RESOLUTION No. 94/2 ON ACCESS TO TAXIS FOR PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY

[CEMT/CM(94)8]

The Council of Ministers of the ECMT, meeting in Annecy on 26th and 27th May 1994,

CONSIDERING:

-- that taxis are an integral part of public transport systems in general and are in particular an important link in the accessible transport chain;

-- that taxis are unique in being able to provide a 24 hour on demand door-to-door transport service;

-- that in certain places taxis are the only available means of transport.

NOTING:

-- that with more accessible mainstream transport (bus, train etc.) being introduced, the complementary role of taxis in door-to-door transport will increase significantly;

-- that designing taxis with full access is more cost effective than adapting vehicles after construction;

-- that using accessible mainstream taxis to provide for people with mobility handicaps can be more cost effective and socially acceptable than providing separate, specialised taxi services and is often also more cost effective than specialised health and social services transport.

RECOGNISING:

-- that it is very important that all vehicles can provide easy access for the very large and growing number of people who are frail, elderly or have walking difficulty;

-- that there is no one universal solution to design/technical issues;

-- that taxi operators should not be put at a competitive disadvantage by a requirement to provide accessible taxis, either in terms of a higher purchase price for taxis or in a different exterior appearance;

-- that the use of information technology can increase the quality and cost-effectiveness of taxi booking and dispatch systems, particularly where the service to people with mobility handicaps is integrated within general taxi operations;
-- that in areas where a significant proportion of taxi use is through on-street hailing or where standardised vehicle fleets are required, there is a strong case for all taxis to be capable of carrying a person in a wheelchair;

-- that in areas where taxi hire is predominantly by means of telephone booking or at taxi ranks, the needs of wheelchair users may be met by a proportion of the taxi fleet (to be determined in the light of local circumstances);

-- that the long term objective should be to achieve fully satisfactory access for people who use ISO wheelchairs;

-- that in both the short and long term, design features such as swivel seats, adequate door apertures, handholds, colour contrasts, etc. make an important contribution to improving access for all users.

RECOMMENDS:

-- that vehicle manufacturers and designers should be encouraged in so far as is possible by governments to address accessibility in the design of all taxis;

-- governments should encourage regional and local authorities to secure the provision of accessible services in their areas;

-- that design parameters for accessible taxis (based on ISO wheelchair standards) should be drawn up by governments, in consultation with industry and with people with mobility handicaps and agreed at European level;

-- that governments should take the lead in gathering and disseminating data essential for the development of accessible taxis (e.g. vehicle and equipment availability, ergonomic and human factors data, operational and training guidelines);

-- that disability awareness programmes for training taxi drivers be drawn up by appropriate authorities involving, in all cases, people with mobility handicaps;

-- that appropriate authorities should take steps to ensure that no barriers (physical or regulatory) should bar taxis which provide a service for people with mobility handicaps from public areas, railway stations, airports etc.;

-- that governments at national, regional and local levels as appropriate should investigate the need for direct and indirect subsidies to enable people with mobility handicaps to make use of taxis where there is no accessible alternative. In this context, governments should take account of the wider economic and social benefits of providing mobility;

-- that governments (national, regional and local) should consider the possibility of incentives (financial and/or legislative) to encourage the purchase and operation of accessible vehicles.

INSTRUCTS the Committee of Deputies to work with appropriate international organisations including the IRU to implement these recommendations and to report back in due course.