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COMMISSION DIRECTIVE

of 6 December 1991

adapting to technical progress Council Directive 74/297/EEC in respect of the behaviour of the steering wheel and column in an impact

(91/662/EEC)

(OJ L 366, 31.12.1991, p. 1)

Corrected by:

►**C1** Corrigendum, OJ L 172, 27.6.1992, p. 86 (91/662/EEC)

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COMMISSION DIRECTIVE

of 6 December 1991

adapting to technical progress Council Directive 74/297/EEC in respect of the behaviour of the steering wheel and column in an impact

(91/662/EEC)

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Having regard to Council Directive 74/297/EEC of 4 June 1974 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the interior fittings of motor vehicles (the behaviour of the steering mechanism in the event of an impact) ([1]), and in particular Article 5 thereof,

Whereas, in view of experience gained and of the state of the art, it is now appropriate, in the case of a frontal impact, to improve protection offered to the driver by controlling the behaviour of the sterring wheel and mechanism which is the aim of Directive 74/297/EEC, by aligning it with the latest developments in the relevant Regulation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and by the introduction of some further improvements;

Whereas, in view of experience gained from accidents indicating that the steering wheel should be soft to protect the driver's face from serious injury, further modifications to this Directive should be introduced for this purpose; whereas, as several proposals for a test method are available, the Commission should bring forward a further proposal to the Committee for Adaptation to Technical Progress by 31 December 1991;

Whereas the provisions of this Directive are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee for the Adaptation to Technical Progress of the Directives on Motor Vehicles,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE:

Article 1

The Annexes to Directive 74/297/EEC are hereby amended in accordance with the Annexes to this Directive.

Article 2

1. With effect from 1 October 1992 no Member State may

(a) — refuse, in respect of a type of vehicle, to grant EC type-approval, or to issue the copy of the certificate provided for in the last indent of Article 10 (1) of Council Directive 70/156/EEC ([2]), or to grant national type-approval, or

— prohibit the entry into service of vehicles,

on grounds relating to their *steering mechanism* if this has been approved in accordance with Directive 74/297/EEC as amended by this Directive;

(b) — refuse to grant EC type-approval in respect of a type of steering control intended for installation in a vehicle or vehicles, or

— prohibit the placing on the market of steering controls intended for installation in a vehicle or vehicles

if the said *steering control* complies with the requirements of Directive 74/297/EEC as amended by this Directive.

([1]) OJ No L 165, 20. 6. 1974, p. 16.
([2]) OJ No L 42, 23. 2. 1970, p. 1.

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2. With effect from 1 October 1996, in respect of motor vehicles of category M_1 which are not forward control, Member States:

— shall no longer issue the copy of the certificate provided for in the last indent of Article 10 (1) of Directive 70/156/EEC, and

— may refuse to grant national type-approval

on grounds relating to the *steering mechanism* if this does not comply with the requirements of Directive 74/297/EEC as amended by this Directive.

3. With effect from 1 October 1995, in respect of forward-control motor vehicles of category M_1 and all N_1 motor vehicles with a permissible maximum mass not exceeding 1 500 kilograms, Member States:

— shall no longer issue the copy of the certificate provided for in the last indent of Article 10 (1) of Directive 70/156/EEC, and

— may refuse to grant national type-approval

on grounds relating to the *steering mechanism* if this does not comply with the requirements of Directive 74/297/EEC as amended by this Directive ►**C1** with the exception of the provisions laid down in paragraph 5.1 of Annex I to this Directive (maximum vertical displacement of the steering column) which shall have effect only from 1 October 1996 ◄.

4. With effect from ►**C1** 1 October 1994, ◄ in respect of types of *steering control,* Member States:

— shall no longer issue the copy of the certificate provided for in the last indent of Article 10 (1) of Directive 70/156/EEC, and

— may refuse to grant national type-approval

on grounds relating to steering controls if these steering controls do not comply with the requirements of paragraphs 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 of Annex I to Directive 74/297/EEC as amended by this Directive.

5. With effect from 1 October 1996 Member States may prohibit the first entry into service of *vehicles* in which the steering mechanisms do not comply with the requirements of Directive 74/297/EEC, as amended by this Directive.

However, this shall not apply until 1 October 1997:

— to a forward-control vehicle of category M_1, or

— to a vehicle of category N_1 with a maximum permissible mass not exceeding 1 500 kilograms, or

— in the case of a vehicle of category M_1 other than a forward-control vehicle, with respect to the requirements laid down in paragraph 5.1 of Annex I (maximum vertical displacement of the steering column).

6. With effect from 1 October 1995 Member States may prohibit the placing on the market of *steering controls* intended for the installation in a vehicle or vehicles if these steering controls do not comply with the requirements laid down in paragraphs 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 of Annex I to Directive 74/297/EEC, as amended by this Directive.

Article 3

1. Member States shall bring into force the legislative, regulatory and administrative provisions necessary in order to comply with this Directive before 1 October 1992 and shall forthwith inform the Commission thereof.

When the Member States adopt these provisions these shall contain a reference to this Directive or shall be accompanied by such a reference at the time of their official publication. The procedure for such reference shall be adopted by Member States.

2. Member States shall ensure that the terms of the main provisions of national law which they adopt in the field covered by this Directive are communicated to the Commission.

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Article 4

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

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ANNEX I

DEFINITIONS, APPLICATION FOR EC TYPE-APPROVAL, EC TYPE-APPROVAL, SPECIFICATIONS, TESTS, CONFORMITY OF PRODUCTION

1. SCOPE

This Directive applies to the behaviour of the steering mechanism of motor vehicles of category M_1, and vehicles of category N_1 with a maximum permissible mass less than 1 500 kilograms, with regard to the protection of the driver in a frontal collision.

At the request of a manufacturer, vehicles belonging to other categories may be approved under this Directive.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Directive

2.1. '*Behaviour of the steering mechanism in the event of an impact*' means the behaviour of this mechanism under the effect of three types of force, ie:

2.1.1. those resulting from a frontal collision which may produce displacement of the steering column towards the rear;

2.1.2. those due to the driver's head inertia in the event of an impact against the steering control in a frontal collision;

2.1.3. those due to the driver's body inertia in the event of an impact against the steering control in a frontal collision.

2.2. '*Vehicle type*' means a category of motor vehicles which do not differ in such essential respects as:

2.2.1. the structure, dimensions, lines and constituent materials of that part of the vehicle forward of the steering control;

2.2.2. the mass of the vehicle in running order, as defined in item 2.6 of Annex I to Directive 70/156/EEC without the driver.

2.3. '*Steering control*' means the steering device, usually the steering wheel, which is actuated by the driver.

2.4. '*Steering control type*' means a category of steering controls which do not differ in such essential respects as the structure, dimensions, lines and constituent materials.

2.5. '*Approval of a steering control*' means the approval of a steering control type with regard to the protection of the driver's head and body against the steering control in the event of an impact.

2.6. '*Approval of a vehicle*' means the approval of a vehicle type with regard to the protection of the driver's head and body against the steering mechanism in the event of an impact.

2.7. '*General steering control*' means a steering control which can be fitted to more than one vehicle type where differences in the attachment of the steering control to the steering column do not affect the impact performance of the steering control.

2.8. '*Air bag*' means a flexible bag that is designed to be filled with a gas under pressure, and is:

2.8.1. designed to protect the vehicle driver in an impact against the steering control, and

2.8.2. inflated by a device which is actuated in case of vehicle's impact.

2.9. '*Steering control rim*' means the quasi-toroidal outer ring in the case of the steering wheel usually gripped by the driver's hand during driving.

2.10. '*Spoke*' means a bar connecting the steering control rim to the boss.

2.11. '*Boss*' means that part of the steering control, usually at the centre, that:

2.11.1. joins the steering control to the steering shaft;

2.11.2. transmits the torque from the steering control to the steering shaft.

2.12. '*Centre of the steering control boss*' means that point on the surface of the boss which is in line with the axis of the steering shaft.