

Press Release - Pressemitteilung - 1-09

EU-study plays down problems coming along with heavy commercial vehicles – EAC wants to stress aspects of security and environment

Brussels, 2009-01-26 25 metres long lorries weighing 60 tons – a nightmare for many road users. Nevertheless, the publication of a scientific study ordered by the EU Commission is renewing the discussion about their approval. It actually reasons that in times of growing commercial transport longer and heavier vehicles, so called LHV, are becoming indispensable. The European Automobile Club Association (EAC) sharply criticises the study for its one-sided discussion on aspects of environment, energy consumption and security.

The study was conducted by Transport & Mobility Leuven (TML), a private expert consortium. Although they do admit occurring security risks, they argue that the LHVs enlarged shipping volume would reduce traffic volume and therefore decrease accident frequency rate. On Monday, EAC secretary general Matthias Knobloch emphasized that a not-proven prognosis should not overcome a broadly accepted understanding of road security: "The focus should stay on European road safety objectives, undertaken by the EU Commission and many partners." Furthermore he noted: "It is striking how the economic perspective – that is the unhindered transport of goods – is put to the fore. Security and environmental aspects are completely disregarded. Before coming to a decision, the EU Commission is requested to take into account the notions of all member states, associations and initiative."

The uneven distribution of negative impacts on different member states does not seem to be reflected adequately at all. Although the study assumes that mostly transit countries will suffer from LHV traffic, it does not discuss the issue at all. "That is that some states – mostly the big ones – might profit from the more efficient transport of goods, while others without taking any advantages are going to get big trouble with rising charges for infrastructure and an increasing traffic load."

In the EACs point of view growing commercial transport should not be focused on roads only but rather be expanded on railway as well as on waterways. "Interactions between developing railway transport und other modes of transport have to be analysed. Otherwise the efforts to establish a sustainable and safe commercial transport are in danger of losing ground," said EAC secretary general.

Please find the study at this link: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/strategies/studies/strategies_en.htm

You can find further information and studies on LHVs on the EAC-supported EU-wide anti mega truck campaign at www.nomegatrucks.eu

All information on EAC: www.eac-web.eu

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About Us: Working together to improve mobility - That's the principle governing the work of the present five partners from Germany and Austria cooperating in the European Automobile Club Association (EAC). The EAC represents the interests of a total of 2.5 million people. As a partner for mobility, our vision is a Europe without borders where travel is easy. That requires harmonising traffic laws between the EU Member States and driving forward innovative technologies – to ensure greater safety and sustainability on the roads.