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ENZ. ENZ. ENZ.

DRAFT 19-12-24

Decree of

Decree amending the 1990 RVV [Road and Traffic Signs Regulation] and the BABW [Road Traffic (Administrative Provisions) Decree] on extending zero-emission zones to taxis, and introducing a new road sign and associated supplementary signs for environmental zones and zero-emission zones

On the recommendation of the State Secretary for Infrastructure and Water Management of 23 January 2024, No lenW/BSK-, Administrative and Legal Affairs Department; Having regard to Article 13(1) and Article 14(1) of the Road Traffic Act 1994 [Wegenverkeerswet];

Having heard the Opinion of the Advisory Division of the Council of State (Opinion of, No);

Having regard to the detailed report of the State Secretary for Infrastructure and Water Management of, No lenW/BSK-, Administrative and Legal Affairs Department;

Have approved and hereby decree the following:

ARTICLE I

The Regulation on traffic rules and traffic signs 1990 shall be amended as follows:

A

Article 86d is amended as follows:

1. Paragraph 1 now reads:

The declaration of closure as per road sign C22e of Annex 1 due to an environmental zone shall apply to passenger cars, commercial vehicles, lorries or buses with a diesel engine.

2. Paragraphs 2 and 3 are deleted, with paragraphs 4 to 6 being renumbered as paragraphs 2 to 4.

3. Paragraph 2 (new) reads:

Under road sign C22e, the supplementary signs listed in Annex 1, C22e4, C22e5, C22e6, C22e7, C22e8, C22e9 or C22e10, shall be placed.

4. In paragraph 4 (new), 'C22a' is replaced by 'C22e'.

B

Article 86e is amended as follows:

1. Paragraph 1 now reads:

The declaration of closure as per road sign C22e of Annex 1 due to a zero-emission zone shall apply to commercial vehicles and lorries or taxis, with the exception of zero-emission vehicles.

2. Paragraph 2 now reads:

Under road sign C22e, the supplementary signs C22e1 or C22e2 listed in Annex 1 shall be placed.

3. In paragraph 5(a), 'paragraph 5' is replaced by 'paragraph 3'.

4. Two paragraphs are added to the Article, reading:

8. Until 31 December 2026, paragraph 1 shall not apply to taxis with emission class 5 registered as taxis before 1 January 2026.

9. Until 31 December 2028, paragraph 1 shall not apply to taxis with emission class 6 registered as taxis before 1 January 2026.

C

In Article 87, 'C22a, C22c' is replaced by 'C22e'.

D

After Article 96a, a new article shall be inserted, reading:

Article 96b

Road signs placed before the entry into force of the Decree of X X 2025 amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990 and the Decree on Administrative Provisions on Road Traffic in connection with the extension of zero-emission zones to taxis and the introduction of a new road sign and associated supplementary signs for environmental zones and zero-emission zones [Besluit nul-emissiezone taxi en nieuw verkeersbord milieuzone en nul-emissiezone] (Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2025, XXX), which do not comply with this Regulation, comply with the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990 as it stood on the day before the entry into force of this amendment.

E

Annex 1 is amended as follows:

1. The road signs C22a to C22d and associated descriptions expire.

2. The signs, descriptions and numbers set out in Annex 1 to this Decree are inserted after road sign C22.

ARTICLE II

The Decree on Administrative Provisions on Road Traffic (BABW) is amended as follows:

A

Article 8(4) now reads:

Road sign C22e of Annex 1 to the RVV 1990 shall be accompanied by the placement of one or more supplementary signs as referred to in Articles 86d and 86e of the RVV 1990. The supplementary signs C22e4 and C22e5 can only be placed in combination with the supplementary signs C22e1 or C22e2.

B

In Article 9(1), 'C6 to C22c' is replaced by 'C6 to C22e'.

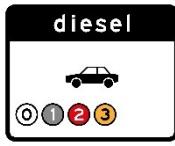
ARTICLE III

This Decree shall enter into force on 1 January 2026. Article I(D) shall expire on 1 July 2026.

I hereby order this decision and its associated explanatory notes to be published in the Official Gazette.

THE STATE SECRETARY FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND WATER MANAGEMENT,

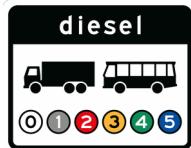
Annex 1 to Article I, Part E, Subpart 2 of the Decree amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990 and the Decree on Administrative Provisions on Road Traffic in connection with the extension of zero-emission zones to taxis and the introduction of a new road sign for environmental zones and zero-emission zones

Sign	Description	
	Closed to passenger cars, commercial vehicles, lorries, buses or taxis due to emission requirements (environmental zone or zero-emission zone)	C22e
	Supplementary sign for C22e: zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries, accessible to zero-emission vehicles	C22e1
	Supplementary sign for C22e: zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles, lorries and taxis, accessible to zero-emission vehicles	C22e2
	Supplementary sign for C22e: environmental zone for diesel passenger cars, accessible to emission classes 4 to 6	C22e4
		C22e5



Supplementary sign for C22e: environmental zone for diesel passenger cars, accessible to emission classes 5 and 6

Sign	Description	C22e6
	Supplementary sign for C22e: environmental zone for diesel passenger cars and commercial vehicles, accessible to emission classes 4 to 6	
Sign	Description	C22e7
	Supplementary sign for C22e: environmental zone for diesel passenger cars and commercial vehicles, accessible to emission classes 5 and 6	
Sign	Description	C22e8
	Supplementary sign for C22e: environmental zone for lorries, accessible to lorries with emission class 6	
Sign	Description	C22e9
	Supplementary sign for C22e: environmental zone for buses, accessible to buses with emission class 6	
Sign	Description	C22e10



Supplementary sign for C22e: environmental zone for lorries and buses, accessible to lorries and buses with emission class 6

Sign



Description

C22f

End of declaration of closure due to emission requirements (environmental zone or zero-emission zone)

EXPLANATORY NOTES

I. GENERAL

1. Introduction

This Decree introduces two amendments. First of all, it shall be possible for the road operator to extend the application of the zero-emission zone to taxis. This also requires changing the signage. A new road sign has been designed that shall not only make it possible to establish zero-emission zones for taxis, but shall also serve as a new road sign for both environmental zones and (other) zero-emission zones. The latter is the other amendment to this Decree. The existing separate road signs for environmental zones and zero-emission zones shall be replaced by a new future-proof road sign with associated new supplementary signs. The new supplementary signs allow municipalities that establish a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles, lorries and possibly taxis to maintain their existing environmental zone for diesel passenger cars. The introduction of the signs does not lead to new possibilities for municipalities to establish environmental zones. The addition of taxis to zero-emission zones is further explained in Section 2 of this Chapter. The new road sign and associated supplementary signs are explained in more detail in Section 3.

2. The content of zero-emission zones for taxis

2.1 Introduction of zero-emission zones for taxis

This Decree amends the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990 (RVV 1990) to allow municipalities to establish a zero-emission zone for taxis locally. With a zero-emission zone, municipalities can ban polluting vehicles from parts of their municipality. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions and so-called traffic emissions such as nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, thus contributing to air quality. In 2019, municipalities were given the option to introduce a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles¹ and lorries by 2025². The present Decree allows municipalities to extend their zero-emission zone to taxis by means of a Traffic Decree.

This Decree also provides for transitional arrangements and lays down exemptions.

2.2 Outline

2.2.1 Preliminary phase and problem outline

¹ In Chapter VB of the RVV 1990, a different definition already applies to commercial vehicles. For Chapter VB and this Explanatory Note, commercial vehicles are light commercial vehicles with a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 3 500 kg.

² Decree of 29 October 2019 amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990, the Decree on Administrative Provisions on Road Traffic and the Registration Number Regulation in connection with the harmonisation of environmental zones (Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2019, 398).

The central government has signed the Clean Air Agreement [Schone Lucht Akkoord]³. A major cause of poor air quality is fossil fuel vehicles. In the Green Deal on Zero Emission Urban Logistics [Green Deal Zero Emissie Stadslogistiek], it was therefore agreed in 2014 that emission-free urban logistics would be introduced from 2025 onwards⁴. This reduces traffic emissions, improves the air people breathe in cities, and contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In 2019, the Climate Agreement [Klimaatakkoord] stipulated the introduction of zero-emission zones in 30-40 municipalities for urban logistics (commercial vehicles and lorries)⁵. The Decree cited in Note 2 enshrines in law the zero-emission zones for commercial vehicles and lorries. With the Decree of 29 June 2023 amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990 in connection with the temporary conditions and transitional provisions for zero-emission zones (Temporary Decree on Zero-Emission Zones), further specification was given to the rules for zero-emission zones for these vehicles⁶.

In addition to commercial vehicles and lorries, fossil fuel taxis also contribute to the problem of poor air quality in urban areas. The Urban Logistics Implementation Agenda therefore stipulated in 2021 that it would be investigated whether the zero-emission zones could also apply to taxis⁷. Zero-emission zones for commercial vehicles, lorries and taxis are an important intermediate step towards fully clean road traffic by 2050⁸.

Since 2019, there have been consultations between municipalities, the central government, representatives of the taxi sector, and other public and private parties about emission-free taxi transport. This resulted in the signing of the Agreement Framework for Emission-Free Taxi Transport (hereinafter: Agreement Framework) in April 2022⁹¹⁰. By signing this Agreement Framework, the central government expressed its intention to make the introduction of zero-emission zones for taxis legally possible. The present Decree is the development thereof. In addition to the intention to legally enshrine zero-emission zones, the signing of the Agreement Framework also included agreements on the commitment and necessary actions to achieve emission-free taxi transport. For example, municipalities facilitate the availability of sufficient charging infrastructure, and the parties work together on communication tools to inform taxi companies, drivers and passengers about the introduction of zero-emission zones for taxis.

2.2.2 Choice of zero-emission zones for taxis

This Decree allows municipalities to introduce zero-emission zones for taxis, as a result of which all vehicles registered as taxis after 31 December 2025 and running on fossil fuel can be excluded from that zone. Only zero-emission taxis, with emission class Z, shall still be allowed to enter the zones. For vehicles registered as taxis before 2026, there shall be transitional arrangements (see 2.2.4).

The decision to give municipalities the option of banning taxis registered as of 1 January 2026 was made in consultation with municipalities, representatives of the taxi sector and other relevant parties. It is important that the switch to zero-emission taxi transport is feasible for operators. The total cost of ownership (purchase and cost of use) of taxi vehicles has therefore been compared, and for most models, the total cost of ownership

³ Parliamentary Papers II 2019/20, 30175, No 343.

⁴ Parliamentary Papers II 2014/15, 33043, No 38.

⁵ Parliamentary Papers II 2018/19, 32813, No 342.

⁶ Decree of 29 June 2023 amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990 in connection with the temporary conditions and transitional provisions for zero-emission zones (Temporary Decree on Zero-Emission Zones) (Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2023, 241).

⁷ Parliamentary Papers II 2020/21, 31209, No 226.

⁸ Parliamentary Papers II 2018/19, 32813, No 342.

⁹ Parliamentary Papers II 2022/23, 30175, No 420.

¹⁰ The Agreement Framework was signed by Royal Dutch Transport (KNV), Uber, Bolt, SchipholTaxi, ElaadNL, Leaseplan, the Dutch Association for Sustainable Energy (NVDE), the municipalities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Eindhoven, Rotterdam, Tilburg, and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.

of a zero-emission model is already lower than that of a comparable fossil fuel model. The total cost of ownership of zero-emission vehicles is expected to fall even further in the future. In addition to the cost of ownership, the average depreciation period of taxis and the availability of zero-emission models were taken into account in the decision to give municipalities the option of banning taxis registered as of 1 January 2026.

Zero-emission zones are a relatively simple means for municipalities to reduce traffic emissions, improve air quality and reduce noise pollution in order to increase the quality of life in their municipality. The zones are relatively easy for municipalities to enforce based on number plates, for example with cameras and Automatic Number Plate Recognition; ANPR). In addition to municipalities, the other parties to the Agreement Framework have also expressed their preference for zero-emission zones to encourage zero-emission taxi transport.

The zero-emission zones for taxis are in line with those for commercial vehicles and lorries. Only municipalities with a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries can establish a zero-emission zone for taxis, and the zero-emission zone for taxis in a municipality is geographically the same as that for commercial vehicles and lorries. This contributes to policy clarity and ensures that the same means of enforcement, exemptions and communication can be used as for commercial vehicles and lorries.

Another reason for choosing zero-emission zones is that they apply to *all* taxis. No distinction is made between taxis that are hailed (hailed by passengers at a taxi rank or on the street) and taxis that are booked (booked by telephone or app).

2.2.3 Impact of zero-emission zones on taxis

There are more than 35 000 taxis operating in the Netherlands, mostly in urban areas.¹¹ Taxis drive around three times more kilometres per year than normal passenger cars, and more than 60 % of taxis run on diesel¹². A growing percentage of taxis are zero-emission¹³. The introduction of zero-emission zones for taxis can further accelerate the transition to zero-emission taxi transport. If a zero-emission zone is introduced in the area where taxi operators operate, this can encourage them to opt for a zero-emission vehicle (earlier).

Zero-emission zones for taxis have a positive impact on people, animals and plants in the areas where taxis operate. The zones reduce the number of fossil fuel taxis, leading to a reduction in traffic emissions, improved air quality, reduced noise pollution, and thus improved quality of life in urban areas. Zero-emission zones also contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The precise contribution of zero-emission zones for taxis to these objectives depends on the number of municipalities that choose to introduce such a zone, the size of the zones and the local traffic situations. By signing the Agreement Framework, the municipalities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Eindhoven, Rotterdam and Tilburg expressed the intention to introduce a zone. The municipality of Haarlemmermeer has now joined. This means that a large part of the taxi market is covered¹⁴. More municipalities can follow.

If municipalities introduce a zero-emission zone for taxis, this shall have an impact on taxi operators driving in the zone. Operators who still drive a fossil fuel taxi shall have to invest in a zero-emission model if they want to continue driving in the zone. The transitional arrangements align as closely as possible with the natural investment timing

¹¹ A quarter to a third of taxis are used for consumer taxi transport, while the other taxis are used for so-called target group transport: procured transport of, for example, pupils, the elderly and the sick.

¹² Sources: Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and the Netherlands Vehicle Authority (RDW).

¹³ In September 2024, more than 26 % of the total number of taxis were emission-free, compared to 16 % 1.5 years earlier. More than half of the newly purchased vehicles registered as taxis in the first months of 2024 are zero-emission. Source: RDW.

¹⁴ The exact number of taxis operating in each municipality is not known. An analysis by CBS shows that most taxi kilometres are driven in Amsterdam, and that almost half of all taxi kilometres are driven in North Holland, South Holland and North Brabant together. 9

of operators (see 2.2.4). For most models, the cost of ownership of a zero-emission taxi is already lower than that of a comparable fossil fuel model. The purchase costs can be higher in some cases, but operators shall recover these costs¹⁵.

Taxi operators who drive in the zones but cannot (yet) meet the access requirements can apply for an exemption in certain cases. By implementing a harmonised exemption policy and setting up a Central Desk for exemption applications, municipalities try to keep the regulatory and administrative burden on operators low (see 2.4).

For municipalities introducing a zero-emission zone for taxis, this means that they must enforce it (see 2.5). Municipalities shall also have to develop an exemption policy. The municipalities that intend to introduce a zero-emission zone for taxis have indicated that they wish to delegate their exemption authority to the Central Desk for Exemptions from Zero-Emission Zones [Centraal Loket ontheffingen nul-emissiezones], which is being set up in the context of the Urban Logistics Implementation Agenda (see 2.4).

Municipalities are free to decide whether they wish to introduce a zero-emission zone for taxis. The establishment of a zone is then effected by a Traffic Decree. In that Decree, a municipality substantiates the effectiveness and proportionality of a zone, considers the impact on residents and taxi operators and drivers, and examines whether all preconditions are met. In addition, the municipality considers the introduction of a zero-emission zone for taxis against other measures that can improve air quality and quality of life. The municipalities that have signed the Agreement Framework, in consultation with KNV and local taxi operators, have drawn up an action plan for the introduction of a zero-emission zone for taxis. The requirements applicable to the adoption of a Traffic Decree also ensure that municipalities take the decision to establish a zero-emission zone for taxis with due care. The Urban Logistics Expert Pool Cooperation Project (SPES) supports municipalities in making Traffic Decrees and provides model decrees.

2.2.4 Transitional arrangements for taxis registered before 2026

Taxi operators who have invested in a fossil fuel vehicle in recent years shall have a few more years to make the switch to an emission-free variant. The access requirements for the zero-emission zones for taxis shall be as follows:

- all vehicles, new or second-hand, registered as taxis as of 1 January 2026 must be emission-free in order to drive in the zone.
- taxis with emission class 5 registered before 1 January 2026 shall have access to the zone until 1 January 2027.
- taxis with emission class 6 registered before 1 January 2026 shall have access to the zone until 1 January 2029¹⁶.

The access requirements were drawn up in consultation with the parties to the Agreement Framework. A balance was sought between achieving a substantial contribution to reducing traffic emissions on the one hand, and feasibility for taxi operators on the other. The total cost of ownership, depreciation period of taxis, and availability of zero-emission taxis were taken into account.

The access requirements apply to all zero-emission zones for taxis regardless of when a municipality introduces such a zone.

2.3 Exemption for wheelchair-accessible taxis

Owners of wheelchair-accessible taxis are often not yet able to meet the access requirements of the zero-emission zones. Affordable, zero-emission wheelchair-accessible taxis are not yet sufficiently available. Therefore, wheelchair-accessible taxis are exempted from the declaration of closure for zero-emission zones for taxis until

¹⁵ In target group transport, contract agreements determine the timing of investment and when the purchase costs are recovered.

¹⁶ The emission class indicates how polluting a vehicle is. Roughly speaking, the higher the emission class, the fewer pollutants are emitted. 10

2030. Wheelchair-accessible taxis are identified in the vehicle register by the body code SH, as a special purpose designation for wheelchair-accessible taxis, or by the speciality codes 70, 145, 146, 147 or 149. The expiry of the exemption shall be reviewed in 2028 to determine whether sufficient affordable, zero-emission models shall be available from 2030 onwards.

2.4 Harmonised exemption policy

In addition to owners of wheelchair-accessible taxis, there are also likely to be other taxi operators who cannot (yet) meet the access requirements of the zero-emission zones. In certain cases, the owners of these taxis may apply for an exemption to drive in the zero-emission zones. It is undesirable if operators in different municipalities are confronted with different exemption policies and different application procedures. That is why the municipalities that are going to introduce a zero-emission zone for taxis, together with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, are agreeing on a harmonised exemption policy to be jointly implemented by the municipalities. This concerns, for example, daily exemptions to enter a zero-emission zone a number of times a year. In addition, agreements are made regarding the granting of exemptions for a longer period, for example, if an operator is facing bankruptcy or if an operator has purchased an emission-free vehicle that has not yet been delivered.

Target group transport, procured transport of, for example, pupils, the elderly and the sick, which is carried out by taxis, is also considered. Municipalities that intend to introduce a zero-emission zone for taxis are procuring or are going to procure their target group transport on a zero-emission basis. However, there shall also be target group transport operating in the zones that is, for example, procured by surrounding municipalities or by other parties. Some of this transport may not (yet) comply with the access requirements of the zero-emission zones due to ongoing agreements with their client. An inventory of this group was drawn up on behalf of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and the municipalities that shall establish a zero-emission zone for taxis. The municipalities cooperate and consult with the industry to develop the conditions for obtaining an exemption.

It is intended that the exemptions shall be assessed by the Central Desk for Exemptions from Zero-Emission Zones, which is being set up as part of the Urban Logistics Implementation Agenda. The municipalities that are introducing a zero-emission zone for taxis have indicated that they shall delegate their exemption authority to the Central Desk. Operators can then go to this desk to apply for an exemption for one or more municipalities with a zero-emission zone. This shall ensure uniformity in the exemption policy, clarity and a lower administrative burden for taxi operators and the municipalities themselves.

2.5 Implementation, supervision and enforcement

Control when entering a zero-emission zone is carried out by the municipality on the basis of the number plate, usually with cameras and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) or through the deployment of special investigating officers. Violation of the declaration of closure of a zero-emission zone may lead to the imposition of a fine pursuant to the Administrative Enforcement of Traffic Regulations Act (Mulder Act). The Minister of Justice and Security shall promote the inclusion of this offence in the Mulder Act as a finable offence.

2.6 Administrative burden and compliance costs

Around 10 000 taxis are deployed for consumer taxi transport in the Netherlands¹⁷. Three quarters of them most likely drive (at times) within the municipalities that plan to

¹⁷ For the taxis used for target group transport, the central government and municipalities aim for emission-free target group transport by 2025. There may still be target group transport that is not yet emission-free and which operates in the zero-emission zones for taxis. The municipalities that are going to establish a zero-emission zone for taxis are working out the conditions for obtaining an exemption for this group.

establish a zero-emission zone for taxis. More than 26 % of all taxis were already zero-emission in September 2024, and this percentage is even higher in the municipalities that plan to establish a zero-emission zone for taxis. The vast majority of other taxis are of emission class 5 or 6. Owners of these taxis shall be able to make use of the transitional arrangements in the coming years. If they were to invest in a new vehicle anyway (due to the depreciation period of their vehicle), the introduction of zero-emission zones for taxis would encourage them to choose a zero-emission vehicle. This Decree does not create any additional administrative burden or compliance costs for this group.

There shall be a small group of operators, a rough estimate is between 500 and 700, for whom this does not apply. If they want to drive in a zero-emission zone, they shall have to invest in a zero-emission vehicle ahead of time and thus have additional administrative burden and compliance costs. These costs consist of the purchase of a new vehicle and any costs that may have to be incurred to register this vehicle as a taxi and to pass on the registration number to the municipality. Assuming one hour of work and an hourly wage of EUR 47, the total administrative burden for this group of operators together is a maximum of EUR 32 900 (700 x EUR 47) on a one-off basis.

In addition to the small group of operators who invest ahead of time in a zero-emission vehicle, there are costs associated with applying for an exemption for operators who are eligible. The number of expected exemptions and the application procedure shall be further assessed. It is expected that there shall be a few hundred exemption applications per year. Assuming 300 exemption applications per year, which take an average of half an hour each, the administrative burden is EUR 7 050 per year.

3. The content of a new road sign for environmental zones and zero-emission zones

3.1 Introduction and background of the new road sign and associated supplementary signs

This part of the Explanatory Notes concerns the adaptation of road signs indicating an environmental zone or a zero-emission zone.

Both environmental zones and zero-emission zones are a means of achieving climate and air quality objectives. To be able to establish such a zone, a road sign is required that indicates the zone and specifies to which vehicles the zone applies. This Decree replaces¹²

the previous road signs for environmental and zero-emission zones with a new future-proof road sign with associated supplementary signs.

The reason for adapting the road signs is threefold:

- First, the previously established¹⁸ road sign for a zero-emission zone (C22c) is specifically designed to prohibit commercial vehicles and lorries. Due to the appearance of this sign, no other vehicle categories can be added. This has become a problem now that taxis, see Section 2, can also be included in the zero-emission zones. In order to be able to add taxis, and possibly other vehicles in the future, a more general sign has now been designed. The previously established road sign for zero-emission zones was practically and legally inoperable for vehicle categories other than the commercial vehicles and lorries depicted on it.
- Another reason for adapting the (supplementary) signs is the fact that if a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries were to be established with the old signs and an environmental zone for diesel passenger cars, the different (supplementary) signs would conflict with regard to commercial vehicles. By adapting the signs, both a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries and an environmental zone for diesel passenger cars can be established.
- Finally, the coexistence of two main signs with different supplementary signs would lead to jumbled signage and lack of clarity for the road user.

The new road sign shall be used for all emission-related zones included in the RVV 1990. This makes it possible to indicate both an environmental zone and a zero-emission zone by means of the associated supplementary signs. The road sign is future-proof so that, without changing the main sign, it shall eventually be possible to establish a zero-emission zone for other vehicle categories as well¹⁹. The present Decree makes it possible to add taxis to the zero-emission zone access regime.

In addition, this amendment decouples the environmental zone for diesel passenger cars from commercial vehicles, making it possible to maintain a separate environmental zone for passenger cars or to establish one in combination with a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries.

Autonomous developments

Except for taxis, the new road sign does not affect the existing access regimes or the agreements regarding them²⁰. By 2025, a number of supplementary signs shall have already expired²¹. Now that this Decree shall enter into force after that date, those signs do not need to be replaced by new supplementary signs. These are the supplementary signs C22a1, C22a4, C22a6 and C22a8.

3.2 Outline

¹⁸ Decree of 29 October 2019 amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990, the Decree on Administrative Provisions on Road Traffic and the Registration Number Regulation in connection with the harmonisation of environmental zones (Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2019, 398).

¹⁹ Establishing a zero-emission zone for new categories of vehicles is only possible after amending the text and the description of road signs in the RVV 1990. With this new future-proof design, both administrative burden and municipal costs are reduced compared to the current system. The present Decree makes it possible to introduce a zero-emission zone for taxis.

²⁰ Decree of 29 June 2023 amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990 in connection with the temporary conditions and transitional provisions for zero-emission zones (Temporary Decree on Zero-Emission Zones) (Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2023, 241).

²¹ See Article 86d(2) (old) and (3) (old) of the RVV 1990.

The new road sign consists of a main sign that is a variation of an existing prohibition sign (C6: closed to motor vehicles with more than two wheels). This replaces the existing road signs for environmental zones and zero-emission zones with a single road sign featuring a declaration of closure for vehicles due to emission requirements. This is a prohibition sign with the image of a car and smoke plumes. As in the current system of environmental zones and zero-emission zones, this road sign is always combined with one or more supplementary signs showing combinations of vehicle categories, emission classes and fuels. The supplementary signs indicate to which categories of vehicles with which emission class the zone applies (access regime).

New road sign and supplementary signs better aligned with BABW and RVV 1990.

The new road sign and associated supplementary signs are better than the previous signs for environmental zones in line with the existing rules for signs and supplementary signs in the BABW (Article 8(2)(b)) and the RVV 1990 (Article 67(1)(b)).

The supplementary signs indicate to which vehicles the declaration of closure applies. This is in contrast to the previous signs that indicated which vehicles were allowed. In the new system, the supplementary signs always indicate to which vehicles and under which conditions (which emission class) the declaration of closure applies. The colours of the emission classes indicated on the supplementary signs are in line with the existing system in the RVV 1990.

With this Decree, the existing signage as established for the zero-emission zones and environmental zones with associated supplementary signs shall be removed from 1 January 2026, and the new road sign with associated supplementary signs as set out in Annex 1 to Article I, Part E, paragraph 2 of this Decree shall apply.

This Decree shall enter into force on 1 January 2026. The signage is subject to a temporary transitional measure of 6 months for municipalities with an existing environmental zone. Municipalities that already have an environmental zone for commercial vehicles and lorries on 1 January 2026 must have placed the new (supplementary) signs and, if necessary, have adopted a new Traffic Decree, by 1 July 2026. In this way, municipalities have sufficient time to place the correct signs without having different signs with the same meaning on the streets for an extended period.

3.3 Impact

The introduction of the new road sign and associated supplementary signs for environmental zones and zero-emission zones solves three problems. First, it shall eventually be possible to add new vehicle categories, starting with taxis, to the signage of zero-emission zones. In addition, it shall be possible to introduce an environmental zone exclusively for diesel passenger cars in areas where commercial vehicles are subject to a zero-emission zone. Finally, a jumble of road signs with supplementary signs shall be prevented. For an environmental zone and a zero-emission zone, a sign with one or more supplementary signs is sufficient.

3.4 Implementation, supervision and enforcement

The new road sign and the associated supplementary signs shall be effective from 1 January 2026. From the publication of the Decree, information campaigns shall be launched to increase awareness of the new signage. Vehicle owners shall be informed on the national websites for environmental and zero-emission zones (www.milieuzones.nl and www.opwegnaarzes.nl) about the environmental and zero-emission zones established by municipalities, the applicable rules and the associated signage. These websites shall also provide an overview of the environmental and zero-emission zones and the combination of the new main sign with the new supplementary signs.

Communication shall not only come from the national government. Individual municipalities and industry associations shall involve their own constituencies in the new signage of environmental zones and zero-emission zones and inform them about this.

3.5 Financial impact

Municipalities that choose to introduce an environmental zone or zero-emission zone can estimate the financial impact and their administrative burden resulting from this change. The extent of this impact depends on the concrete decision-making process, but for the time being it is estimated to be limited, as municipalities wishing to introduce a zero-emission zone from 2025 onwards would in any case have to invest in replacing and installing the sign for the zero-emission zone. Municipalities that only maintain an environmental zone must also introduce new signage. Since many of them are tightening access requirements at that time anyway, new signage is already part of the planning.

4. Discussion, advice, consultation, preliminary scrutiny and notification

In the run-up to this Decree, the signage was discussed with municipalities, the National Signposting Service (NBd), the Ministry of Justice and Security, the Public Prosecution Service Central Processing Office (CVOM) and Rijkswaterstaat.

European developments in harmonising signage for areas with restricted traffic access were also considered. This includes advice on the use of a main sign featuring a car *en face* with exhaust gases (as shown in the present main sign) and below that the vehicles to which the main sign applies (as shown in the present system). This system is currently under development and has not yet been definitively established. The introduction of the Dutch zero-emission zones is ahead of the development of European and international regulations. The new main sign is similar to the one used in Flanders for a low-emission zone.

In addition, the effectiveness and comprehensibility of the main sign and the various supplementary signs were evaluated by means of a user survey, in which the participants were representative of the entire population of road users on Dutch motorways. The results show that the main sign is strongly associated with pollution, where it is clear that less polluting vehicles and vehicles with clean fuel (electric and hydrogen) are allowed to drive in regardless of the type of supplementary sign. There are also indications that respondents cannot correctly interpret the system of, for example, '3 and below' or '4 and above' in relation to the class of vehicle in which they are driving (is class 3 above or below class 4 and/or is class 3 or class 4 cleaner or more polluting?). In order to reduce the risk of ambiguity, it was decided to explicitly display on the new supplementary signs the emission classes to which the environmental zone applies. This is to prevent road users from making mistakes regarding the logic of which emission classes are higher or lower and which emission classes are cleaner or more polluting.

The user survey concludes that with the proposed modifications to the sign and an adequate information campaign, road users may make fewer mistakes and the comprehensibility and clarity of the new signage shall be increased.

4.1 SME test

On 31 January 2023, as part of the SME test, discussions were held with six SMEs regarding the intention to introduce zero-emission zones for taxis. The SMEs are active in the consumer taxi market and in target group transport, in various parts of the Netherlands. The participants in the panel discussion are positive about the Decree. They endorse the underlying sustainability ambitions and are of the opinion that the plans are feasible, but have a number of concerns.

The first is that wheelchair taxis and taxis for recumbent patient transport shall be exempted, and that the expiry of that exemption in 2030 shall be reviewed in time to determine whether sufficient affordable, zero-emission wheelchair taxis shall be available. This shall be reviewed in 2028, see Section 2.3.

A second concern for the participants is that there must be sufficient charging infrastructure, including so-called fast charging stations, possibly especially for taxis. Municipalities facilitate the availability of sufficient charging infrastructure and coordinate this with the network operator and relevant market parties, as also laid down in the Agreement Framework. The central government also cooperates with these parties within the so-called National Charging Infrastructure Agenda (NAL). The charging needs of taxis are taken into account in the inventory made of the required charging infrastructure in this context. The NAL aims to ensure that the development of charging infrastructure in the Netherlands aligns with the growth of all types of electric transport, with the primary goal of providing sufficient charging options. In the NAL cooperation agreement, concrete arrangements have been made between the central government and the regions in this regard²².

It is important for the SMEs that close attention is paid to target group transport. According to them, this serves as a form of public transport for people who cannot use regular public transport. Emission-free driving should not be at the expense of the service provided to these people, for example, because charging would be required during a journey. It is important that clients in the target group transport (mostly municipalities) pay attention to this. Within the framework of the Covenant and Administrative Agreement on Zero Emission Target Group Transport, clients in target group transport are encouraged and assisted by the central government in the procurement of emission-free transport²³.

In the SME panel discussion, it was further discussed that, in order to reduce the administrative burden for SMEs, it is important that there is one desk where exemptions can be applied for, and that all municipalities with a zero-emission zone for taxis apply the same exemption policy. Participants pointed out that there are taxis that operate throughout the country, and it should therefore be possible to obtain an exemption for all zero-emission zones that is valid for a longer period. This input from SMEs shall be taken into account in the development of the exemption policy.

4.2 Internet consultation

An internet consultation on the draft Decree took place from 18 August to 15 September 2023. A total of 15 responses were received. Four individuals responded, seven companies or representatives of companies, and four municipalities. While the responses are generally positive about the possibility for municipalities to establish a zero-emission zone for taxis, the parties call attention to a number of points.

Three responses indicate that the access requirements, as explained in Section 2.2.4, apply to each zero-emission zone for taxis regardless of when a municipality establishes the zone. According to one umbrella organisation, this means that operators may be informed shortly before the introduction of a zone that their taxi is not permitted to operate within the zone. One municipality requests that the access requirements of a zone depend on the time of its establishment. This alternative was not selected. Uniform access requirements for all zero-emission zones prevent operators from being confronted with different situations in different zero-emission zones. The uniform transitional regime is based on the national taxi fleet and the average depreciation period of taxis. Municipalities shall have to communicate and consult with the local taxi industry in good

²² Parliamentary Papers II 2021/22, 31305, No 351; www.agendalaadinfrastructuur.nl.

²³ <https://www.crow.nl/crow-doelgroepenvervoer/zero-emissie-doelgroepenvervoer>.

time if they want to establish a zero-emission zone. If necessary, a municipality may temporarily grant additional exemptions.

One municipality asks why the access requirements specify the date of 1 January 2025.²⁴ This was chosen in consultation with municipalities, representatives of the taxi sector and other relevant parties, and after studying the availability and cost of ownership of zero-emission taxis. The date chosen coincides with the time from which municipalities can establish a zero-emission zone for taxis, which in turn coincides with the time when a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries can be established.

One private individual asks why more generic policies were not chosen. The central government has chosen to make commercial transport greener in cities first, because this is the most efficient and cost-effective. Two (representatives of) taxi companies emphasise the importance of sufficient (fast) charging infrastructure and market-based charging rates. One of them would also like to see a 'broad exemption policy', and one municipality also made two comments about the exemption policy. The exemption policy is being formulated together with the municipalities and in consultation with the industry.

In general, the system for the proposed sign is not called into question, but further clarification is requested. In addition, a number of parties made suggestions to refine the wording and the road sign with associated supplementary signs and to clarify the explanatory notes. Many of these suggestions have been adopted.

With regard to the system of using colours and displaying emission classes on the road sign and the associated supplementary signs, a specific response was submitted by a private individual. This suggestion was included as a consideration earlier in the preparation phase. The final choice for the system was made on the basis of expert judgment from parties such as the National Signposting Service, municipalities and the police, and the user test. The user test showed that the supplementary sign is easier to interpret if all emission classes that do not have access are displayed. It was also decided to use the colours already assigned to emission classes in the RVV 1990 and recorded on existing supplementary signs. The choice to change the system of the supplementary signs from 'permitted' to 'prohibited' was made in line with the existing system in the RVV 1990. This does not display the emission classes that do have access.

Critical responses were also received regarding the number of signs in combination with the road sign for the environmental zones. However, the proposed road sign with the associated supplementary signs precisely replaces the road signs for both zero-emission zones for urban logistics (C22c) and environmental zones (C22a) to prevent an excessive number of road signs.

The response from an interest group to explicitly include mobile machinery and tractors as permitted vehicle categories on the supplementary signs does not lead to a change, as mobile machinery and tractors are not subject to the zero-emission zone regime. This shall also not be the case for the time being, which is why they have not been added.

One municipality requests flexibility regarding the supplementary signs. In order to make it as clear as possible for road users, it is necessary that the supplementary signs for environmental zones and zero-emission zones are the same everywhere.

As a result of the responses from municipalities to combine time window zones, pedestrian zones and zero-emission zones into a single road sign, discussions were held with the municipalities concerned. The problem of combining signs for zero-emission zones and other types of areas cannot be solved by adapting the main or supplementary signs for the zero-emission zones. The supplementary sign indicates which vehicles the main sign applies to. Limiting the time of the supplementary sign would mean that the main sign did not apply outside these times. Municipalities may, however, establish a time window area within a zero-emission zone.

²⁴ Initially, the plan was to enable zero-emission zones for taxis as of 1 January 2025. In the meantime, this date has been postponed to 1 January 2026.

The responses to the zero-emission zones for urban logistics and possible exemptions for certain vehicle categories fall outside the scope of this Decree and do not lead to changes to the road sign.

4.3 ATR (Advisory Board on Regulatory Burden) test

On 14 September 2023, the Advisory College issued a regulatory opinion on the draft decision. The Board recommends that the Decree be submitted after a number of points of advice have been taken into account.

First, the Board recommends ensuring that municipalities establishing a zero-emission zone for taxis facilitate sufficient charging infrastructure and grid capacity. The Agreement Framework stipulates that municipalities facilitate the availability of sufficient charging infrastructure and that they consult with local taxi operators to determine whether the preconditions for a zero-emission zone (including sufficient charging infrastructure) are met. When making the Traffic Decree by means of which municipalities subsequently establish a zero-emission zone for taxis, they also check whether all the preconditions have been met. Objections and appeals are possible against a Traffic Decree. Section 4.1 explains what the central government and municipalities are doing to ensure sufficient charging infrastructure and grid capacity.

Second, the Board recommends organising a single uniform access regime (including exemptions) together with municipalities. How this is done is outlined in Sections 2.2.4 and 2.4.

The Board also recommends addressing the financial and tax provisions for taxi operators and agreements with municipalities regarding the communication on this. Operators can use the Environmental Investment Allowance (MIA) scheme to make tax-efficient investments in environmentally friendly business assets. In 2024, MIA could be used for the purchase of an electric or hydrogen-powered taxi with nine seats or for wheelchair transport. Each year, the business assets eligible for MIA are redefined. This depends, among other things, on the additional costs of an environmentally friendly business asset. More information can be found at www.rvo.nl/miavamil. Municipalities may offer additional financial facilities to operators and shall communicate accordingly.

Finally, the Board recommends completing the (regulatory) costs for companies. If municipalities decide to establish a zero-emission zone for taxis, they shall clarify the impact on operators in the Traffic Decree and weigh this against other interests, see further Section 2.6.

4.4 Preliminary scrutiny

On 1 December 2023, the draft Decree was submitted to the Senate and the House of Representatives of the States General for preliminary scrutiny on the basis of Article 2b of the Road Traffic Act. On 11 September 2024, the House of Representatives asked to what extent the draft Decree aligns with the policy intentions. This question was answered on 8 October 2024. This reply was then put on the agenda of the Committee's debate on Sustainable Transport on 17 October 2024. The answer did not lead to further responses.

4.5 Notification [XX]

The draft of this Decree was submitted to the European Commission on [XX] (notification number XX), under Article 5(1) of Directive (EU) 2015/1535 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 September 2015 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical regulations and of rules on Information Society services (OJEU 2015, L 241).

Pursuant to Article 6(1) of the aforementioned Directive, a standstill period of 3 months was subsequently observed, which thus ended on [XX].

II. Explanatory Notes by Article

Article I (RVV 1990)

Part A (Article 86d of the RVV 1990)

Subparts 1 and 4

The former sign for an environmental zone and the sign for a zero-emission zone have been replaced by a new road sign indicating an environmental zone and/or zero-emission zone with a new alphanumeric combination. The supplementary signs listed in Annex 1 determine which vehicle category and type of zone apply. A combination of an environmental zone and zero-emission zone is possible. An environmental zone, in an area with a zero-emission zone, can now also be established solely for diesel passenger cars. In such an area, a zero-emission zone applies to commercial vehicles and an environmental zone applies to diesel passenger cars. In all cases, the road sign C22e is combined with one or more supplementary signs (C22e1 to C22e10).

Subpart 1

The Dutch term 'bussen' is replaced by 'autobussen'. 'Autobussen' were always meant and are also defined in Article 1 of the RVV 1990. They shall also be mentioned in the description of the supplementary signs.

Subpart 2

The entry into force of this Decree on 1 January 2026 shall allow the former paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 86d to expire and the other paragraphs to be renumbered. Indeed, the Decree of 29 October 2019²⁵ already stated that the original paragraphs 2 and 3 would cease to apply after 1 January 2022 and 1 January 2025, respectively.

Subpart 3

This part of the Article indicates which supplementary sign(s) can be placed. Combinations with other supplementary signs are not possible for environmental zones and zero-emission zones. The supplementary signs C22e2, C22e4, and C22e5 have a new meaning. The other supplementary signs (C22e1 and C22e6 to C22e10) replace existing supplementary signs with the same meaning.

C22e2 indicates that taxis can also be added as a vehicle category to which the zero-emission zone applies.

The supplementary signs C22e4 and C22e5 allow for an environmental zone that only applies to diesel passenger cars. As a result, in an area with a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles, an environmental zone for diesel passenger cars may also apply.

The other new supplementary signs replace existing supplementary signs and thus have the same meaning as the earlier version of the signs. The supplementary sign C22e6 replaces the old sign C22a2, C22e7 replaces the old sign C22a3, C22e8 replaces the old sign C22a5, C22e9 replaces the old sign C22a7, and finally, the new supplementary sign C22e10 replaces the old sign C22a9.

There is no supplementary sign C22e3 yet. This number is not yet used so that a new supplementary sign can be added in the future with a new vehicle category to which the zero-emission zone applies.

Part B (Article 86e of the RVV 1990)

Subpart 1

²⁵ Decree of 29 October 2019 amending the Regulation on Traffic Rules and Traffic Signs 1990, the Decree on Administrative Provisions on Road Traffic and the Registration Number Regulation in connection with the harmonisation of environmental zones (Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 2019, 398).¹⁹

This Article regulates which vehicle categories can be included in a zero-emission zone. Only zero-emission commercial vehicles, lorries and taxis may enter a zero-emission zone. The Article ensures that the new road sign C22e, which shall also apply to environmental zones, can also apply to zero-emission zones. The adaptation of the text and the new road sign with supplementary sign shall make it possible to add taxis to zero-emission zones. As with environmental zones, the access regime for a zero-emission zone is indicated by a road sign in combination with a supplementary sign. The supplementary sign makes it clear to which vehicle the environmental zone or zero-emission zone applies. It is only permitted to use the supplementary signs included here in an environmental zone or zero-emission zone. A zero-emission zone for taxis shall therefore always be accompanied by a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries. See further the Explanatory Notes under Part B, Subparts 1 and 4.

Subpart 2

The supplementary signs C22e1 and C22e2 indicate the vehicle category to which the zero-emission zone applies. There is no road sign C22e3 yet, so a new supplementary sign with an additional vehicle category can be added to the zero-emission zone in the future. The supplementary sign C22e1 has the same meaning as the old supplementary sign C22c1. The new supplementary sign C22e2 establishes a zero-emission zone that also applies to taxis.

Subpart 3

By adding new paragraphs 8 and 9, there is a transitional period for certain taxis that have already been registered as taxis before 1 January 2026 and which are not yet emission-free. These are taxis with emission class 5 that retain access until 31 December 2026 and taxis with emission class 6 that retain access to the zero-emission zone of taxis until 31 December 2028. The exemption ensures that already registered taxis can continue to enter the zero-emission zone for a few more years. The exemption is not intended for taxis that are registered after the entry into force of the possibility to establish zero-emission zones.

Part C

As the existing signs for an environmental zone and a zero-emission zone are being replaced by a new road sign with a new number, this Article has been amended.

Part D

To give the road operator time to adjust the road signs, the previous road signs remain valid for an additional 6 months. This limited transitional period was chosen in order, on the one hand, not to overwhelm municipalities with new signs but, on the other hand, to quickly offer citizens and businesses the uniformity of the new road signs.

Part E

The old road signs for environmental zones (C22a) and zero-emission zones (C22c) are replaced by a new road sign (C22e) with associated supplementary signs. The end of an environmental zone or zero-emission zone is indicated by the new road sign C22f.

Article II (BABW)

Part A

(Article 8(4) of the BABW)

The previous road signs C22a, for environmental zones, and C22c, for zero-emission zones, are replaced by a new road sign C22e. This new sign, like previous signs C22a and C22c, can only be placed with one or more supplementary signs as referred to in Articles 86d and 86e of the RVV 1990. Since the supplementary signs C22e4 and C22e5 can only be placed in combination with the supplementary signs for a zero-emission zone, an environmental zone for diesel passenger cars can only be established in the case of a zero-emission zone for commercial vehicles and lorries or taxis. In the absence of a zero-emission zone, the possibility remains to establish an environmental zone for diesel passenger cars and commercial vehicles.

Part B

(Article 9(1) of the BABW)

With this amendment to Article 9(1) of the BABW, it shall be possible for municipalities to place the word 'zone' above the new road sign C22e, as was previously the case for signs C22a and C22c, with, for example, an indication of the area in question.

Article III

This Decree shall enter into force on 1 January 2026. This date was chosen in consultation with municipalities, representatives of the taxi sector and other relevant parties, and after studying the availability and cost of ownership of zero-emission taxis. The date of entry into force fits within the system of fixed regulatory change dates. This date takes into account the minimum implementation period of 3 months between publication and entry into force that applies under the Code on Inter-administrative Relations [Code Interbestuurlijke Verhoudingen] to regulations that are directly relevant to local and regional authorities. Article I(D) shall be repealed on 1 July 2026; see the Explanatory Notes to Article I(D).

THE STATE SECRETARY FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND WATER MANAGEMENT,