The IRU Road Safety Charter

"The Road Transport Industry Commitment to Improving Road Safety"

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organisation estimates that road accidents cause over one million deaths and 20-50 million injuries worldwide each year and the trend is rising in the newly motorising countries, whereas it is falling in high income countries.

The International Road Transport Union (IRU), representing coach, taxi and truck operators in 67 countries, considers that every road accident victim is one too many and is committed to reducing the number and severity of accidents involving commercial vehicles.

Pursuant to its work in favour of road safety since its foundation in 1948, the International Road Transport Union is committed to promoting a culture of road safety in the road transport industry as an essential element in its Charter for Sustainable Development, acceded to by all its national Member Associations in 1996.

All efforts to reduce accidents involving commercial vehicles must take into careful consideration the essential and irreplaceable service they provide to society and the economy in response to constant change in passenger and goods transport.

While road transport, like every transport mode and activity, is subject to human error, the involvement of a commercial vehicle in an accident in no way implies its responsibility for the accident. Furthermore, the industry has already considerably reduced the level of its accident involvement - in the European Union Member States for both lorries and coaches, the latter being 30 times safer than private cars.

In the context of the accelerating globalisation of transport and tourism, national measures to improve road safety through innovation, infrastructure and incentives must be coordinated at the international level.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IS NEEDED TO PROMOTE ROAD SAFETY

The public authorities at all levels have a responsibility to improve road safety by cooperating with one another and with all relevant partners, including the road transport industry, represented by the IRU and its national Member Associations, to:

◇ identify scientifically, on an internationally harmonised basis, the major causes of road accidents so as to concentrate the limited resources available on their elimination;

◇ plan and maintain safe road infrastructure appropriate to current and foreseeable traffic demand by the various categories of user and, in particular, of buses, coaches and truck thanks to a permanent and preventive dialogue with the IRU national Member Associations;

◇ enact and enforce harmonised legislation to ensure that:
  - use of the road infrastructure is compatible with the demands both of road safety and of the mobility of persons and goods;
  - all categories of road users are trained to share road space responsibly and safely with one another and that the effect of such training is not lost;
  - passengers and loads are properly secured to prevent accidents occurring and to avoid injury if an accident does occur;
  - appropriate incentives are given to transport operators who apply the IRU Road Safety Charter for Transport Operators, annexed hereto;
  - the rules on access to the profession require that commercial vehicle operators have sufficient competence and adequate financial means to assume their responsibilities for transport and safety;
  - principals in passenger and goods road transport are legally liable for demands they make on transport operators which infringe transport legislation.
The partners of the road transport industry in the private sector and civil society organisations, including:

- organisations representing other categories of road users,
- road builders,
- manufacturers of vehicles and equipment (including traffic management systems),
- IT and telecom suppliers, as well as
- civil society groups and
- the media

have a responsibility to cooperate with the road transport industry and its representative organisations to achieve a reduction in traffic accidents involving commercial vehicles. This necessary joint effort is epitomised by the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), of which the IRU is a founding and active member.

The International Road Transport Union, representing the road transport industry globally commits itself to:

◊ pursue and intensify its work in favour of road safety through its competent bodies, including the IRU Academy, in cooperation with its Member Associations.

◊ pursue and further intensify its active contribution to:
  - the launching of a coordinated global initiative to promote road safety by the United Nations Organisation and the World Health Organisation;
  - the promotion, by the World Bank, of road safety in its lending programmes;
  - the road safety work of the UN Economic Commission for Europe and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport;
  - the implementation of the European Union's Road Safety Action Plan and Road Safety Charter;

◊ cooperate, at the international level, with its partners in the private sector and civil society organisations, as mentioned above, to achieve a reduction in traffic accidents involving commercial vehicles.

The IRU Member Associations, representing the road transport industry nationally, undertake to:

◊ pursue and intensify their initiatives and their active contribution to road safety work;

◊ develop and implement the decisions of the IRU and use its materials according to the Schedule in appendix 2 - unless these are already covered by the Association's own relevant programmes and national legislation - in order to promote a road safety culture amongst their transport operator members. This approach includes the signature by such operators of the IRU Road Safety Charter for transport operators (See in appendix 1), to be supplemented by voluntary measures at the national level;

◊ promote training in the road transport industry meeting up to internationally recognised standards, such as those of the IRU Academy;

◊ pursue and intensify their work in favour of road safety through their competent bodies, in cooperation with the public authorities and other road user groups, where appropriate.

Yokohama, 22 April 2004
IRU ROAD SAFETY CHARTER FOR TRANSPORT OPERATORS

The undersigned transport operator and IRU Member Association agree that, following their signature of this Charter, their names be published on the IRU Website and the transport operator undertakes to comply with the advice contained in the IRU Road Safety Management Manual, and notably, to

◊ **Plan operations to ensure safety obligations are met**
  a. Schedule vehicles so that drivers' hours and resting time rules can be followed in normal traffic conditions mindful of drivers' needs;
  b. Ensure vehicle loading complies with minimum and maximum axle load requirements;
  c. Schedule journeys such that speed, routing and other traffic restriction requirements are complied with. Where there are no actual restrictions, ensure that, as far as possible, the safest route is followed;
  d. Ensure that vehicles are parked in places where they are not likely to jeopardise road safety.

◊ **Monitor driver compliance with the law**
  a. Check regularly that drivers hold valid vocational driving licences and other certificates required by the law, and that they have received appropriate training;
  b. Monitor tachograph records for compliance with drivers' hours and resting times;
  c. Follow up appropriately any complaints against the driver;
  d. Ensure drivers are fully aware of and comply with their obligations, notably with regard to their passengers, in the case of bus, coach and taxi transport.

◊ **Encourage driver training at levels above the legal minimum standards**
  a. Encourage drivers to understand their responsibilities to their passengers, other road users and the communities through which they pass;
  b. Have drivers trained in accordance with internationally recognised standards, such as those of the IRU Academy Training;
  c. Keep records of such instruction;
  d. Re-assess driver performance regularly and in the case of complaints;
  e. Give each driver a personal copy of the IRU Truck or Coach Driver Check-List and of any other road safety material for drivers produced by the IRU or its national Association, as appropriate.
◊ **Ensure vehicles are safe and well-maintained**
   a. Ensure, by preventive maintenance and checks before departure, that vehicles are always roadworthy;
   b. Ensure that vehicles are well prepared as a function of the state of the roads and possible meteorological conditions and provide them with the essential equipment needed (e.g., snow chains in winter);
   c. Implement guidelines on vehicle maintenance, such as those contained in the IRU Road Safety Management Manual;
   d. Implement formal procedures for vehicle defect reporting by drivers;

◊ **Show consideration for other road users and pedestrians**
   a. Educate drivers to adopt a "defensive", driving technique. In particular, not to tailgate;
   b. Remind drivers of the special vulnerability of pedestrians, cyclists and motor cyclists;
   c. Ensure drivers make the maximum use of motorways and primary routes and avoid residential areas, except for commercial vehicles, buses and coaches serving the latter;
   d. Ensure, in the case of goods transport, that all loads are properly secured and, where appropriate, covered;

◊ **Promote the health of its workforce**
   a. Comply with the occupational health responsibilities of employers to their employees;
   b. Take concrete steps to encourage drivers to adopt a healthy lifestyle and avoid driving under inappropriate medication.
   c. Inform drivers appropriately about health hazards they may encounter on particular journeys, in the presence of epidemic diseases, for example.

Name of the Transport Company and/or Transport Operator, stamp and signature

Name and signature of the President of the Member Association