

OPEN LETTER ON EU FUNDING FOR SAFE AND SECURE TRUCK PARKING AREAS

Attn.:

- Mrs Adina-Ioana Vălean , European Commissioner for Transport
- Members of the European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN)

OBJECTIVE 100,000: EU funding for safe and secure truck parking areas must continue and candidates must improve the quality of their applications, to create a genuine EU network of high quality truck parking areas and stop driver shortage.

In the aftermath of the EC's announcement of the results of the second Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) call for funding, the undersigned key road transport industry stakeholders express their strong concern about the record low number of truck parking projects selected for funding: only 4, amounting to some €12 million. For the stakeholders, this must be resolved in the next calls for funding, notably the upcoming 3rd CEF call for applications scheduled in September this year.

The stakeholders call on the European Commission, Members of the European Parliament and EU Member States to ensure all appropriate conditions are met to reach the milestone objective of building 100,000 safe and secure parking spots for trucks by 2030.

Building a genuine European network of SSTPAs and reaching this milestone should become a policy priority, as well as a business and social objective for both investors and European policy makers, to stop a devastating driver shortage and ensure that road transport remains a solid pillar of European resilience, sustainability and indeed efficiently functioning supply chains, at times when cargo theft crimes in the EU is constantly increasing.

To this end, the united European road transport industries call on European policy and decision makers to:

- Recognise professional drivers as essential workers, who need decent resting conditions, in particular at safe and secure truck parking areas.
- Recognise, promote and support safe and secure truck parking areas, certified according to the EU Standard, as strategic EU infrastructure hubs, to ensure drivers' well-being, sustain EU's resilience, and promote alternative fuel infrastructure.
- Maintain the funding of safe and secure truck parking areas high on the EU policy and funding agenda and include them in the next financial period as a strategic area for EU support, with budget allocation equal to or higher than the one provided in the current period.
- Update and modernise the selection criteria for CEF funding, including by making safe and secure truck parking areas situated on the comprehensive network eligible for funding.

- Ensure the availability of necessary funds, so that all submitted mature and high-quality projects for building or modernising safe and secure truck parking areas which reach the evaluation threshold, obtain the required funding.

The signatories also urge applicants to step up their efforts to further improve the quality of their applications by: starting to prepare their dossiers sufficiently in advance; accompanying their applications with a solid feasibility study; providing a detailed and solid financial plan; and indeed, guaranteeing the timely obtention of a building permit, to ensure that any high quality and mature project is selected for funding.

We also look forward to the results of the upcoming SSTPA study, to be launched by the European Commission, to provide all public and private stakeholders with much needed information on where SSTPAs are most needed in view of cargo flows, which will be key to improve drivers' security and working conditions.

Finally, safe and secure truck parking areas, certified according to the EU-Parking Standard, should also become hotbeds for the deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure, guaranteeing drivers' well-being and safety, including against illegal migrants, whilst at the same time ensuring connectivity.

Together, we:

- Invite EU Member States to place building and modernising safe and secure truck parking areas as priority infrastructure projects in their own national plans,
and
- Call upon industry partners and investors to join forces to achieve the objective of 100,000 safe and secure truck parking spots by 2030.

At the same time, we reiterate our invitation to the European Commission to:

- substantially increase the current EU support and funding provided within CEF-T, to accelerate the development and roll out of a dense network of recharging and refuelling alternative fuel infrastructure for HDVs, including at SSTPAs, in the next 2-3 years.
- support, including financially, educational and promotional campaigns for safe and secure truck parking areas, as well as for the audit, certification and training of stakeholders according to the EU standard, and the connection of safe and secure truck parking areas to a central point.
- ensure synergies between TEN-T and TEN-E by enabling additional co-funding opportunities for high-capacity charging stations together with on-site renewable energy deployment and, more generally, for the deployment of alternative fuel infrastructure for HDVs at SSTPAs. This includes identifying the required infrastructure for charging power and capacity in cooperation with electricity suppliers.

We propose to Members of the European Parliament, to initiate an own-initiative resolution to address the issues raised in this letter and support the objective of achieving 100,000 safe and secure truck parking spots in the EU in the coming 5-7 years.

We are ready and willing to meet and discuss in more details these industry proposals and the practical ways they could be implemented in the most efficient and pragmatic manner.

Signatories:

