



HARMONIZED SYSTEM
REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

NR0151E1

-
23rd Session
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O. Eng.

Brussels, 19 February 2001.

STUDY WITH A VIEW TO AMENDING THE STRUCTURE OF CHAPTER 87

(Item III.10 on Agenda)

Reference documents :

NC0056E1 (HSC/23)	NC0234E1 (HSC/25)
NC0145E1 (HSC/24)	NC0250E2, Annexes H/15 and IJ/16 (HSC/25 – Report)
NC0160E2, Annex H/7 (HSC/24 – Report)	NC0290E1 (HSC/26)
NC0162E1 (HSC/24)	NC0340E2, Annexes G/8 and G/21 (HSC/26 – Report)
NC0227E1 (HSC/25)	NR0145E1 (RSC/23)

I. BACKGROUND

1. After the preparation of Doc. NR0145E1, the Secretariat received the following note from the Canadian Administration on 1 February 2001.

II. NOTE FROM CANADA

2. “Heading 87.02 provides for vehicles for the transport of ten or more persons including the driver. The vehicles generally associated with this heading are transit buses and motor coaches, for public transport. Heading 87.03 covers the remaining passenger vehicles, the vast majority of which are personal passenger vehicles with a seating capacity ranging from four to eight persons (including the driver). There are no problems in distinguishing between these two types of motor vehicles.
3. The problem arises in the case of a very narrow range of vehicles such as large vans and minibuses. Depending on the final configuration of the vehicle interior, the seating capacity can range from eight to fourteen persons. In the North American motor vehicle industry, various types of vans and minibuses are manufactured on the “standard platform”. The standard platform consists of a complete chassis, body and most external fittings and is used as the basis for an entire range of vehicle types. Based on the customer’s requirements, the interior of the vehicle can be configured for up to 14 persons. The standard platform approach provides the industry with the flexibility to offer a wide range of vehicle configurations and applications while retaining economies of scale.

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4. The situation is further complicated by temporary or additional seating options. In some cases, vehicles may have a fixed seating capacity for under ten persons with an area for the transport of luggage and other goods situated in the rear. As an option, a vehicle can have foldout seats or benches. This provides for additional temporary seating when the rear area is not being utilized for luggage or other goods.
5. Within the design envelope, space allocation for passenger seating reflects market biases and norms. In some markets there is a premium placed on passenger comfort. This results in a larger per capita passenger space requirement and seat size. In other markets, there may be a lesser emphasis on comfort, which in turn results in lower per capita passenger space and seat size requirements.
6. Human beings do not come in a single standard size. In areas where persons are small in stature, there is a lower requirement for seat size or passenger space. Conversely, in areas where persons are bigger, the space requirements are proportionately greater.
7. Such physical and cultural requirements are taken into account by motor vehicle manufacturers in the design of vehicles for specific markets. It would therefore be unrealistic to apply a universal standard for either seat size or passenger space.
8. The policy of the Canadian Administration has been to classify these motor vehicles on the basis of the total number of fixed and foldout seats as specified in the design envelope of the vehicle. To date there has been no need to specify the weight or height of an adult person or a standard seat size.
9. In view of the foregoing, the Canadian Administration believes that there is no need to create a new heading that would account for vehicles which may be classified either in heading 87.02 or 87.03. The line of demarcation between the vehicles of these headings is clear, adequate and based on objective criteria. The addition of a new heading for intermediate vehicles or any attempt to add dimensions to seat sizes would only serve to complicate the situation unnecessarily.”

III. CONCLUSION

10. The Sub-Committee is invited to take the above Canadian comments into account while discussing this agenda item.
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