

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM FOR EUROPEAN UNION LEGISLATION/DOCUMENTS
WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE UK/EU WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT AND THE WINDSOR
FRAMEWORK**

COM(2025) 993 final

COM(2025) 993 final ANNEXES 1 to 2

2025/0422 (COD)

**Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE
COUNCIL amending Regulations (EC) No 561/2006, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2019/2144 and
(EU) 2024/1257 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the
simplification of technical requirements and testing procedures for motor vehicles
and repealing Council Directive 70/157/EEC and Regulation No 540/2014 of the
European Parliament and of the Council**

Submitted by the Department for Transport

19 March 2026

SUBJECT MATTER

1. This Explanatory Memorandum sets out the implications for Northern Ireland of a proposed EU Regulation of the European Parliament and Council amending several vehicle related EU regulations related to the working patterns for drivers of commercial goods and passenger vehicles, and the testing and type-approval of vehicles.
2. This proposal aims to streamline and modernise the EU's type-approval framework for motor vehicles by simplifying technical requirements, reducing administrative burdens on manufacturers, and replacing EU Regulations with UN Regulations.
3. Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 (the "drivers' hours rules") specifies the maximum driving times and minimum break and rest periods for drivers of most large vehicles (i.e. goods vehicles weighing over 3.5 tonnes and passenger vehicles with 10 or more seats) who are engaged in the carriage of goods or passengers by road. Vehicles in scope of the drivers' hours rules also need to comply with Regulation (EU) 165/2014 (the "tachograph rules"), which specify the rules relating to the construction, installation, use, and testing and control of tachographs used in road transport. Tachographs are devices used to record a drivers' compliance with the drivers' hours rules. The proposed amendment would remove electric light goods vehicles, over 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 4.25 tonnes, from the drivers' hours rules and hence the tachograph rules.

4. Regulation (EU) 2018/858 is the EU's type-approval framework for passenger and commercial vehicles. There are two proposed amendments. The first introduces a new M1E sub-category for passenger cars to define "small electric vehicles" as wholly electric vehicles that belong to the M1 category of small passenger vehicles and have a length not exceeding 4.2 metres. The second amendment introduces powers to allow the EU Commission to set technical requirements for in-vehicle communication interfaces with electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
5. Regulation (EU) 2019/2144 sets requirements for a range of vehicle safety technologies. The proposed amendment would remove the requirement for speed limitation devices to be fitted to electric light goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 4.25 tonnes.
6. Regulation (EU) 2024/1257 concerns the testing and approval of vehicles to the new Euro 7 emissions requirements. There are three proposed amendments. The first removes the low temperature laboratory test for Euro 7 as it is sufficiently covered by the existing Real-world Driving Emissions test. The second updates the Regulation to refer to "vehicle categories" rather than "vehicle types" for Euro 7 engine type-approval. The third clarifies that the Commission is empowered to develop measures to ensure that on-board monitoring and on-board fuel consumption monitoring data are received, compiled, processed and stored effectively in a harmonised manner to monitor real-world performance of Euro 7 vehicle types.
7. Council Directive 70/157/EEC and Regulation No 540/2014 set the mandatory noise limits for vehicles and the testing and approval requirements. Regulation No 540/2014 also concerns the approval of Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems (AVAS), which are mandatory for quiet electric/hybrid cars to warn pedestrians at low speed. The proposal would repeal both of these instruments and rely on internationally harmonised UN Regulations.

SCRUTINY HISTORY

8. There has been no previous scrutiny of this proposal.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

9. The Secretary of State for Transport.

INTEREST OF THE DEVOLVED GOVERNMENTS (DGs)

10. The topic of type approval is a reserved matter. The Devolved Governments, particularly in Northern Ireland, have an interest and have been consulted in the preparation of this EM. No comments were received.

LEGAL AND PROCEDURAL ISSUES

- i. **Legal Base:**

Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union 91 and 114.

ii. **Voting Procedure:**

The proposal will undergo the EU's ordinary legislative procedure. Both the Council and Parliament will review the text before final compromise text is agreed and voted on.

iii. **Timetable for adoption and implementation:**

The proposal was published on 16th December 2025. It is not possible to determine how long the process will take to complete but, once adopted the regulation will enter into force 20 days after it is published in the Official Journal of the EU. It also includes transitional provisions for the repeal of the requirements relating to vehicle noise, with Directive 70/157/EEC to be repealed on 1st July 2027 while approvals issued to Regulation No 540/2014 will remain valid until 1st July 2028.

POLICY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11. The amendment to Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 is to take into account the additional mass of electric light goods vehicles resulting from the battery. It aligns their treatment with the requirements for conventional vans with gross vehicle weight up to 3.5 tonnes. It also excludes motorhomes over 7.5 tonnes when used for private purposes. This Regulation is not included in the Windsor Framework. As a result, no divergence can occur between the type-approval requirements in Great Britain and Northern Ireland as a result of this amendment. Both Regulation (EC) 561/2006 and Regulation (EU) 165/2014 have been assimilated into UK law. Any changes made in the EU to these regulations would not apply in the UK.
12. The amendment to Regulation (EU) 2018/858 to introduce a new sub-category of 'small electric vehicle' is intended to be the first step towards the introduction of targeted measures to support the uptake of small electric vehicles (EVs) within the EU.
13. We note the potential for the Commission to introduce dedicated technical regulations for 'small electric vehicles' and to make use of its power to amend technical requirements regarding vehicle charging. My Department will continue to monitor developments in both areas in line with the Government's presumption of alignment with EU type-approval requirements for road vehicles.
14. The amendment to the type-approval requirements for speed limitation devices would remove the requirement for them to be fitted to electric light goods vans between 3.5-4.25 tonnes gross vehicle weight. As with the

amendment to the requirements for tachographs, this is to take into account the additional vehicle mass due to the EV battery. It aligns those vehicles with the requirements for internal combustion engine light goods vehicles with equivalent payloads and uses, which are exempt from the requirement to fit a speed limitation device. If agreed, the amendment could result in divergence between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Government will consider whether further legislation is required to address this specific amendment in Great Britain, in line with its commitment to a presumption of alignment with changes to EU type-approval requirements for road vehicles.

15. The amendments to the Euro 7 emissions requirements are intended to simplify the emissions testing of vehicles and therefore reduce costs for manufacturers. The Commission's assessment is that use of testing done through the existing Real-world Driving Emissions test is sufficient to demonstrate compliance at low temperatures and so the separate low temperature test is duplicative. The amendment to use vehicle categories rather than vehicle types is also intended to prevent duplicative testing since a single vehicle category can contain multiple vehicle types. The amendment to clarify the Commission's power to develop measures regarding on-board monitoring and fuel consumption are to ensure EU Member States report consistently and accurately.
16. My Department is closely following the development of Euro 7 emissions regulations and has also strongly supported and contributed to the transposition of Euro 7 requirements into harmonised UN Regulations at the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. As in other areas my Department will continue to monitor developments in these areas, in line with the Government's presumption of alignment with EU type-approval requirements for road vehicles, and aims to consult later this year on proposals for implementation in Great Britain.
17. The repeal of Council Directive 70/157/EEC and Regulation No 540/2014 is a result of those instruments being superseded by internationally harmonised UN Regulations 51, 59 and 138 which cover the same technical requirements, including for AVAS. The EU already accepts approvals to these UN Regulations as alternatives, and this change reflects the increasing use of them by manufacturers for approval under the EU scheme. The UK is signatory to the same UN Regulations and already accepts approvals to them under the GB type-approval scheme; as a result no divergence between Great Britain and Northern Ireland is expected.
18. There is no effect on Northern Ireland's participation in the UK's free trade agreements as the automotive elements of such agreements are based on the recognition of international UN Regulations where available.

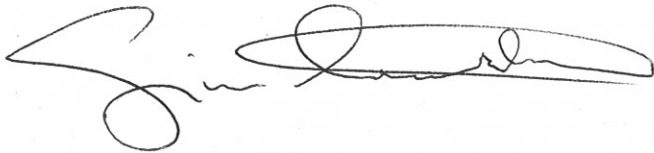
19. There is no effect on Northern Ireland's participation in the UK's Common Frameworks.
20. Other than the amendment to Regulation (EC) No 561/2006, which is not included in the Windsor Framework, the proposed amendments are to legislation in scope of the Windsor Framework and will apply directly in Northern Ireland, no further legislation is required.

CONSULTATION

21. The motor vehicle manufacturing industry were consulted by the European Commission during the development of these measures. The Commission prepared impact assessments for the Regulations these proposals will amend, but it has not prepared a formal impact assessment for this proposal.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no financial implications for the UK.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Lightwood', written in a cursive style.

Simon Lightwood MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport