

**HISTORY OF THE FORMATION OF ROAD TRAFFIC RULES
AND TRAFFIC CONTROL SERVICES IN BELARUS**

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Traffic rules appeared almost when the first car was invented. It was created with the goal of making human life easier, and traffic rules – in order to make it safer. Unfortunately, not all road users think about the value of human life. In our country, every year tens and hundreds of people die under the wheels of cars, and all because basic traffic rules are not followed. But every person should know and understand that he is responsible for his life. Ignorance of traffic rules does not exempt you from responsibility. Even when crossing the road at a red signal, people do not understand that by doing so they can harm not only themselves, but also others.

Compliance with traffic rules is a basic necessity that helps to avoid accidents and human casualties. The vast majority of accidents happen because someone violated one or another requirement of the rules. Therefore, the Rules are necessary to ensure that traffic on roads and streets is safe for drivers and pedestrians. They organize traffic, clearly, down to the smallest detail, prescribing how all its participants should behave. The article briefly examines the main stages in the history of the formation of the Road Traffic Rules in Belarus.

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With the advent of the first cars in the 19th century, the need arose for high-quality traffic management. Even then, many rules were defined that are still in effect today.

On September 11, 1896, Minister of Railways M.I. Khilkov issued a decree “On the procedure and conditions for transporting heavy cargo and passengers by self-propelled carriages on the roads of the Ministry of Railways.” This decree contained 12 mandatory provisions:

1) when operating self-propelled carriages, the speed of their movement, when meeting with carriages drawn by horses, so as not to frighten the horses, should be reduced to the quietest speed; for the same purpose, the self-propelled carriage during these meetings should move, if possible, to the very edge of the highway;

2) on sharp turns, self-propelled carriages must move quietly, and in closed areas, in addition, sound their horn;

3) in accordance with the requirements of general safety, the speed of passage of self-propelled carriages should be reduced: on slopes, when meeting with other crews, at intersections of the highway with other roads and in villages;

4) when driving on highways where there are outposts for collecting highway tolls, self-propelled crews pay a toll in the amount that will be established for the right of passage on the highway for such crews;

5) the self-propelled carriage had to be registered, equipped with license plates on the front and rear, and in good working order, which was confirmed by an annual mandatory inspection by a special commission. It is curious that license plates, having different sizes in different cities and called "tins", were issued at that time for one year, confirming the driver's payment of the annual transport tax. You could keep the old numbers, and many people decorated their premises with them. Each self-propelled carriage must have a proper certificate that the crew is serviceable in all parts and that all parts of the mechanical engine are in good working order and safe condition (... "for the issuance of such certificates to the owners of self-propelled carriages, it is necessary to inspect these crews in the same manner and within the same time frame, which are installed for the inspection of steam boilers on ships sailing on inland waters");

6) iron tires on the rims of self-propelled vehicles must be flat over the entire surface, not at all convex or concave, and so attached to the rims that nails, pins, screws or rivets do not protrude;

7) the width of the wheel rims and iron tires should in no case be less than 3 ¼ inches (1 inch – 2.54 cm) with a full weight of the carriage with a load of 120 to 180 pounds (1 pound – 16.38 kg) and not less than 4 inches with a crew weight with a load of 180 to 300 pounds;

8) the passage of self-propelled carriages weighing more than 300 pounds on the highway is not permitted without special permission requested in advance;

9) the crew could be driven by a citizen over 21 years of age who can read and write and speak Russian, meets health requirements, has passed a special driving test and has a driving permit. Transferring rights to third parties without special training and leaving a car on the street unattended were prohibited. Interestingly, since the 1900s there have been special educational institutions where future drivers were trained;

10) when driving through railway crossings, the driver was obliged to sound a sound signal about his approach;

11) it was forbidden to drive with an open muffler or without one. There was a fine for a faulty exhaust system;

12) when stopping, the carriages were supposed to be placed along the sidewalk in one row in the direction of travel, without blocking the passage. When passing oncoming traffic, the crews kept to the right and overtook on the left; entering the oncoming lane was allowed, but driving along it for a long time was prohibited.

Violators of these points of the rules were punished with a fine of up to 100 rubles (!) or arrest for two weeks. The punishment depended on the degree of guilt and repetition of the violation. Drunk driving, aggressive driving and blocking roads could lead to the loss of your driving privileges.

It is known that even then there were toll roads – on the highway where outposts were located, crews had to pay special fees [1].

In the USSR in the 1920–1930s there were no uniform rules; they were created locally. On June 10, 1920, the Council of People's Commissars adopted the Decree “On automobile traffic in Moscow and its environs”. The rules had 9 sections, which contained 39 points. In many cities of the Soviet republics, the contents of the Decree were adopted as the basis for traffic rules. The rules contained requirements for drivers: that they have documents and a waybill; requirements for registration plates; requirements for cars and their registration; the rights to use certain types of cars were described.

On September 10, 1931, the Main Directorate of the Workers' and Peasants' Militia signed a circular "On the procedure for organizing supervision over the implementation of traffic rules." With the entry into force of the circular, departments for regulating street traffic were created within police departments.

On May 15, 1933, the Central Administration of Highways, Unpaved Roads and Motor Transport under the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (TSUDORtrans) approved the “Rules for the movement of motor vehicles on the roads of the USSR”.

The need arose to create a new state body that could control the discipline of drivers on the roads, and on November 5, 1934, in accordance with the decree “On measures to improve road facilities,” the Main State Automobile Inspectorate was created under TSUDORtrans.

On March 27, 1936, the Traffic Rules in Minsk were adopted, which included 13 articles. These Rules introduced 22 road signs: 13 prohibiting, 6 warning, 3 indicating.

Already in 1938, the first traffic light appeared in the modern capital of Belarus at the intersection of Kirov and Bobruiskaya streets (figure 1).

Local rules, which were created on the basis of the standard “Rules for driving on the streets and roads of the USSR,” were adopted in the Union State in 1940. But it was only in 1945 that standards for road and registration plates were developed.

GOST 2965–45 “Road warning signs. Classification and technical conditions” divided road signs into three types:

- a) warning about dangerous places – 4 signs;
- b) prohibiting – 14 signs;
- c) indicative – 8 characters.



Figure 1. – The first traffic light on the territory of Belarus

GOST 3207–46 “License plates for cars, tractors, transport tractors, trailers and motorcycles” introduced uniform registration plates for all: 2 black letters and 4 numbers on a yellow background (figure 2).

On May 8, 1946, the Executive Committee of the Minsk Regional Council of Workers' Deputies issued the first post-war Traffic Rules in the city of Minsk and the Minsk region.

In 1957, the USSR published new standard Rules for traffic on streets and roads, which formed the basis of the “Rules of traffic on streets and roads of the Belarusian SSR”, which were approved by the Council of Ministers of Belarus by Resolution No. 335 of May 12, 1959. The rules contained 100 points and 2 appendices.

On January 1, 1959, GOST 3207–58 “License plates of road vehicles” came into force, according to which black numbers on a yellow background were replaced by four numbers and three white letters on a black background.

At the World Road Traffic Conference in Geneva in 1949, the United Nations adopted the Convention on Road Traffic and the Protocol on Road Signs and Signals. These documents contained international requirements for the organization and order of road traffic in order to develop it and improve safety. In August 1959, the Soviet Union (which then included Belarus) acceded to these UN agreements. The first unified traffic rules of the USSR were developed on the basis of international documents and approved by order of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs in January 1960. On December 2, 1960, the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted Resolution No. 639 “On the establishment of the USSR Traffic Rules in Belarus”.



Figure 2. – License plates of the first half of the 20th century

In August 1964, the Council of Ministers of the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic approved the Rules for the registration and registration of motor vehicles and motorcycles, the Rules for the technical inspection of motor vehicles and motorcycles, the Rules for road accidents and the Regulations on the procedure for assigning qualifications to drivers of motor vehicles and urban electric transport [2].

Traffic rules established standards of behavior for drivers, who are the main participants in traffic and are also (if violated) the cause of most accidents, as well as pedestrians and passengers, who often cause injuries and deaths. The rules established requirements for road users and reflected certain organizational and technical capabilities for preventing accidents. This explains the fact that as road traffic develops and the means and capabilities of its organization expand, the Rules of the Road are also improved.

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