

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002378/26
to the Commission**

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(9 June 2026)

Subject: Application of tachograph rules in short-haul delivery transport and penalties for human error in record-keeping

The EU rules on driving time, rest periods and the tachograph system are designed to improve road safety, curb fatigue and prevent the manipulation of working hours.

Practical experience has shown, however, that the application of the rules to short-haul delivery transport has raised concerns about their proportionality and appropriateness.

Where distribution is concerned, frequent daily stops require constant changes to be made to the tachograph, and this increases the risk of human error in record-keeping. In practice, individual unintentional failures to mark the correct space could be treated in the same way as intentional breaches of driving times and rest periods.

This could result in disproportionate penalties, such as an increase in the risk rating and the threat of a transport licence being withdrawn, even if the actual driving time and workload were well within safe limits.

Furthermore, the current system does not fully take into account the specific characteristics of delivery transport, where work consists of short trips, frequent stops and load handling.

1. How suitable does the Commission think the tachograph system and the current rules on driving times and rest periods are for short-haul delivery transport, where stops are more frequent and work is more intermittent than in long-haul transport?
2. Does the Commission take the view that the current rules and the practices in place to enforce them draw enough of a distinction between intentional infringements and human errors in record-keeping, and is the Commission willing to assess the need to clarify or fine-tune the rules with a view to establishing proportionate enforcement practices for short-haul delivery transport?
3. Does the Commission intend to look into whether current tachograph technology, and the ways in which it is used, are sufficiently compatible with the ways in which modern urban and delivery transport actually operate?

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Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(21 August 2026)

The Commission takes note of the concerns raised regarding the application of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 ⁽¹⁾ and Regulation (EU) No 165/2014 ⁽²⁾ to short-haul delivery transport.

These acts aim to improve road safety and fair working conditions across all professional road transport, while allowing certain exemptions and derogations which Member States may use for specific categories of local operations under Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006.

Under Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 and Article 41 of Regulation (EU) No 165/2014, Member States lay down rules on penalties, which must be effective, proportionate, dissuasive and non-discriminatory.

Directive 2006/22/EC ⁽³⁾, including its Annex III, frames the seriousness of infringements. National authorities are responsible for risk-rating systems and for distinguishing between manipulations of the tachograph and inadvertent mistakes, subject to those EU-level requirements.

The Commission monitors the implementation of the social rules and tachograph legislation through regular reports, expert dialogue and the Tachograph Forum, and adopts and continues to review detailed technical specifications for smart tachographs under Regulation (EU) No 165/2014, including features intended to ease use, improve accuracy and support enforcement.

At this stage, however, the Commission has not been made aware, in this context, of particular issues arising from short-haul delivery transports, which are usually carried out by vehicles below 3.5 tonnes and therefore fall outside the scope of the relevant EU rules when undertaken in domestic transport.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2006/561/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2014/165/oj/eng>.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2006/22/oj/eng>.