



PRESS STATEMENT

European Confederation of Police

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Luxembourg, 1 July 2005

Less security because of budgetary concerns?

'The Council's move to delay the EU Driving Licence Directive is to the detriment of citizens' security', says EuroCOP President Heinz KIEFER

The President of the European Confederation of Police, Heinz KIEFER has reacted with regret following the failure of the EU Transport Council to adopt the EU Driving Licence Directive due to the opposition of transport ministers from Germany, France, Austria, Poland and Denmark earlier this week.

Even if it is understandable that governments are hesitant to change their national systems following the adoption of a single European driving licence, they must take care not to neglect the wider consequences, says Mr KIEFER.

The European driving licence would replace the 110 different models that are in use throughout the EU now, making it a lot easier to determine whether a driver is actually entitled to command a specific type of vehicle or not. This would make work for police officers during traffic controls a lot easier while making controls more efficient at the same time.

While this would mean a great benefit to road safety the practical implications reach beyond that:

Since the driving licence is widely accepted as proof of identity in various aspects of every day life, harmonisation and the introduction of up to date security features is as important as the introduction of biometric data into passports and identity cards, says Mr KIEFER, adding that he cannot accept the argument of too high costs as a reason to delay the Driving Licence Directive.

A Member State such as Germany is prepared to pay up to an estimated 600 Million Euro for the introduction and another 650 Million Euro annually for the functioning of biometric data in passports. The estimated total costs for the introduction of a uniform EU driving licence are estimated at a total of about 800 Million Euro. These costs would be spread over ten years, reducing the annual burden to 80 Million Euro.

Mr KIEFER has therefore called upon the UK Presidency of the EU to work towards a swift adoption of the EU Driving Licence Directive. 'A uniform driving licence in the EU will not only improve road safety, it will also contribute to closing security gaps in every day life.'

Previous EuroCOP Press releases available at

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The European Confederation of Police, EuroCOP, is the umbrella organisation of 27 national Police Unions and Staff Organisations from 19 European States. It represents the interests of over 600.000 police officers in Europe. www.eurocop-police.org