

SWOV-VVN visit to Czech Republic

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Report on the visit of a SWOV-VVN delegation to the Czech Republic on June 24th and 25th 1993

1. Headlines

The delegation, Mr. P. Wesemann, research manager SWOV, Mr. R. Wittink, project manager education SWOV and Mr. J. Goos, director VVN, was the guest of the Czech Governmental Council for Road Safety, BESIP.

Visits were made to the Karl University in Prague for a meeting with ten education specialists, to the Ministry of Transport, to Technical University in Prague and to the Research Institute on Road and Urban Transport USMD. Also a visit was made to the Auto Saloon in Prague, especially to the representation of BESIP at this exhibition.

Mr. J. Horin of BESIP organized most of the meetings and accompanied us with his colleague mr. K. Pospisil. We also met mr. V. Spicka, General Director of the Czech Governmental Council for Road Safety.

At the Ministry of Transport, we were received by Mr. E. Prediger. From the Highway Fund Administration, Mr. J. Svarc and Mr. Z. Valach were present. Mr. J. Mikulik, director of the Transport Research Centre in Brno represented his institute and the meeting was also attended by Mr. P. Karlicky, who we met at the Technical University of Prague. At the Research Institute of Road and Urban Transport USMD, we were the guest of Mr. F. Hajek, mr. E. Bakalar and Mrs. V. Rehnova.

2. Elaboration

At the Karl University, a discussion about education programmes took place with representatives from all over the country. They do research or were representing teachers of

several school levels. They cooperate in a working group, headed by Mrs. E. Papezova of the Karl University.

An important subject is the training of teachers and of driver instructors.

Education programmes start with toddlers, teaching them to cross the street as pedestrian. In the third class of primary school the children are prepared for a certificate as pedestrian. (At the end of the day we visited an automobile exposition where BESIP was represented. There we were shown a highly sophisticated computer programme to teach small children how to go to school). In the tenth class children are prepared for a certificate as cyclist. Traffic safety education is integrated in different school courses. Competitions are organised.

At secondary school, pupils can take theoretical lessons in preparation of a driver licence. Practical lessons are organised in cooperation with professional instructors. Lessons within schools pay more attention to safety than lessons in a driving school. Technical and agricultural schools have their own driver instruction.

At secondary school there are no lessons any more about cycling.

BESIP provides funds for the development and production of programmes. The Ministry of Education does not feel responsible for traffic education.

A discussion was raised about the formulation of educational goals and the evaluation of programmes. There is need to involve parents in the teaching and training of children. After a short introduction about the road safety education in the Netherlands, the need for further exchange of expertise and materials has been expressed. As a specific problem discotheque-accidents were mentioned.

At the Technical University Mr. Karlicky expressed the need for international cooperation and exchange of expertise with regard to highway engineering. Mr. Karlicky would be willing to participate in projects SWOV could carry out when ordered

by the Czech Republic and funds will be provided by international funds. He is also willing to participate in a panel group of specialists in Central and Eastern Europe SWOV is assembling to develop a manual for low cost engineering measures.

At the meeting in the Ministry of Transport, three proposals of SWOV were discussed that could be subjects for coöperation with the Czech Republic.

The first proposal is directed at the development of a National Road Safety Plan. Mr. Prediger explained that at this moment there are not many possibilities to finance research. He gave high priority to legislation and regulations regarding roads.

BESIP pointed at their recently approved "System Programme for increasing the Road Traffic Safety".

The second proposal is directed at legislation on driver behaviour, enforcement and information. Here again much interest was paid to legislation. A fundamental revision of Road Traffic Law is to be foreseen. More specific measures are needed with regard to speed and cyclists.

SWOV stressed the importance of the international survey on road safety attitudes of car drivers SARTRE, in which Czechoslovakia took part. The results could be used as a basis for measures to stimulate public acceptance of measures.

The third proposal is directed at low-cost infrastructural road safety measures. SWOV already started a project that incorporates several countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Mr. Karlicky and Mr. Mikulik both accepted to be member of the panel of the current project, that is led by Mr. P. Slop of SWOV. They will receive more information from him. Mr. Mikulik said he had developed a manual on these kind of measures and that since 1985 a black spot programme has been in operation. Another expert is Mr. Zeleny from the Economic University, Faculty of Logistics.

It was decided that a report of the discussion would be made in the Netherlands as well as by the Czech hosts. Mr Mikulik

said he would send information about his institute. SWOV promised to react on actual plans in the Czech Republic and to elaborate on research proposals. These initiatives should lead to further contacts, on invitation of SWOV in the Netherlands. On that basis possibilities will be searched for coöperation and for financial support. Mr. Svarc's experiences with PHARE however gave little hope until now. Mr. Horin said he would take initiatives for an agreement on coöperation between the two countries.

At USMD Mr. Hajek explained that USMD is a private institute now. The German company Dekra possesses 48% of the shares. USMD was founded 25 years ago and the Austrian research institute KfV was taken as the example. USMD was in those days a coordinating institute for Road Safety Research within the Ministry of Transport, mainly financed by the Ministry of Science.

Type approval of new cars and safety devices and periodical technical inspections of cars after some years are nowadays an important part of the work of USMD. Transit traffic is a main problem in the Czech Republic, with 400000 trucks yearly. In cooperation with the Ministry of Environment, foreign truck drivers receive information about routes, e.g. for dangerous goods. Instruction of truck drivers and licensing for dangerous goods transport are other tasks of USMD.

Mr. E. Bakalar and Mrs. V. Rehnova explained their work on psychological tests of drivers, at most professional drivers. Approx. 7 % of the drivers do not receive a licence on the basis of these tests. USMD carried out a research project on the hangover effects of alcohol, ordered by BESIP. They do not carry out research on traffic behaviour at this moment.

This report will be send to:

Mr. V. Spicka, Mr. J. Horin and mr. K. Pospisil of the Czech Governmental Council for Road Safety BESIP;
Mr. E. Prediger of the Ministry of Transport;

Mr. J. Svarc and Mr. Z. Valach of the Highway Fund Administration;

Mrs. E. Papezova of the Karl University;

Mr. J. Mikulik, from the Transport Research Centre in Brno;

Mr. P. Karlicky, from the Technical University of Prague.

Mr. F. Hajek, mr. E. Bakalar and Mrs. V. Rehnova from the Research Institute of Road and Urban Transport USMD.

Mr. J. Kalhorn, Counsellor for Transport, Public Works and Water Management at the Dutch Embassy in Budapest and Prague;

Mr. J. Goos, VVN, Hilversum, the Netherlands;

Mr. J. Busstra, Directorate of Traffic Safety of the Dutch Ministry of Transport and Water Management.