



Motorcaravanning Commission Meeting Zadar, Croatia, 19.04.2013 Report

Commission members

João Alves Pereira, President of the FICC

Jose I. Gonzalez, Chairman of the Commission, and members: Les Kendrick, Chris Wells, Gianni Picilli, Stan Stolwerk.

Absent, Gérard Couté could not attend the Meeting due to his agenda.

▪ **Invited guests as observers**

Jerko Sladoljev, President of Top Camping Pool, Croatia

Jaime Santana, Vice-President of the Portuguese Federation

Rui Narciso, President of the Motorcaravanning Association of Portugal

Frane Skoblar, Director of Zaton Holiday Resort, Zadar, Croatia

The President of the FICC and the Chairman of the Commission welcome the members of the group, they also wished Stan Stolwerk from the NKC, Nederlandse Kampeerauto Club (joining in place of Willem Helwegen), a prosperous future in the Motorcaravanning Commission team.

The invited guests were given a warm welcome and thanked them for attending the Meeting.

The President, João Alves Pereira, stated that all Commissions in the FICC are important but the Motorcaravanning Commission was a top priority project in the FICC since the year 2005. He congratulated the Commission team for the work developed from the moment it was created; he said that motorcaravanning, even in this period of crisis, is on a growing trend.

The CCI (Camping Card International) is the most valuable camping card in the market and there are a number of projects that will reinforce our strategy for the benefit of camping caravanning and motorcaravanning. This year is the 80th Anniversary of the FICC and is the moment for new undertakings to confirm our leadership; we are aiming our efforts to and for the benefit of our members. It is important to point out that we are not a commercial organization, concluded the President.

Stan Stolwerk, Managing Director of the NKC, said that he started 2 months ago; is responsible for the NKC office where there are 30 people working and promoting motorcaravanning. He added that he is willing to work together with the Commission as a team because there a lot of challenges to reach in the near future.

Jerko Sladoljev, an expert in camping, had manifested that there will be a possibility in creating stopovers or rest areas all over Croatia specifically for motorhomes, the government will be involved in its development. Motorcaravanning has different needs and that is good reason for a different approach, the majority of motorcaravanners don't like to stay in a campsite, they don't find it convenient; in general, camping sites are located far from cities and places of interest to visit.

Regarding stopovers and camping sites, Mr. Jerko Sladoljev recommended that the FICC could have an "international label" (like a quality seal) to award campsites and stopovers; thus in return campers and motorcaravanners will benefit with better service and discounts from such agreement.



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Before the meeting started, the members of the Commission were asked by Jose I. Gonzalez if they would agree to allow **Mr. Rui Narciso, President of the Motorcaravanning Association of Portugal**, to address the Commission in order to explain a problem regarding to motorhome parking in his country; as he mentioned, there was a constant discrimination with arbitrary or even illegal measures taken by city councils and regions in Portugal. To compare their situation, they would like to find out if there are similar cases in other countries. The Commission members unanimously agreed and also accepted to include the mentioned subject on the agenda, to be debated on the next meeting.

AGENDA

B Driving Licence in the EU – Updating to C1 97 Category

On 20 November 2012 the European Commission published Directive 2012/36/EU amending the 3rd Directive on Driving Licences. Besides some administrative improvement the Commission addresses for the first time the lack of a private driving licence above 3.5 t.

With C1 97 the European caravanning industry was able to slightly soften the so far untouchable 3.5 t threshold which was until now the barrier between private (under 3.5 t) and commercial usage (above 3.5 t). The Commission acknowledged that category C1 is heterogeneous and includes a wide range of vehicles.

However, C1 97 differs only slightly from C1. Drivers of C1 97 vehicles should not be required to demonstrate during the driving test their knowledge of rules or equipment or certain legislation only applicable to professional drivers such as the digital tachograph, rules on driving hours and rest periods, rules on transported goods or passengers and rules for the national and international carriage of goods or passengers.

The new Directive summarizes under C1 97 the following vehicles:

Vehicles for leisure or personal use (such as motorcaravans)

- Emergency or fire- fighting vehicles,
- Utility vehicles used for professional purposes but where driving is not the principal activity of the driver (vehicles used by craftspeople).

Most EU Countries

- When such a driver reaches 70 the driving licence has to be renewed and unless a medical examination is taken the original entitlement, as mentioned above, is downgraded to leave just categories B and E. This means the driver is now limited to driving a vehicle with a MAM not exceeding 3,500kg, but because the category E remains any weight of trailer compatible with the towing vehicle can be towed.

A-Frame Towing

Regarding to a question on A-Frame towing, asked on the previous meeting by the Commission member Les Kendrick, trying to find out the reason why many British motorcaravanners when driving in Spain with a motorhome towing a car with A-Frame are usually stopped by the police and, in many cases, they have to pay heavy fines. In this regard the Chairman had written to Mrs. Maria Seguí, General Director of Transport in Spain, she followed communication with Siim Kallas, Vice-President for Transport in the European Commission to find a possible solution.



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Apparently the law when towing a traditional trailer is reasonably clear whether in Spain or Europe. However, towing a car behind a motorhome on an A-frame or similar types the situation is not so clear.

According to tests, there are also concerns about the ability to reverse a car on an A-frame when using an inertia braking system. Traditional braked trailers can be reversed without problem because they have auto-reversing systems that enable the brakes to collapse when rearward motion is instigated. Cars do not have such systems. This will be very difficult to achieve on an A-frame using an inertia device.

Furthermore the use of A-frame towing with inertia braking systems is under threat from prospective European legislation concerning trailers, which is due to come into force in 2014. The new legislation will require conformity with only the UNECE regulation (United Economic Commission for Europe). This latter regulation only permits inertia braking systems to be used on centre axle trailers such as caravans and traditional trailers and not cars towed as trailers.

Unfortunately, as the Chairman explained, there are no easy solutions in the short term, until a standardized criteria is reach for these type of trailers in the EU.

Mobile Phones While Driving

Use while driving is common, but widely considered dangerous. Due to the number of accidents that are related to mobile phone use while driving, some countries have made the use of a mobile phone while driving illegal.

Others have enacted laws to ban handheld mobile phone use, but allow use of a hands free device. In some cases restrictions are directed only to those who are newly qualified license holders.

The Medical News Today has shown that mobile phone use leads to more erratic driving with less speed control. With a decrease in speed control, you're more likely to get pulled over for a ticket or lose control of your vehicle. Also, if another vehicle stops in front of you without warning, there's a chance you may hit it.

According to a study carried out by Royal Automobile Club, in connection in a few European countries, it was found out that people are as impaired when they drive and talk on a mobile phone as they are when they drive intoxicated at the legal blood-alcohol limit" of 0.08 percent, which is the minimum level that defines illegal in some EU countries.

How do we implement all these points, as we know, we can only recommend our members to proceed as best as they can with these matters. We are aware that many clubs do a great effort in this direction, but we cannot stop recommending clubs to continue this policy of prevention.

Dangers of GPS While Driving

- Over-reliance

The Commission members commented that one danger is that individuals become too accustomed to using GPS in their everyday lives. This can be a problem when the system fails and the user is left stranded; for example, a mobile phone user might have been relying on his or her phone's GPS system for directions only for the phone to run out of battery, leaving one without any other form of guidance. Users can also place too much trust in their GPS devices. Over-relying on a GPS navigational device



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for road directions can lead to users missing or ignoring vital road signs that warn of upcoming dangers.

- Inappropriate Routes

Specifically, GPS users might find themselves heading into locations that are inappropriate; for example, a GPS device might send a motorhome driver into a village with narrow streets.

Following the suggestion from João Alves Pereira, the Commission has agreed to produce a document with recommendations for safe **mobile phone use and GPS navigation while driving, safe overnight parking (using a stopover or campsite, if possible) and respect for environment**; it will be available on request from FICC office.

Good Practice

The Commission members concluded that motorcaravanning must be based on Good practice. In order to make it effective should be continuously promoted by federations and clubs. To facilitate the promotion of Good Practice the Commission introduced some recommendations.

The "Motorcaravanner's Ten Top Tips" (clubs can use their code of good practice, if they have one) it is composed by 10 individual suggestions (available from the FICC office, if needed) which are designed to develop a good image for motorcaravanning, a couple of examples as follows:

- Protect nature and environment – observe the Countryside and Seashore Codes. By keeping conditions as Nature intended, we preserve a precious pastime for all campers and lovers of the outdoor life.
- Park safely and considerately, in particular ensure that traffic is not hindered; and that the view of historical centres, monuments, commercial activities, points of scenic interest and similar locations can be seen and enjoyed by other people.

Technical Motorcaravanning Information

In the last few years the Motorcaravanning Commission has issued a number works, especially technical information leaflets and documents with recommendations, available on request from the FICC office:

- The Motorcaravanning Handbook
- The Ten Top Tips (Code of Good Practice)
- Vignette prices (the flat rate toll version, adopted by a few European countries driving motor vehicles –normally mandatory in some states)
- European toll prices, mainly EU
- Speed limit for motorcaravans in the EU
- Low Emission Zones in Europe
- Stopover model plan, minimum or basic installation, for a motorhome service area

Les Kendrick, member of the Commission (item added to the agenda as any other business), had informed the following data in regard to new motorhome registrations in the United Kingdom.

DVLA (Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency, UK) registration increased dramatically over the past 3 years, he said:



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New Registrations	N° of Motorhomes
Registered 31 st December 2010	173.348
Registered 30 th September 2011, including SORN (Statutory Off the Road Notification):	176.938
registered September 2012	202.216
SORN	25.217

DVLA (Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency, UK) have been registering, on average, an increase of new motorhomes per year during the period: **9.000**

Motorcaravan Articles

The Commission has decided to publish on the FICC News Magazine the points of discussion during meetings held by the Motorcaravanning Commission. The aim is to keep motorcaravanners updated with the latest information discussed by the group that can be of interest for the welfare motorhomers.

Next Meeting

Since there was not time to discuss a date for the next meeting, the Commission have decided to carry on by e-mail trying to agree on a meeting date between last week September and first week October 2013.

Jose I. Gonzalez
The Motorcaravanning Commission, FICC

30th April 2013