



## **Driver's Hours**

### **Response of the Alliance Internationale de Tourism (AIT) and the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) to the European Commission's Proposal on the Harmonisation of Certain Social Legislation Relating to Road Transport**

The AIT and the FIA represent more than 40 million motorists Europe-wide. In addition to representing the interests of our members, we are also one of the leading providers of breakdown assistance in the EU. Every year our clubs assist more than 14 million people in breakdown situations. We are concerned that our work will be adversely effected by the Commission's proposed regulation. Rescue and recovery services make a vital contribution to road safety and congestion management. As an emergency service for drivers in distress, it is essential we are able to respond quickly and efficiently to requests for our services. Our member clubs have an excellent safety record, invest in training for all their drivers and always puts road users' safety and first class service first. Please support us to ensure that regulation of our industry is appropriate to need.

#### **Background**

- In the general, breakdown work comprises two kinds of activity, local roadside repair (rescue) with limited local recovery, and longer distance recoveries
- There are also two main types of vehicle, those primarily providing full service repair at the roadside (80-85% of jobs) and local tows (15-20%) and those providing longer distance recoveries
- The vehicles of our operators operate either in 'geographical cells' or distance controlled automated deployment systems, rather than out of a single garage or depot. Day-to-day they routinely operate outside a radius of 50kms from any point even though the work is indisputably local;
- Limiting the activity of breakdown vehicles to a radius of 50km would seriously impact on vehicle deployment and thus worsen road safety and congestion

#### **Proposed Solutions**

1. The Transport Council has welcomed our suggestion of an exemption for breakdown vehicles for all journeys of less than 100km in radius from their base. Please support this.

2. Keep the exemption for all small rescue vans of below 3.5 tonnes - enabling their rapid and effective response to emergency calls so reducing congestion and promote road safety

### **How Breakdown Services Differ**

(a) There is no single structure for breakdown operations. Our clubs' vehicles are multi-skilled breakdown vans, not dedicated recovery trucks.

- Our member clubs have dedicated fleets of specialised rescue vans, designed to carry out mainly roadside repair plus some vehicle recovery.
- These vans repair 80 – 85% of all vehicles attended.
- As drafted, multi-purpose vehicles would fall within scope of the amended regulation if towing further than 50km from base.

(b) Our clubs' breakdown vehicles are not based at local garages.

- Our breakdown vehicles are based in cells.
- Many cells, in which the breakdown vehicle would be based for a shift, may be 40km or wider. Vans undertake repairs and short local tow jobs inside the cell, but provide back up for adjacent cells (60 kms) and can tow up to 30-40 kms in any direction from the point of breakdown, i.e. a radius of 100km.
- Cell deployment varies regularly according to criteria such as weather, time of day, and congestion.

(c) Contractors are used for long recovery jobs.

- Longer tows are carried out by dedicated recovery vehicles such as the slide back pictured or spectacle lifts.
- The majority of recoveries are carried out for us by a network of contractors operating from local depots.
- Such vehicles would fall within the spirit and letter of the amended regulation.



An example of a multi-skilled breakdown vehicle.

