This document is interesting but could not be used by the French authorities in the state due to several technical issues
- GB: The concept of road surface labelling is welcome. However, the methods proposed for use do not align with the current requirements in the UK

Is the content of the proposal (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/2019/2) helpful? (2)

- A: In general, the technical content of the proposal does not meet the requirements of a technical standard and is not suitable for reliably determining technical parameters. The test methods proposed in this draft represent just a subset of the available methods and are obviously based only on national practice in the Netherlands rather than on a consensus within an international body comprised of the relevant stakeholders in this matter, like the appropriate CEN or ISO committees
- FIN: This document does not respond to the real needs in the conditions of Nordic Countries
- N: The test methods proposed in the GRB pavement labelling draft represent just a subset of the possible methods and are obviously based on national practice in the Netherlands rather than on a consensus within CEN. There is also currently no agreement on the technical suitability of the proposed methods for the labelling of pavements. The need for a labelling system has not been sufficiently discussed and agreed in a forum like CEN. Practical use of such a labelling system has a number of challenges in Norway (and other countries that use studded tires and have winter conditions)

Would you support implementation of this proposal? How much time would it take?

- RUS: If this proposal were implemented, for Russia it has to be postponed for 6-7 years
- CH: Taking in account the actual situation in Europe (road construction) there is no response possible to this question
- A: Not at the moment, because in Austria a pavement management system (PMS) is already in use for motorways to monitor surface characteristics
- F: The French authorities could not use this reference document in its current form, since the approach seems premature and several points deserve improvement
- FIN: For many reasons the Finnish Asphalt Specification committee does not support the implementation of the proposed procedure in Finland
- GB: The proposals outlined in this document do not align with the policies and methods used in the UK. In order to develop understanding of these procedures and how they apply to UK roads research would be required which may take over 10 years
- N: In principle we are positive to a label system for pavements, since this can give a motivation for the entrepreneurs to deliver for example low noise pavements, and the label system might work as a classification system for noise properties of pavements.

Does this proposal need more development?

- RUS: More research is needed to take into account the Russian conditions
- CH: This document would need some more development. But first and foremost there should be more harmonization in road construction – however, we fear this will be very difficult. Within Europe, countries have different pavement recipes, which are developed by adaptation to local conditions, such as the characteristics of quarries, bitumen, local temperature fluctuations, sea level, etc.
- A: Definitely yes, but not in the bodies under the regime of WP.29. First harmonized measurement principles and coordinated characteristic values are necessary for a new labelling system for pavements. Also the need for a reference surface is not optimal, because some pavement types are not available in all Member States
- F: Technical difficulties for the labelling of road surfaces must be analyzed. Several problematic points are identified
- FIN: This proposal can be developed further.
- GB: Further research is most certainly required if such a proposal is to be pursued

How do you see the prospects for the further development of this proposal?

- CH: At the moment we see little possibilities to go further from the vehicle (tyre) side
- A: There is substantial danger of conflict with European and international standardization organizations and their consensus-finding mechanisms as well as with ongoing standardization activities
- F: Road professionals must be associated and common indicators and measurement methods for each property must be discussed at European scale
- FIN: First, the test methods have to be accepted as an European standard before the use can be required at the European level
- GB: It is suggested that if such a method is to be pursued, then it should be done in association with CEN and relevant trade association groups

Would you be interested in further discussions on development/implementation of this proposal?

- CH: At the moment we have no capacities to contribute in the context of ongoing work and wider studies concerning this subject
- A: No at the current state
- F: The Ministry for an Ecological and Solidary Transition would be interested in participating in working groups on the subject, depending on the number of staff available
- FIN: Made a proposal for further development of the content of the discussed document
- GB: Yes
- The UK already has a method of assessing and labelling the safety of sections of highway retrospectively, considering all assets and their properties. Any future work should respect such existing procedures.

Any other views related to this document?

- CH: Switzerland has no fundamental problem with the grip of a road surface. In the rarest of cases, accidents are only dependent on the existing grip. In addition, the grip requirements vary locally, i.e. depending on the road layout/situation as well as with the season and local weather conditions. Therefore, chapters 2.4 and 2.5 of the draft cannot be confirmed for Switzerland in this way. The statement in Chapter 4.3.3 is also incorrect for Switzerland: skid resistance measurements are made even on motorways with $v = 80$ km/h, under traffic
- A: WP.29 and GRBP are NOT responsible for the development of instruments concerning road infrastructure. Therefore Austria is strictly against development or adoption of any document concerning road infrastructure measures possibly binding the contracting parties of the 1958 or the 1998 Agreements. Such documents must be adopted by the responsible bodies or committees
- F: The European project ROSANNE aims at harmonizing measurement methods for noise, rolling resistance and skid resistance of road surfaces
- FIN: The best way to encourage road authorities and contractors to achieve common commitment to CO₂ reduction is to give recommendations and share the information on the best practices without defining too detailed means. The experiences and best practices need to be shared to inspire others
- N: There is ongoing work at CEN with a standard for the classification of road surfaces, and in this working group there is competence both on the road technology side and on measurement technology. The classification here is based on CPX. We believe that the work here is more important than what is presented to GRBP from NL.

Conclusions

- The proposed by the Netherlands the Draft Resolution on Road Surface Labelling (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/2019/2) in many aspects cannot be suitable for implementing internationally
- There was no much interest expressed to move the issue of the gradation of road surfaces and road surface labelling forward at GRBP level
- GRBP and WP.29 seem not appropriate fora for this issue as it is currently out of their scope
- The developments on the issue reported to GRBP could be referred to e.g. CEN/TC 227 as indicated by Austria, France, Finland and UK (although this harmonization activity is just at EU level) and to the relevant ISO Technical Committee (but it seems that there is no one – checked one the website)

Proposal for endorsement by GRBP and WP.29

- To report back to WP.29 that the proposed by the Netherlands the Draft Resolution on Road Surface Labelling (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRB/2019/2) in many aspects cannot be suitable for implementing internationally, and that GRBP and WP.29 seem not appropriate fora for this issue as it is currently out of their scope
- To communicate the Draft Resolution on Road Surface Labelling and the results of its consideration at GRBP to the appropriate international forum dealing with road construction / operation / maintenance: CEN/TC 227

Thanks to the participants of the survey

Thank you for your kind attention