

By email and post

Mr Jan Buczek
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Geneva, 16 September 2014

**MEASURES ADOPTED IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM ON THE WEEKLY REST PERIOD
BEING TAKEN ON BOARD VEHICLES**

Dear Mr Buczek,

Thank you very much for your letter of 11 September 2014 concerning the measures adopted in France and Belgium which are of continued concern for the IRU.

I welcome the increased activity of IRU Members from Eastern EU Member States and especially the leading role of ZMPD in this issue. As I was informed, on 3 September 2014, the meeting of the IRU Commission on Social Affairs (CAS) discussed the matter in detail and agreed on short and longer term steps that will be taken by the IRU Secretariat and IRU Members based on the arguments mentioned in your letter, namely proportionality, discrimination and a lack of appropriate infrastructure.

In the short-term, our joint aim should be that this issue is discussed at the meeting of the EU Transport Ministers on 8 October 2014. This should be yet another step in the IRU strategy to appeal to the EU Institutions to deal with these disruptive protectionist steps. Although the weekly rest issue was raised by a number of Member States during the Council Working Party on Land Transport on 11 September 2014, according to my information, until now, unfortunately no Member State has explicitly requested the matter to be brought to the Transport Council. It is therefore crucial that IRU Member Associations continue to lobby their national Transport Ministries to this end.

In the long-term, a flexible and efficient solution must be found to on the one hand provide for adequate social conditions for drivers and on the other hand retain the competitiveness of the European road haulage industry and prevent the dismantling of the transport single market. In the meantime, a transitional arrangement or moratorium on the measures in Belgium and France should be adopted.

As you are aware, the French and Belgian measures figure also on the agenda of the meeting of IRU Goods Transport Liaison Committee (CLTM) that will be held on 8 October 2014.



I am convinced that the CLTM and CAS are best placed to be the lead IRU statutory body for this matter as it concerns the unilateral steps of certain EU Member States. Let me also inform you that the IRU Secretariat will explore whether joint solutions could be envisaged in the framework of the Social Sector Dialogue with the European Transport Workers' Federation, providing the CLTM gives a mandate in this direction.

Furthermore, it goes without saying that any future lobbying activity must be backed by detailed data on how banning the weekly rest in the cabin has affected the road transport industry. I would therefore encourage you to contact your Members to provide the quantitative details on the impact of the measures on their transport operations, such as extra kilometres driven, specific extra cost of fuel used, perhaps preliminary estimates on the insurance increase, etc. This would greatly strengthen the advocacy towards the EU Institutions and national authorities.

I thank you for your continued support and engagement in this issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'U de P', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Umberto de Pretto
Secretary General