

The four motor directives⁽³⁾ established the principle of compulsory cover on the basis of a single premium for civil liability in respect of the use of motor vehicles and stipulated the minimum content. This compulsory insurance applies throughout Community territory and for the entire duration of the contract as long as the vehicle remains registered in the country of origin.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 105, 23.4.1983.

⁽²⁾ Proposal for a Council Directive governing the tax treatment of private motor vehicles moved permanently to another Member State in connection with a transfer of residence or used temporarily in a Member State other than that in which they are registered (OJ C 108, 7.4.1998).

⁽³⁾ Directives 72/166/EEC (OJ L 103, 2.5.1972), 84/5/EEC (OJ L 8, 11.1.1984), 90/232/EEC (OJ L 129, 19.5.1990) and 2000/26/EC (OJ L 181, 20.7.2000).

(2001/C 103 E/100)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2227/00

by Raffaele Costa (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(3 July 2000)

Subject: Use of headlights to reduce accidents

A recent study carried out by various American universities and followed up by a research centre in Paris has shown that the constant use of dipped headlights by vehicles at all times (including during daylight hours) would reduce accidents by 16 %.

Is the Commission aware of these findings and will it say whether any such studies have been conducted or are planned?

Answer given by Mrs de Palacio on behalf of the Commission

(11 September 2000)

The Commission is continuously reviewing the available research evidence concerning the effectiveness of daytime running lights as an accident reduction measure. The results of the considerable amount of research in this field are not conclusive, but they do indicate that for all road users daytime running lights would be a positive road safety measure and that the effects are directly proportional to ambient daylight levels. Estimates of the accident reduction effect vary widely and are still the subject of unresolved academic debate. The study mentioned by the Honourable Members contributes to this assessment.

The Commission concludes that daytime running lights are likely to be a cost-effective road safety measure but not to be as significant, for example, as the benefits to be obtained from speed reduction, less drinking and driving, or increased seat belt wearing. The Commission view on the significance of these measures is described in greater detail in the latest road safety communication⁽¹⁾.

It should also be noted that daytime running lights will have a cost, in the form of higher fuel consumption. The Commission has estimated that the maximum additional fuel consumption, and consequent CO₂ emissions, is between 1,5 % to 2,0 %, although this depends to some extent upon the technical specification for daytime running lights.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2000) 125.