

The Commission feels that Directive 96/96/EC, possibly to be reinforced by legislation on random roadside checks, provides for sufficient guarantees to improve vehicle standards in general and thus currently has no plans for specific legislation concerning school buses.

(<sup>1</sup>) OJ L 46, 17.2.1997.

(98/C 158/247)

**WRITTEN QUESTION P-3725/97**  
**by Christof Tannert (PSE) to the Commission**  
(12 November 1997)

*Subject:* Legibility of future euro banknotes for the blind

Can the Commission say whether the interests of the blind and visually impaired will be taken into account in designing euro banknotes and, if so, how?

**Answer given by Mr de Silguy on behalf of the Commission**  
(16 December 1997)

Article 4.2 of the Statute of the European Monetary Institute (EMI) states that it is responsible for supervising the technical preparation euro-denominated banknotes.

However, the Commission can inform the Honourable Member that the European Association for the Blind has been fully involved in the design and production of euro banknotes by the EMI.

On 13 December 1996 the EMI issued a press communiqué on the implications of the euro for blind and visually impaired people, which describes the technical specifications necessary to ensure that euro banknotes meet the needs of the blind and visually impaired. These include differences in size and colour, the presence of clearly legible figures in the same position on all banknotes to facilitate identification of their face value, and symbols which can be read by touch.

(98/C 158/248)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-3727/97**  
**by Daniel Varela Suanzes-Carpegna (PPE) to the Commission**  
(21 November 1997)

*Subject:* GSP and the countries of the Andean Pact and Central American Common Market

Following the adoption and implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1256/96 (<sup>1</sup>) of 20 June 1996 applying multiannual schemes of generalized tariff preferences from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1999 in respect of certain agricultural products originating in developing countries, customs duties have been suspended in their entirety for the countries of the Andean Pact and the Central American Common Market in respect of all products under codes 1604 and 1605, with the exception of canned tuna under codes 1604 14 14, 1604 14 18, 1604 14 90, 1604 19 39 and 1604 2070, since the suspension of duty-free imports may be requested 'when the quantities put into free circulation with preferential benefit, originating in that country, exceed the average annual quantity of its exports to the Community of the products concerned over the last three years'.

This provision is highly ambiguous. It seems logical to assume that the figure would be a changable one, since it would always be the average for the three previous years. In 1997, this would be the years 1994, 1995 and 1996, in 1998 the years from 1995 to 1997 and in 1999 the years from 1996 to 1998, with the result that the reference figure would be lower on each occasion. It is not clear whether this is what is meant or whether the figure should be a fixed quantity.

What period should be taken into account for calculating the average?

Under this calculation, what is the current figure for imports into the Community which should not be exceeded by each of the eleven countries concerned?