

## WEIGHTS & DIMENSIONS OF HDVs: VOTING RECOMMENDATIONS

CLECAT, the European Association for Forwarding, Transport, Logistics and Customs Services, welcomes the [Commission proposal](#) to revise the [Directive 96/53/EC](#) on weights and dimensions of heavy-duty vehicles used in national and international transport. In a context of structural shortage of drivers and the need to decarbonise freight transport, this timely initiative should help maximise the efficiency of the road freight transport and incentivise the shift to zero-emission vehicles.

The freight forwarding sector is committed to ambitious European decarbonisation goals and is willing to actively contribute to the substantial reduction of GHG emissions from its transport and logistics operations. However, the current Directive hinders the free movement of goods across the EU, leading to inefficiencies, higher emissions and legal uncertainty. It is therefore of utmost importance that the revision of the Directive clarifies these rules and facilitates more efficient road freight transport.

In view of the upcoming vote in the European Parliament's Plenary session on 12 March, we call on MEPs **to endorse the following voting recommendations:**

### 1. **EMS provisions**

**AM 61 to 64** propose to remove any provisions authorising cross-border operations with European Modular Systems (EMS) combinations between countries allowing their circulation on their territory.

*CLECAT recommendation: **REJECT**, the Commission proposal allowing these operations with EMS between countries already allowing them at national level is a great step forward in maximising road transport efficiency. We would like to remind MEPs that **EMS trucks do not compete with other mode of transport such as rail transport. Evidence from logistics operators that have made use of EMS suggests that such vehicles have not substituted rail or inland waterway travel, but rather led to the replacement of conventional 40-tonne trucks. This is because the choice of mode is rather determined by factors such as the distance travelled, geographical areas, the value of goods transported or their volume, all of which can differ between road, rail and maritime.***

**AM 5, 26, 27 and 28** propose that Member States perform a prior assessment on the impact of EMS combinations on road safety, infrastructure and modal shift for new EMS routes and restrict conditions for EMS trials.

*CLECAT recommendation: **REJECT**, we consider the conditions set out by the Commission proposal reasonable, as the provision of information on maximum allowed weights and dimensions of EMS in specific countries as well as on the parts of the network where EMS can circulate is essential for efficient road transport supply chains. As already stated in our previous [policy recommendations](#) on EMS provisions, **no robust evidence of reverse modal shift or increased road safety risks for the use of EMS vehicles had been found in the Commission's impact assessment or scientific literature.** Therefore, imposing a prior assessment of the impact of EMS on road safety, infrastructure and modal shift creates unnecessary barriers to the deployment of EMS combinations, and would hamper logistics service providers' efforts to optimise the efficiency of their road transport operations.*

## **2. Use of longer articulated vehicles**

**AM 36** restricts the use of articulated vehicles of 18m to intermodal transport operation only.

*CLECAT recommendation: **REJECT**, this type of vehicle is mostly used in Germany or Italy as part of groupage operations between logistics hubs. With their increased length, they can carry 10% more capacity compared to standard trailers. If such vehicles would be restricted to intermodal operations only, more vehicles would be needed to carry the same amount of cargo, thus increasing journeys and emissions, at times of deepening driver shortage. We therefore call for removing unnecessary barriers to the use of high-capacity vehicles.*

## **3. National exemptions**

**AM 3 and 25** clarify the Directive on the possibility for Member states to allow cross-border operation of longer/heavier vehicles between their territory.

*CLECAT recommendation: **SUPPORT**, CLECAT particularly welcomes this clarification of the Directive, as we maintain that the EU legal framework should not overrule national rules on weights and dimensions and should not restrict the possibility to authorise cross-border transport operations with heavier/longer/higher/wider vehicles between consenting Member States that allow their circulation in national traffic.*

## **4. Cross-border operations with 44-tonne diesel trucks**

**AM 65** proposes to delete Article 4b from the Directive.

*CLECAT recommendation: **REJECT**, we welcome this new article allowing the use of 44-tonne HDVs running on fossil fuels in international road-only operations between Member States that accept such heavier vehicles in national operations. This provision would thereby remove artificial barriers to the cross-border movement of heavier trucks, which led to an increased number of vehicles on the road and increased emissions, such as between France and Belgium for example. However, the provision should not be limited in time for conventional vehicles, as there are still uncertainties regarding the deployment of zero-emission vehicles and corresponding infrastructure in time.*

## **5. Other amendments**

**AM 8, 29 and 30** propose to set up national access points and an EU web portal to access information on national maximum authorised weights and dimensions of vehicles, as well as any restrictions, including the parts of the networks where EMS vehicles are allowed.

*CLECAT recommendation: **SUPPORT***

**AM 40** proposes that Member states use the revenues generated by penalties to develop the market uptake of sustainable transport means.

*CLECAT recommendation: **SUPPORT***

**AM 46** mandates to Commission to draw up a detailed report on the implementation of the Directive and assessing different enabling conditions for the market uptake of zero-emissions HDVs.

*CLECAT recommendation: **SUPPORT***

**AM 49** moves the transposition deadline of the Directive to one year (instead of two) after its entry into force.

*CLECAT recommendation: **SUPPORT***

CLECAT remains at the disposal of interested parties for any further information.