Opinion on the proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 91/439/EEC on driving licences

(95/C 301/07)

On 6 July 1995 the Council decided to consult the Economic and Social Committee, under Article 75 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the above-mentioned proposal.

The Section for Transport and Communications, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its Opinion on 10 July 1995. The Rapporteur was Mr Donovan.

At its 328th Plenary Session (meeting of 13 September 1995), the Economic and Social Committee unanimously adopted the following Opinion.

1. Introduction

1.1. Directive 80/1263/EEC [1] introduced a Community model for national driving licences to facilitate the free movement of people travelling within the Community or taking up residence in a Member State other than the one where they passed their driving test.

1.2. This first directive has been replaced by Directive 91/439/EEC [2] which adapts the model established by Directive 80/1263/EEC to take account in particular of the harmonization of the categories of vehicles and to make it easier for everybody to 'read' the licence. It comes into effect on 1 July 1996.

1.3. The Commission now proposes to amend Directive 91/439/EEC in order to give Member States the option of issuing a driving licence in an alternative format ('credit card').

[1] First Council Directive of 4. 12. 1980 on the introduction of a Community driving licence — OJ No L 375, 31. 12. 1980, p. 1. ESC Opinion in OJ No C 197, 23. 8. 1976, p. 32.

[2] OJ No L 237, 24. 8. 1991, p. 1.

2. General comments

2.1. The Economic and Social Committee in its Opinion on 26 April 1989 [3] was very supportive of Directive 91/439/EEC.

2.2. In recent years some Member States have expressed interest in further enhancing this Directive.

2.3. The proposed amendments are designed principally to meet these aspirations with the optional credit card scenario and they go further to take into account possible future technological inputs as may be agreed.

2.4. The proposals are very forward looking and certainly consistent with the further development of the Single Market.

2.5. Therefore, the Committee wholeheartedly supports the Commission's proposed amendments.

[3] OJ No C 159, 26. 6. 1989, p. 21.

Done at Brussels, 13 September 1995.

The President

of the Economic and Social Committee

Carlos FERRER