

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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SECOND REPORT

ON

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH HAVE JUSTIFIED
THE DEROGATION ACCORDED TO IRELAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM
AS REGARDS CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF DIRECTIVE 85/3
ON THE WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

PROPOSAL

FOR

A DIRECTIVE AMENDING DIRECTIVE 85/3
ON THE WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS AND CERTAIN OTHER TECHNICAL
CHARACTERISTICS OF CERTAIN ROAD VEHICLES

(presented by the Commission)

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SUMMARY

This report deals with the circumstances justifying a derogation accorded to Ireland and the United Kingdom as regards certain maximum permitted weights in international traffic as laid down in Directive 85/3 and its amendment.

The duration of these derogations is to be determined on the basis of a technical analysis of the situation of the infrastructure in both countries and on the basis of the consequences of the implementation of all weight limits of Directive 85/3 in these countries.

The starting point for this report is the technical conclusions of the earlier Commission report (COM(87)34) on the quality of standards of design and assessment which are currently applied in Ireland and UK.

These technical conclusions and the additional statistical information provided since then, lead to the following conclusions:

In the case of the United Kingdom and Ireland sufficient data have now been collected on estimates to enable a definite time limit to be fixed for the derogations in question.

The time limit in both cases should be long enough to allow for the completion of surveys aimed at the identification of individual bridges which are below the load-bearing standards and to allow for the strengthening of the most important bridges on principal roads.

The time limit should not, however, be fixed so as to allow the last sub-standard bridge to be strengthened. Safety objectives can be protected, following the ending of the derogation, by individual weight restrictions where necessary.

The time limit should be fixed in taking account of the fact that the work of strengthening sub-standard bridges can in part be carried on in parallel to the work of identification.

Taking these points into account, the Commission believes that both derogations should be brought to an end on 31 December 1996, which would be twelve years after they were granted.

SECOND REPORT BY THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

on

the development of the circumstances which have justified the derogation accorded to Ireland and the United Kingdom as regards certain provisions of Directive 85/3 on the weights and dimensions of commercial vehicles

1. Introduction

1.1. Reason for the report

Article 8 of Council Directive 85/3/EEC on the weights, dimensions and certain other technical characteristics of certain road vehicles, as amended by Directives 86/360/EEC and 88/218/EEC, provides a temporary derogation to Ireland and the United Kingdom in respect of the following points:

- a) the total laden weights of 5 and 6 axle road trains in these Member States need not exceed 32,5 tonnes and those of 5 and 6 axle articulated vehicles need not exceed 38 tonnes, whilst the Directive allows 40 tonnes in general and up to 44 tonnes for certain articulated vehicles carrying a 40ft ISO container in a combined transport operation;
- b) the sum of the axle weights per tri-axle need not exceed 22,5 tonnes if the distance between the axles is over 1,3 and up to 1,4 m, whilst the Directive allows 24 tonnes;
- c) the weight per drive axle need not exceed 10,5 tonnes, whilst the Directive allows 11,5 tonnes (as from 1 January 1992).

Article 8 further specifies that the Commission should submit a report to the Council on the development of the circumstances which have justified these derogations by 30.6.1986 concerning points a and b and by 30.12.1987 concerning point c. These reports should be accompanied by proposals concerning the duration of these derogations and procedures for periodic reviews of all circumstances justifying the continuation of these derogations.

1.2. The first Commission report (COM(87)34)

In February 1987 the first report of the Commission on the UK and Irish infrastructure was transmitted to the Council (COM(87)34). It was the result of preliminary investigations made by the Commission on this subject.

As the subject concerns the condition of a total stock of more than 100.000 bridges, information from national authorities was essential. First information was only obtained in June 1986 and was rather global. Therefore it was impossible for the Commission to present a full report accompanied by a proposal at that time.

On the basis of the information available and comparative calculations the report concluded as follows :

- Design standards for bridges in UK and Ireland are similar to those in the other Member States of the Community. Modern bridges in both countries are, therefore, sufficiently strong to carry the EC maximum authorized weights.

- Older bridges that were assessed according to the standards of the UK assessment code BD 21/84 are equivalent to bridges in other Member States that carry the EC maximum authorized weights.

- As only a small proportion of old bridges in UK and Ireland were assessed at that time, a strategic plan of assessment and possible strengthening should be drawn up in order to enable the Commission to make a proposal.

1.3. Additional information on Irish and UK bridges

After the transmission of the first report of the Commission the following additional information was officially provided by the Irish and UK authorities:

- November 1987

The assessment of highway bridges and structures
Bridge Census and Sample Survey
(publication of Department of Transport UK)

- December 1987

Interim classification of road bridges in Ireland

- July 1988

Report on inspection assessment and rehabilitation
of masonry arch bridges
(publication of the Department of Environment
Ireland)

More detailed information about the condition of bridges and strategic planning would have been useful and will certainly appear in the future. However, the latest figures provided by the Member States have enabled the Commission to draw a number of conclusions in the technical field.

The proposal of the Commission on the duration of the derogation is based on these technical considerations.

1.4. Scope of the report

The reasons for the Irish and British derogation on weights are given in the preamble to the Directive and concern the conditions of the road network in these Member States.

Higher vehicle weights may have the following major impacts on the road network:

- faster deterioration of the roads,
- higher loads on bridges which lead to faster deterioration and higher risks of exceeding the bearing capacity.

The deterioration of roads caused by heavy vehicles is mainly an economic problem. An assessment can be made of the total effect on the roads of heavier vehicles, fewer of which will be required to carry the same tonnage of goods.

In January 1980 the UK Department of Transport published a report on the effects of the increase of the permitted weight from 32,5 to 38 tonnes for articulated vehicles. The calculations in that report show that, whilst 38 tonne vehicles with 5 axles are individually no more damaging than 32,5 tonne vehicles with 4 axles, 20% fewer 38 tonne vehicles are required for the same transport job.

On-going research in several European laboratories, now coordinated in a joint research programme by the OECD, cofinanced by the Community and several Member States, aims at a verification of the theories on the relation between road damage and axle weights. Results in individual laboratories have already demonstrated that the relation as described in the so-called 4th power law cannot universally be applied.

The deterioration of roads caused by heavier axles will be much less serious if the road is well maintained. Acceptance of higher loads in the roads causes costs (road maintenance) and benefits (efficient transport) which are sometimes difficult to assess and to compare but it remains an economic decision. Higher loads on bridge, however, involve safety aspects on which a decision is more difficult to make. Therefore, since bridges are the most important obstacle to an overall harmonization of weights, this report like COM(87)34 concentrates on bridges.

The derogations for UK and Ireland concern the total weight of the vehicles, the individual axle weights and the tri-axle.

Theoretically it is quite possible to calculate axle configurations for 40 or 44 tonne vehicles which would have no greater impact on the bridges than the currently permitted 38 tonnes artic or 3 or 4 axle rigid vehicles in UK and Ireland.

It may also be the case that an increase of permitted vehicle weights to EC limits affects short span bridges more than long span bridges.

Nevertheless such technical considerations have not been made in this report because it serves no purpose to define different durations for the derogations that were granted as no axle configuration can be excluded and the different types of bridges exist on all categories of roads.

So, on the basis of the technical analysis of the British standards as made in COM(87)34, this report deals with the consequences of the introduction of all EC vehicle limits for the existing bridges in Ireland and UK.

1.5. Structure of the report

In Chapter 2 the actual situation in UK is further analyzed on basis of all the information that has been made available to the Commission until now. Following this analysis conclusions are drawn as regards a reasonable duration of the derogation on technical grounds.

The same procedure is followed in Chapter 3 for Ireland.

Chapter 4 concludes with the consequences of the technical findings of chapters 2 and 3 for Community legislation as laid down in Article 8 of Directive 85/3.

2. Analysis of situation in the UK

2.1. Introduction

In Commission report COM(87)34 a technical analysis was made of the latest assessment standard used in the United Kingdom: standard BD 21/84. This code was introduced in 1984 to bring the standards in line with vehicle weights of 38 tonnes and axle weights of 10,5 tonnes. However, a comparison of this code with modern design standards for bridges in 4 other Member States that allow the EC vehicle weights, concludes that bridges that meet the assessment standards of BD 21/84 are equivalent to the bridges in the other Member States.

This conclusion is the starting point for the analysis of the actual situation as given hereunder.

2.2. Total of bridges in the UK

Table 1 shows the estimation of the total UK road bridge numbers as given in 1986.

Owner	Country	Number
DTP	England) Wales) Scotland)	11.400
Local Government	N Ireland (all bridges)	8.100
+ BR (1) & LRT (2) + BWB (3)	England Wales Scotland	77.200
Total		96.700

Table 1: Numbers of UK Road Bridges

- (1) British Railways
- (2) London Regional Transport
- (3) British Waterways Board

2.3. The report "Bridge Census and Sample Survey"

At the time of publication of BD 21/84 it was anticipated that a large number of structures would be affected by the code, but there was no reliable estimate of the number involved, nor of how many would fail to meet the standards in the code.

The report "Bridge Census and Sample Survey" describes a sample survey by public road bridge owners in the United Kingdom to provide these estimates.

Although the study has been co-ordinated by DTp, it does not include the bridges owned by DTp, but covers those owned by local authorities, British Rail, British Waterways and London Transport.

Many bridges listed in Table 1 have not been included in the census since they were built according to modern standards and are sufficiently strong. A broad definition of the coverage is: bridges over 1.5 metres in span, either (a) built before 1922, or (b) built since 1922 but not known to have been designed to carry at least 30 units of HB loading (*) (which could include bridges built up to the early 1960's). This means that the study was limited to the categories of bridges which are "suspect" according to a classification which is in line with the request of the Commission in report COM(87)34.

The study took place in two phases. Firstly a census, to establish how many bridges were likely to be affected by the new code, and then a sample survey of about 560 bridges to assess their load-carrying capacity.

2.4. Census

All owners completed a census return giving the numbers of bridges that they owned which complied with the guidelines. These were broken down into principle material used, date of construction, and class of road carried by the bridge. Table 2 shows the total number of bridges in the United Kingdom for each type of material.

(*) See report COM(87)34.

Table 2: United Kingdom census totals by material of "suspect" bridges which are not owned by DTp including Northern Ireland.

Materials	Number
Masonry	34 901
Concrete	10 372
Metal	7 909
Other	989
All Materials	54 171

As the total number of non DTp bridges is estimated to be 85.300 this results confirms the preliminary conclusions of the first Commission report that about 2/3 of the bridges needed to be assessed.

2.5. Sample Survey

The sample survey was designed with the intention of providing overall estimates of the number of sub-standard bridges and of the cost of strengthening them. In addition information was gathered about traffic flows and diversion distances, so that estimates could be made of the proportions of bridges for which some action other than strengthening, such as weight restriction, might be more economic, so giving an alternative, lower, estimate of the total cost.

Most of the assessments have been done using simple and hence conservative methods of analysis (e.g. MEXE method see COM(87)34). The implications for the sample survey as a whole are that there will be a tendency to overestimate the number of bridges needing strengthening.

Table 3 shows the estimated proportions of bridges which are sub-standard.

Table 3: Proportions of bridges below standard

Materials	Best estimate
Masonry	0.10
Concrete	0.35
Metal	0.66

2.6. Estimation of the numbers of sub-standard non DTP bridges

Applying the proportion of bridges below standard of 2.5. to the census returns of 2.4. gives the estimated numbers of sub-standard bridges in UK shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Estimated totals of sub-standard non DTP bridges in UK

Materials	Estimate
Masonry	2 800
Concrete	3 330
Metal	5 130
All Materials	11 260

However, on the basis the DTP report, tables showing more specific information can be drawn up allowing a further analysis of the situation.

Firstly table 5 shows the totals by road class and material.

Roughly 1 in 4 of the "suspect" bridges owned by local authorities, British Rail or British Waterways are situated on principal roads. Obviously these roads are the most important for international and national traffic flows.

Table 5: Census totals by road class and material

Owner	Principal roads					Other roads					Grand Total
	Mas.	Conc.	Met.	Oth.	Total	Mas.	Conc.	Met.	Oth.	Total	
Total	6705	2843	2213	147	11908	28196	7529	5696	842	42263	54171

Legend : Mas. - Masonry (Brick and Stone)
 Conc. - Concrete
 Met. - Metal
 Oth. - Other

Secondly table 6 gives more detailed figures about the assessed bearing capacity as found in the sample survey.

Table 6 : Sample by material and assessed capacity

Assessed Capacity	Masonry		Concrete		Metal	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
7.5t or less	6	2	41	24	65	52
more than 7.5t but less than 38t	20	8	18	11	16	13
38t or more (BD 21/84)	237	90	110	65	43	35
Total	263	100	169	100	124	100

As argued above, the assessment methods used (MEXE) will lead to a rather pessimistic view of the situation.

Nevertheless table 6 makes it clear that of the bridges that were assessed below standard BD 21/84 the concrete and metal structures in particular are not just a little too weak but that they are assessed only for 7.5 tonnes or less. This means that those bridges are far below the level which is needed to carry current British vehicle weights.

Applying the percentages of table 6 to the total numbers of sub-standard bridges gives table 7.

Table 7 : Estimated totals of sub-standard non DTP bridges by assessed capacity

	7.5t or less	between 7.5t and 38t	Total
Masonry	650	2150	2800
Concrete	2310	1020	3330
Metal	4120	1010	5130
	<u>7080</u>	<u>4180</u>	<u>11260</u>

It is obvious that this table indeed reflects a serious infrastructure problem in Great Britain.

However, it is hard to believe that more than 7000 bridges with a bearing capacity of 7.5 tonnes or less are regularly used by lorries with a total weight of 38 tonnes or a tri-axle weight of 22.5 tonnes as allowed under current British legislation. It is most likely that these bridges are situated on places where these vehicles do not pass or that these bridges already have weight restrictions now.

The more than 4000 bridges of mediocre quality are more difficult to identify and may represent a more serious hidden problem if vehicle weight limits are raised to the EC level.

A speedy identification of these problem cases is needed not only for the implementation of EC vehicle standard but also for the sake of safety in the UK.

2.7. Bridges under the authority of DTp

The total of bridges owned by the central government (except bridges in Northern Ireland) is estimated to be 11400.

According to the information provided by the UK authorities, the numbers of bridges on motorways and other trunk roads in the "suspect" category owned by the DTp are around 2000 in England and 1000 in Wales and Scotland. These are important bridges for the British road infrastructure.

At present a systematic assessment of these bridges is taking place in order to provide the competent authorities with detailed information for a strengthening programme or temporary weight restrictions.

This assessment is scheduled to be finished within 3-5 years.

It is very likely that these DTp bridges which are at present used by all heavy UK traffic are in a much better condition than the bridges owned by local authorities.

However, no further details about the expected results of the DTp assessment could be provided at present.

Therefore the following assumptions are made:

- Bridges with the very low bearing capacity of 7,5 tonnes or less are not included in the category of "suspect" DTp bridges.
- Bridges that have a medium bearing capacity (7,5 - 38 tonnes) figure in the category of "suspect" DTp bridges in the same proportion as found for non DTp bridges.

2.8. Recapitulation

The foregoing considerations on the situation of the UK bridges are reflected in Table 8.

Table 8: Quality of bridges in UK (round figures)

Owner	I Total	II suspect	III estimation sub-standard	IVA very sub- standard 7.5t or less	IVB sub-standard between 7.5 and 38t
DTP	11400	3000	230	-	230*
non DTP (incl.all bridges in N IRL	85300	54171	11260	7080	4180
Total	96700	57171	11490	7080	4410
% of total	100%	58%	12%	7.3%	5%

* Estimated to be the same proportion of column II as for non DTP bridges.

As argued in par. 2.6 it is assumed that bridges in column IVA are not used by heavy lorries. If they are, even occasionally, then they should be reinforced or restricted immediately but it is hard to claim that an increase of vehicle weights up to the EC limits will affect this category.

Column IVB (5% of the total UK bridge stock) represents in reality the UK problem with accepting EC vehicle weights.

As for the figure of 5% the following observations can be made:

- As demonstrated by Table 5 only 1 to 4 of the non DTP bridges are on principal roads. If we apply this estimate conservatively to the figures of column IVB then the result is that less than 2% of the bridges on trunk roads and principal roads will need strengthening to carry the EC vehicle weights safely.
- It is not realistic to maintain a general derogation for a whole network of infrastructure until the rehabilitation of the last bridge has been finished. It is possible to allow industrial traffic to circulate if 5% of the bridges that could be used are weight restricted, all the more so if this means a weight restriction on only 2% of the bridges on trunk roads and principal roads.

The above observations lead to the following conclusions:

The technical justification for the UK derogation in Directive 85/3 will not remain valid until all bridges have been strengthened but will be valid at least until the 5% of weak bridges has been identified.

The identification of the weak DTP bridges will be finished in 3-5 years. In tandem with this assessment the strengthening of the most critical cases will be begun.

On a local level assessment takes place but there is no overall planning. Nevertheless at least for principal roads a similar schema for non DTP bridges seems to be reasonable. This implies that within a comparatively short period following the end of the process of identification of 3-5 years all bridges on trunk and principal roads will have been either strengthened to the required standard or, if not, could be individually weight restricted. From that point there would no longer be a technical justification for a general weight restriction in the UK.

3. Analysis of the situation in Ireland

3.1. Introduction

Although in Directive 85/3 the same derogations were accorded to Ireland as to the United Kingdom the situation in both countries appears to be quite different.

The infrastructure of Ireland is much older and the network of national primary and secondary roads is limited (6% of the total length of all roads).

As regards the maximum authorized vehicle weights, the Irish legislation permits now a weight for 5-axle road trains of 38 tonnes which is equal to the maximum permitted weight for 5-axle articulated vehicles.

The UK still maintains 32,5 tonnes as a maximum for road trains according to the derogation in Directive 85/3.

It must be said that technically there is absolutely no justification for a lower limit for road trains than for articulated vehicles. Road trains are longer (18 m) so the distribution of the weight is even better. The Irish position on this issue is certainly more logical from the technical point of view.

3.2. Present situation in Ireland

In the first Commission report com(87)34, estimations were given of the Irish situation on basis of a limited sample survey of 113 bridges. In the conclusions a further classification was asked in order to be able to quantify the problem more precisely.

The Irish authorities have now surveyed 2500 of their bridges and they have established a computerized register to keep and analyse the bridge data. The survey is scheduled to be completed by the end of 1990.

Guidelines on repair and strengthening have been drawn up and circulated and an average of £ 2 million per annum was allocated to bridge strengthening in 1987 and 1988.

Though a strategic plan on strengthening, indicating a possible duration of Ireland's derogation has not yet been forwarded, the efforts described above give a more accurate picture of the situation.

Table 9 shows the interim classification of road bridges in Ireland.

Table 9

Interim classification of road bridges - Ireland	Number	% of all road bridges
1. Bridges not built according to known standards which have not yet been assessed	18600	93%
2. Bridges designed from 1922 - 1961 to carry HA loading whose capacity for HB loading has not been checked	800	4%
3. Bridges designed after 1961 to carry 45 or 37 1/2 HB units	600	3%
4. Bridges designed after 1982 to carry BS 5400 loads including assessment	70	-
Total road bridges (all classes)	20070	100%

Analysis of this table leads to the conclusion that the proportion of old bridges (mainly masonry arch) is very high.

These kinds of bridges not built according to known standards are difficult to assess. Therefore the on-going survey is mainly based on visual inspection and global calculations (MEXE method).

Nevertheless the results of the survey completed up till now confirm the initial conclusion of COM(87)34 that 35% of the suspect bridges will need strengthening before EC vehicle weights can safely be admitted.

Recapitulation of Irish situation

Total number of bridges	suspect	estimation sub-standard
20000	19400	7000
100%	97%	35%

The key issue is to identify the bridges which are not up to a sufficient load-bearing standard and strengthen the most important operating local weight restrictions on the remainder.

In the absence of strategic planning for the strengthening it is difficult for the Commission to estimate a realistic period for the derogation. However the following observations can be made:

- The end of the derogation should not coincide with the reinforcement of the last bridge in Ireland. A system of local weight restrictions could replace the general derogation when the rehabilitation of the most strategic bridges is completed. As the Directive 85/3 deals with international traffic the strengthening operation should be concentrated on national primary and secondary roads and on industrial areas in the first place.
- The costs of strengthening of a masonry arch bridge are difficult to estimate but the average costs will likely be not lower than £ 10,000. Spending £ 2 million a year would allow the strengthening of no more than 200 bridges.

It is obvious that the strengthening of even some of the 7000 bridges will not be finished within a reasonable period if no more money is allocated.

Allocation of more money is of course the responsibility of the Irish government however there is a strong argument for Community financial support in the framework of infrastructure programme. This view rests particularly on the fact that existence of Directives on weights and dimensions argue for the Community itself to assume a role in insuring that infrastructure is brought up to the common standards that are needed. In addition such action would assist in the process of harmonising transport conditions and increasing the efficiency of transport in the Community overall.

However even with much more money logistical problems will limit the number of bridges that can be strengthened in Ireland. Specialized contractors and engineers are needed for this work and it is not possible to repair many bridges in one area at the same time as reasonable traffic circulation should be maintained. The rehabilitation of 300 bridges a year seems to be a reasonable limit.

- Of the total road network 6% are national primary or secondary roads. Assuming that 25% of the Irish areas are frequently used by international heavy traffic, this means that the general derogation could be ended when about 30% (2100) of the sub-standard bridges have been strengthened.

- In view of these factors strengthening should be concentrated on primary and secondary national roads and industrial areas. The derogation should be ended when the strengthening of bridges in the areas and roads which are used by international traffic has been finished. Local weight restrictions, even for complete areas, should take the place of general restrictions.

4. Proposed duration of the derogations

The conclusion in the case of the United Kingdom and Ireland is that sufficient data have now been collected on estimates to enable a definite time limit to be fixed for the derogations in question.

The time limit in both cases should be long enough to allow for the completion of surveys aimed at the identification of individual bridges which are below the load-bearing standards and to allow for the strengthening of the most important bridges on principal roads.

The time limit should not, however, be fixed so as to allow the last sub-standard bridge to be strengthened. Safety objectives can be protected, following the ending of the derogation, by individual weight restrictions where necessary.

The time limit should be fixed in taking account of the fact that the work of strengthening sub-standard bridges can in part be carried on in parallel to the work of identification.

Taking these points into account, the Commission believes that both derogations should be brought to an end on 31 December 1996, which would be twelve years after they were granted.

PROPOSAL
FOR
A DIRECTIVE AMENDING DIRECTIVE 85/3
ON THE WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS AND CERTAIN OTHER TECHNICAL
CHARACTERISTICS OF CERTAIN ROAD VEHICLES

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 75 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

whereas Directive 85/3/EEC (1) as amended by Directive 88/218/EEC (2) lays down maximum authorized weights, dimensions and other technical characteristics of certain road vehicles;

whereas the state of certain portions of the road network in Ireland and the United Kingdom did not make it possible at the stage of adoption of Directive 85/3 and its amendments to apply all the provisions of this Directive;

whereas the application of some of these provisions in those Member States was therefore temporarily deferred under arrangements to be laid down by the Council in a decision to be taken at a later date;

(1) O.J. L 2 of 3.01.1985.

(2) O.J. L 98 of 15.04.1988.

whereas it was not yet possible to lay down those arrangements in Directive 85/3;

whereas the Commission transmitted on 4 February 1987 a first report to the Council (1) indicating that the bridges in Ireland and the United Kingdom which were built according to the design standards applied in those Member States are sufficiently strong to carry the maximum authorized weights of Directive 85/3;

whereas the Commission has asked in that report for a classification of all bridges in 7 defined classes followed by a strategic plan for the assessment and strengthening work to be done in order to enable the Commission to make a proposal concerning the duration of the derogation;

whereas on basis of the first report and the information provided since then, the Commission has drafted a second report, which deals with all derogations accorded to Ireland and UK in Directive 85/3 and its amendments;

whereas this report concludes that there will be no further justification for a general derogation once the sub-standard bridges have been identified and those on principal routes have been strengthened;

whereas bridges which still require strengthening after the end of the derogation could be covered by local restrictions but that there is then no justification for a further general derogation;

whereas, once safety considerations are met in this way, the full application of the provisions of Directive 85/3 will have beneficial effects on the operation of transport facilities,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE -

(1) COM(87)34 final.

Article 1

Directive 85/3/EEC is hereby amended as follows.

Article 8 is replaced by the following:

" The provisions of Article 3 as regards the standards referred to in points 2.2, 3.3.2 and 3.4 of Annex I shall not apply to the United Kingdom and Ireland until 31 December 1996.

However, the United Kingdom and Ireland shall apply until 31 December 1996 Article 3 to the articulated vehicles referred to in point 2.2.2 of Annex I where:

- the total laden weight does not exceed 38 tonnes,
- the weight on any tri-axle with the spacing specified in point 3.3.2 of Annex I does not exceed 22,5 tonnes

and to the combined vehicles referred to in point 2.2 of Annex I where the weight per driving axle does not exceed 10,5 tonnes."

Article 2

After consulting the Commission, Member States shall take the measures necessary to comply with this Directive not later than 1 July 1989.

Member States shall inform the Commission of the measures they take to implement this Directive.

Article 3

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels,

COMPETITIVE IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposal for a Directive annexed to the report amends Directive 85/3 on maximum permitted weights and dimensions of commercial vehicles. In Article 8 of this Directive a temporary derogation was accorded to the UK and Ireland as regards certain weight limits because of the condition of the infrastructure in those countries.

The proposed amendment of Directive 85/3 fixes a closing date for these derogations of 31 December 1996. As from this date vehicles in the UK and Ireland may circulate with the same weights as in the rest of the Community. As an example the maximum permitted total weight for articulated vehicles will be raised as from this date from 38 tonnes to 40 tonnes.

The impact on small and medium enterprises will be two fold :

- Enterprises in the UK and Ireland can operate under the same more economical conditions as in the other Member States.
- Lorries entering the territory of the UK and Ireland do not need to adapt their loading to the specific situation of these countries.

In general the impact of this measure will be positive for enterprises involved in transport in the whole Community.