

Stoneridge outlines EU tacho and driver law changes

Published by *Transport Operator* on November 1, 2020

Vehicle systems provider Stoneridge, Inc. has outlined some of the effects of the EU Mobility Package 1, adopted by the European Parliament earlier this year, and some of the ways in which it is designed to benefit HGV drivers.



The company says it remains committed to providing highly engineered compliance products for a safer, cleaner and fairer transport market with its smart tachograph suite of products.

“Over three phases, the legislation aims to improve road safety, create fair and consistent enforcement across road transport sectors, reduce road emissions, and encourage innovation and digitalisation,” said Stoneridge.

“The goal of the new EU Mobility Package 1 is to modernise the road transport sector by ensuring there are adequate working conditions put in place for drivers, and harmonising administrative requirements and access to the road transport market across EU countries – essentially making it quicker and easier to transport goods across borders.”

By 2026, tachographs will become mandatory for all light commercial vehicles between 2.5 tonnes to 3.5 tonnes, the company points out. Last year, Stoneridge successfully launched its most recent SE5000 Connekt Smart Tachograph with a dedicated short-range communications (DSRC) antenna and new test equipment, and reports that it saw strong demand in the market.

This year, Stoneridge, together with its UK distributor, Skillray, says it is actively working to meet retrofitting obligations following the development of the Stoneridge Smart Tachograph 2, in compliance with the European Commission’s technical specifications that are expected to be released by 2021.

The Smart Tachograph 2 will fulfill the legal requirements and simplify handling and regulated reporting, the company says.

It went on to highlight new incoming rules around driver wages.

“Each country in the EU has its own minimum or living wage laws; however, with the introduction of the new EU Mobility Package 1, it is now mandatory that the minimum wage for HGV drivers will be consistent across all EU countries.

“Therefore, if a transport company in Germany sends a driver to work in France, the German company must pay the driver at least minimum wage or the same as a local french driver would – giving drivers much fairer and consistent payment for their work across the EU.”

The new EU legislation also allows drivers a regular weekly rest period of more than 45 hours in suitable accommodation paid for by the transport company, adds Stoneridge.

“This ensures the driver’s safety and welfare are accounted for – especially on long haul trips. Drivers will also be entitled to a ‘cooling-off’ period of four days, protected by the new legislation after they return to the home state of the vehicle. On top of this, all vehicles must be returned to the company’s headquarters every eight weeks.”

With these new changes in place, it is critical that fleets and drivers utilise an efficient system to monitor hours of service and rest, the firm contends.

“Stoneridge’s Optac3 Tachograph Analysis software for fleets has been adapted to comply with these new regulations. The software automatically checks tachograph data against this new legislation and displays summaries and infringements in a clear, easy to understand format.”



Although there are strict rest period rules for drivers, says Stoneridge, the new EU Mobility Package 1 now gives drivers the right (and the choice) to return home to their country of origin every four weeks for each period of three or four consecutive working weeks.

“Long haul HGV drivers can spend long periods of time away from home, and so, this new legislation may give drivers the opportunity to see friends and family more,” said the company.

Along with initiatives launched by the European Commission in 2019, the Mobility Package also recognises the need for more safe and secure truck parking areas, Stoneridge explains.

“The legislation aims to build 100,000 new parking areas and improve upon existing rest areas, as some are insufficient and dangerous for the drivers. With few safe places to stop for rest, many drivers park on the hard shoulder or parking bays next to fast motorways.

“This is obviously very dangerous, and so this has highlighted a real need for safer parking areas for drivers to pull up to and rest.”

The company concluded: “The EU Mobility Package 1 regulations will apply from 2 February 2022; however, the rules on driver rest times and returning to their home country have already begun [as of] 20 August 2020.

“Stoneridge’s Optac3 fleet analysis software has been adapted to match the part of the new regulation that already entered into force.”

<http://transportoperator.co.uk/2020/11/01/stoneridge-outlines-eu-tacho-driver-law-changes/>