

**CITA**

**INTERNATIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION COMMITTEE**

*Her Excellency  
The State Secretary of Transport  
Engineer Ana Paula Vitorino*

*Closing Speech*

*2008 CITA Conference  
Vehicle Inspections “Win/ Win Approaches”*

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Mr. President of CITA – International Motor Vehicle Committee,

Mr. President of IMTT,

Mr. President of ANCIA,

Dear Lecturers,

Dear Madams, Dear Sirs,

Firstly, I address a word of thanks to ANCIA for the invitation to participate in the Closing Session of the International CITA Conference 2008, whose main theme is Vehicle inspections “Win/ Win Approaches”.

I also want to wish all international participants a pleasant stay in Portugal hoping that it has lived to your highest expectations and demonstrate in the name of the Government the will to see again as soon as possible the organization of other such events in our country.

Allow me a previous word of recognition and appreciation to CITA, and to all of those who have contributed for the accomplishment of this initiative in Portugal, for the opportunity and actualness of the debated theme, which, I’m sure will contribute to an objective that belongs to us all: to guarantee a vehicle inspection system that has quality and rigour contributing for the reduction of road casualties in Portugal and for the observance of the environmental goals assumed by Portugal within the Kyoto Protocol.

I also want to highlight the relevance for Portugal in putting together events such as this one, because of the opportunity to discuss and evaluate experiences, holding on to the good international practices and therefore improving all our abilities and knowledge so as to guarantee a consistent response, with quality, to the challenges imposed to the sector of vehicle technical inspections in Portugal.

CITA Conferences are, in fact, a forum of recognized importance to share and exchange relevant and necessary information in the field of vehicle technical inspections.

Dear Madams, Dear Sirs,

In a world where we are getting closer to one billion circulating vehicles, issues concerning road safety and environment protection assume a global dimension, whose resolution, apart from local specifications, can be found in the diversity of adopted solutions to carry out vehicle technical inspections, by the different States.

In Portugal, vehicle technical inspections started in a general way in 1994, and the State adopted the solution of resorting to inspection centres held by private entities that freely settled within the national territory.

For the above mentioned centres it was settled, as a condition to operate, the accreditation of their quality system by the national accreditation entity according to the EN ISO 17020 norm.

We can therefore find, functioning in Portugal, 171 inspection centres, where over 1.800 inspectors work, and have already inspected over 50 million cars and their trailers, being its contribution for the maintenance of existing vehicles obvious in term of suitable circulating conditions.

In 2005, in the scope of a policy to develop the national inspections system, part of these centres started to perform a wider set of inspections, substituting the administration, with the goal of gradually transferring the majority of the vehicle inspection activity to the private sector, freeing the State for a better performance in its function as a regulating agent.

It is also important to point out, particularly as far as road safety is concerned, the role of road inspections, which started in Portugal in 2004 in the scope of the 2000/30/CE guideline, whose contribution has been noticeable in controlling the condition of the existing heavy vehicles that are circulating, although it is considered that in this field there is a lot to improve in the future.

Dear Madams, Dear Sirs,

Any vehicle inspection system has to be dynamic and adapt to the changes and needs of its users, ensuring, without damaging the maintenance of the inspection's technical strictness, the best quality in the rendered service. And the quality of an inspection service, for the owner of the vehicle, is measured, most times, in terms of the closeness of the centre, quickness in the

service, warm reception, access to information, and availability of electronic means to book and pay for the inspections.

Bearing in mind these and other goals, the Government will soon proceed with the opening of a contest for new inspection centres, promoting, at the same time changes in the existing legislation, with the objective of continuously improving the inspection system.

To speak to the purpose, I would like to remind that, in the sector of vehicle technical inspections, despite the highly positive evolution which was registered in the last years, there is still a lot of work to be done: both at the level of defining a clear strategy for all agents in the sector, and at the level of revising the legal frame, systematizing it and making it coherent and feasible.

Therefore, the Government has worked with special acuity and promptness while revising the Law-Decree nº 550/99, which establishes the juridical regimen for the activity of inspecting motor vehicles and their trailers, so as to set up a more rigorous and clear reference frame.

Today, I briefly want to tell you about the project of the legal diploma which will soon be proposed by the Government, that defines the revision of the juridical regimen for the activity of inspecting motor vehicles and their trailers.

The guidelines that I established to create this diploma were quite simple:

- Firstly, clarifying the State's role and the assumption that the practice of the activity of inspecting vehicles is to continue being developed by private associations that administrate inspection centres, according to exploration concession contracts to be made with IMTT;
- Secondly, the guarantee that the net of inspection centres, namely the number, location and installation, as well as the types of inspection that the centres should perform, obeys to clear criteria of geographic location, known to all agents of the sector;
- Thirdly, the guarantee of equality in the access of all candidates to the net of inspection centres; and
- Fourthly, ensuring that the access to the exploration of inspection centres is attributed according to a public contest to be promoted by the IMTT having clear adjudication criteria and whenever the defined geographic location criteria are verified.

It will be considered the candidates' minimum requirements, to be included in the book of expenditures, the idoneity and the economic, financial and technical capacity for the implementation of the project.

The economic and financial feasibility will be analysed according to the financial resources that guarantee the opening and good management of the inspection centres, and the demonstrative viability study of the installation and/or exploration of an inspection centre.

The technical capacity will necessarily have to take under consideration the conformity analysis of the inspection centre project's characteristics within the applicable legislation, as well as the equipments and human resources that the candidate proves to have, namely the prevision of the technical director, of the responsible for quality and the board of inspectors qualified by the IMTT.

As far as the evaluation of the applications is concerned, the selection criteria are based upon parameters of high exigency, of which I want to point out:

- The project's quality, namely its suitability to the objectives of vehicle inspections;
- The quality of accessibilities;
- The level of economic and financial feasibility; and
- The previous opinion of the autarchy as far as the installation is concerned.

And, according to these terms, a managing entity will be selected with whom an exploration contract of an inspection centre will be made.

Once the exploration contract is made, the managing entity submits the inspection centre's project to the IMTT for approval.

Any alteration to the initial project, namely changes that imply the widening or reduction of the inspection centre's activity, the widening of the scope of category A centres to category B centres, will be subject to approval by the IMTT, according to the foreseeable impact in the relevant market.

With this revision of the Law-Decree nº 550/99, we intend, as I mentioned, to introduce a criteria of strictness and transparency in the access to the vehicle technical inspections activity; and we

will not be available to make viable intentions that are not technically, financially and socially sustained, because we want to be demanding in the activity's access and permanency.

However, the fact that we are demanding in the activity's access and permanency, does not mean that the State is an agent that makes investing difficult. On the contrary.

We want to be a facilitating element and, at the same time, a guarantee that this activity is being developed according to transparent rules, fulfilling its mission with strictness, which is having an increasingly safer car fleet.

This is the only way to reduce significantly the number of accidents in our country.

I want to seize the opportunity and the fact that we are here in the city of Porto, to announce that this year in September we will open a first contest for the concession of the vehicle technical inspection centre in the district council of Gondomar, which will be a first test to the new dispositions foreseen in the revision of the Law-Decree nº 550/99.

Dear Madams, Dear Sirs,

New centres, closer to the populations and easy to access, are objectives that integrate the policy of improving the quality of the service rendered to the citizens.

According to this perspective, it is currently being studied the next step towards cooperation among inspection centres and the administration in Portugal.

Having in mind the proximity to the citizen, that is assured by the national centres' distribution and its known technical recognition, it is now being planned the use of inspection centres as reception places for some activities developed by the administration in the motor car area.

Without depreciating the goal that guided the creation of private inspection centres, which is making technical vehicle inspections without the direct intervention of the State, we aim at taking this cooperation further ahead, with profits for all parts involved and always having in mind the goal of improving the service rendered to the citizens.

Apart from the mentioned changes and due to the fact that in Portugal motor bicycles, motorcycles, tricycles and four-wheeled vehicles are not yet subject to mandatory periodic

inspections, IMTT is working towards establishing the extension of this obligation to those vehicles, because it is an important measure, namely in the area of road safety.

This is, in fact, a very important step, as it is known that from the total number of vehicles involved in accidents in 2007, around 15% were motor bicycles and motorcycles, and from the total number of victims in the same year, around 18% were drivers and passengers of those kinds of vehicles. From the total number of casualties and seriously wounded people the share of responsibility of these vehicles corresponded to 22% and 26% of the total, respectively.

Dear Madams, Dear Sirs,

Knowing that the international CITA Conferences are the biggest event related to vehicle technical inspections, and, consequently, with road safety, I conclude, thanking once again the opportunity to be in a Conference as important as this one, before such a distinguished audience.

Therefore, I wait with special interest to be sent the conclusions of this Conference, that will certainly be, a contribution for a new kind of relationship that the Government wishes to implement between the Public Administration and the sector's private agents.

Step by step we are building a stronger sector, capable of rendering the citizens quality services, contributing to the betterment of road safety and environmental quality. That is what the Portuguese ask from all of us.

Thank you for your kind attention.