

Increasing the efficiency of road transport in Europe - Proposal: international Periodic Technical Inspection (PTI)

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Project genesis

The roadworthiness test for trucks and trailers is a mandatory safety inspection required by every EU member state and must be conducted in the country of registration. Transport equipment operating internationally needs to be routed back to the country of registration for this annual test.

To comply with the regulations, drivers are forced to drive unnecessary kilometres. This has negative environmental and financial impacts, on top of negatively affecting traffic flow.

The Dutch Government is the only one in Europe to allow roadworthiness tests to be performed outside Dutch borders, specifically in Belgium and in Spain, since 2010. With the European-type approval system already in place for cars, trucks and trailers there is a good base to harmonise the annual testing protocols among European countries. This is common practise in the railway industry for many years.

To protect the environment, increase road safety and flexibility, and reduce costs, the European Transport Board and its partners would like to trial the inspection of Dutch-registered trailers in other EU member states, carrying out the mandatory safety inspection at a location closer to the current trailer location.

This project is supported by:

- Technical Road Transport Association (TRTA)
- DSV
- TIP Trailer Services
- Transport en Logistiek Nederland (TLN)

The enormous environmental impact of national PTI

A tractor can be driven independently with a driver, but a trailer cannot. A semi-trailer can only be moved with a tractor. However, trailers are rarely located in the country where the mandatory annual technical inspection must be done, which forces a driver to move it with or without a freight on it.

Also, with the Mobility Package regulation, since February 2022 trucks are required to return to their place of registration every eight weeks. The consequences are that these resources will be removed from the supply chains, while increasing the carbon emissions.

TRTA has simulated the calculations on the Dutch & European trailer park: 14,551,200 empty kilometres are driven each year by approximately 141,000 trailers, to carry out the inspection in the Netherlands. It is equivalent to 6,170,000 kilograms of CO₂, with an extra congestion of 1,692km.

In Europe, excluding the United Kingdom, the figures are obviously even more impressive. Approximately 1,836,000 trailers drive 189,475,200 kilometres without freight or cargo, creating an extra congestion of 22,032km, for timely inspection only. The ecological impact is disastrous: these kilometres emit 80,330,000kg of CO₂!

When the ETB conducted a survey among its members in 2007, the figures were already alarming:

- 2,190,000 road kilometres without freight or cargo, for timely inspection only
- Extra CO₂ impact 928,000kg
- Extra congestion 219km

We are convinced that allowing trailer inspection across Europe, regardless of the country of registration, will lead to significant benefits for both the planet and the industry. There is an urgent need to take actions, to reverse the impact of carbon emissions on climate change.

Benefits of a European recognition of roadworthiness tests

Among European countries, MOT inspection can be done differently, from the requirements to the method of assessing it. However, vehicles are becoming smarter and smarter.

Nowadays, it is very easy to track the health of a vehicle and monitor it thanks to real-time data. These data will play a major role in the future of the periodic inspection in EU member states, where we can expect to have an harmonisation of testing standards and the mutual recognition of roadworthiness tests on the continent.

We see an incredible value of having a European recognition of roadworthiness tests. There is no doubt that it will make safety roadside check easier, but also reduce road congestion, CO₂ emissions and cost.