

Feedback on proposal to encode tachograph symbols ([L2/18-090](#))

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Introduction. I agree 100% with the author, that encoding the symbols necessary for this notation, would be greatly beneficial. It has a lot of precedent and plenty of evidence. However, I disagree with some specifics of the proposal which I discuss here.

CIRILLYC CAPITAL LETTER DE. The symbol this is meant to represent in tachographs, is used in a very abstract way, to represent the car itself, the driver or just the tachograph. I however strongly disagree this unification is warranted.

Firstly, the glyphs are different, in the evidence provided the symbol displays a horizontally symmetric design while “Д” is asymmetrical. The symmetry of the design makes sense, since it could be interpreted as the body of a car, with an opening for the windshield and the two “legs” being the wheels. So, maintaining that aspect of the symbol is important.

Secondly, this is meant to be used as a symbol, that has no genetic relation to the Cyrillic script. If a user sees the letter de, they may think as being some kind of bug. Since they may expect only Latin letters.

Thirdly, this has a casing relation, which is unprecedented for a generic symbol. Even mathematical alphanumeric symbols, though have a casing relation specified, applications such as Java do not have an implementation for casing like they have for other letters. This is made worst by the fact that while the lowercase retains visual similarity (д), the lowercase changes shape completely when italicized (đ).

Therefore, I propose to unify this symbol with ONCOMING AUTOMOBILE (🚗 1F698).

If the consortium believes atomic encoding is better due to the big glyphic and semantic difference, then I suggest an appropriate entry in the code charts below, along with a proposed name.

Entry.

 TACHOGRAPH SYMBOL FOR AUTOMOBILE

- Used in tachographs to indicate the driver, the automobile or the tachograph itself

→ 1F698 🚗 ONCOMING AUTOMOBILE

Symbol for break. In the proposal it is pointed out that the glyph for use with the tachograph, is just a set of three orthogonal lines with minimal width. However, the proposal unifies this symbol with the existing BED (🛏 1F6CF), once again I have my objections.

Firstly, the glyphs differ by so much, that the relation between the characters is very abstract. Is like if somebody would want to encode a bowtie emoji, to complement with the necktie one (👔 1F454), but the consortium unified it with BOWTIE character (🎀 22C8).

Secondly, while implementations have settled on a side view of the bed (like this glyph implies) and the orientation of the headrest is correct, nothing is stopping implementations to draw the character from a different point of view or orientation (even if it's the text presentation), like the official code chart glyph for this character.

Another possibility is to use the character SLEEPING ACCOMODATION (🛏️ 1F6CC), however that character depicts a person sleeping, which corrupts the original meaning of conveying rest, but for the car.

While it is not an official emoji, that hasn't stopped companies like Microsoft from emojifying it. Having a separate symbol for the tachograph would greatly alleviate the confusion and would mean that implementations won't have to bother with setting the text presentation *a priori*.

So I propose to encode this symbol atomically; again, with the appropriate entry below.

Entry.

TACOGRAPH SYMBOL FOR REST

- This symbol is meant to represent an abstract bed

→ 2441  OCR CHAIR

→ 1F6CF  BED

Helm and steering wheel symbols. To clear the facts about the HELM SYMBOL, it is not true that this symbol is “only” used to label nautical terms in encyclopedias (the ANCHOR (⚓ 2693) also does that) as the proposal implies. This symbol (⚓ 2388) and the steering wheel are both considered abstract technical symbols, with very similar semantics, so one may propose unifying them, however this is the wrong approach.

Firstly, the glyph expected from the tachograph community varies depending on the display, as the evidence shows, however its identity remains through. Trying to unify it with a different looking symbol, that is more related to boats instead of automobiles, would only cause confusion and a future proposal to amend it.

Secondly, the steering wheel symbol is already used in dashboards of cars to indicate a problem with the steering system. It is very probable that the symbol may appear in the user's manuals of such cars. With the advent of autonomous driving, it may be used to indicate the user that they should regain manual control. None of this is expected from the helm symbol.

Thirdly, either symbol (not both at the same time) are good candidates for emojification, because they can be used to convey the concept of control. Having a second character that is not emojified (preferably the steering wheel), will allow developers to implement the tachograph notation without worrying about having to set the text presentation (which current text editors do not allow you to do *a posteriori*).

The steering wheel should have a cross reference to the HELM SYMBOL, due to the shared semantics about control.

Code allocation. My last objection to the proposal is the code allocation proposed.

In the proposal:

- 1F9CF - STEERING WHEEL: Since the Miscellaneous Symbols and Arrows block is tentatively full already, this proposal has placed it in the Supplemental Symbols and Pictographs, which conveys the idea that it could be emojiified; and as I already argued, it is better to only have one emoji for this semantic and that is the helm symbol. I propose to encode it in the Transport and Map Symbols block, since it better aligns with its semantic and is less likely to be emojiified. The exact code position is irrelevant.
- 1F7D9 - WHITE SQUARE WITH HORIZONTAL BISECTING LINE: I agree with placing this character in the Geometric Shapes Extended block, along with a reference to 25EB.
- 2B96 - VERTICAL BAR WITH BLACK RIGHT & 2B97 - BLACK RIGHT-POINTING TRIANGLE WITH VERTICAL BAR: This is allocated to the Miscellaneous Symbols and Arrows block, however this may enter in conflict with the proposal [L2/17-435](#), which allocated the codepoints to two arrows used in old computer character encodings; of course, those characters could simply be relocated to the Supplemental Arrows C block, but the proponents of that proposal (including myself) would prefer to use BMP codepoints for such historically significant characters (after all, our proposal came first). To avoid conflict and to future proof for further additions, I suggest creating a new block and allocating those symbols there; it would be called Miscellaneous Technical Extended A or Miscellaneous Technical Supplement; It could start at 1FC00.
- Similarly, I would also place the TACHOGRAPH SYMBOL FOR AUTOMOBILE and the TACHOGRAPH SYMBOL FOR REST in the new block I just proposed.