

EU LEGISLATION UPDATE

APRIL 2007



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE

FIVA RESPONSE TO EU COMMISSION CONSULTATION ON URBAN TRANSPORT

FIVA made a submission to the European Commission's consultation on Urban Transport in April (see February EU issues update). While the policy examination is broad (encompassing all forms of public and private transport, urban transport problems and potential solutions) FIVA focused on highlighting its concerns that measures to address urban pollution and congestion have in a number of cases disproportionately impacted upon historic vehicle use – either with historic vehicles and older vehicles being banned from use at particular times or with the threat of higher congestion charges for older vehicles. The response explained FIVA's research undertaken in 2005/06 which showed that historic vehicles account for 0.8% of all vehicles in Europe and only travel annually 0.07% of the distance travelled by modern vehicles. The response then stressed that the environmental impact of historic vehicle use is therefore negligible and that FIVA feels that any measures specifically - or unintentionally - targeting historic vehicles are disproportionate to their aim and that the impact on historic vehicles owners is therefore unfair, especially in light of the fact that catalysers, soot filters and other technical solutions for cleaner emission are not an option for historic vehicles. The European Commission is undertaking this consultation as a first step to determine how it may best contribute to the development of policies to improve urban transport in Europe. FIVA therefore urged the Commission to recognise its concerns and accordingly offer positive advice in any guidance material to and actions with member state governments and local authorities when pursuing its urban transport policy initiatives.

EC COMMISSION CONSULTATION ON MARKET BASED INSTRUMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The European Commission has just started a consultation on the possibility of the use of market based instruments for environmental policy. The EU has increasingly favoured economic or market-based instruments ("MBI") – such as indirect taxation, targeted subsidies or tradable emission rights because it believes that they provide a flexible and cost-effective means for reaching stated environmental policy objectives. This consultation is designed to help the Commission decide how to proceed further. A part of the paper deals with road transport – noting the high contribution that road transport makes to CO₂ and pollutants and detailing the market based instruments which have been pursued to date at EU, national and local level in order to try to meet environmental policy objectives. The Commission is now soliciting comment on how these may be taken forward or extended across the EU. FIVA will participate in the consultation – and use the opportunity to further promote the research findings and to reiterate the comments on vehicle use made in the consultation on Urban Transport

FIA HERITAGE COMMISSION MEETING

In mid-April, Horst Brüning attended the FIA's Heritage Commission and provided its members with an update on FIVA's legislation activities over the past half year. In his presentation HB explained how the development of environmental policy is clearly now presenting the greatest threat to the use of historic vehicles and accordingly stressed the need to take proactive action to address these threats. Additionally, it was agreed that one of the FIA Commission members would help FIVA to manage regulatory developments in the UN which meets in Geneva – one of the more pressing issues being the discussions on the use of day-time running lights which is progressing more quickly at UN level than at EU level where it is currently on hold until after the summer.

INFORMATION

The EU Commission CO2 proposals

As noted in previous EU issue updates, the European Commission intends to ensure that CO2 emissions from new cars are reduced to 120 grams per kilometre by 2012 (by car manufacturers achieving an average of 130g/km through improvements in engine technology and accompanying measures such as increased use of biofuels delivering the remaining 10g/km). It has now also published its impact assessment of the proposal which shows that the initiative will cost €10-23bn to achieve – an equivalent of €24-54 per tonne of CO2 abated. In each of these cases, the lower figure assumes that other measures being put in place to reduce emissions (taxes and consumer awareness) will result in increased demand for more efficient cars.

Meanwhile, the German Government now seems ready to support the proposed increased CO2 limits. As President of the European Council, Germany is expected to table a Resolution during the Environment Council in June calling on the Commission to publish a proposal to achieve the above aims detailed above by the end of the year. The German Government has however, made clear that it will resist any proposal that disproportionately penalise its large auto manufacturers.

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The FIVA Legislation Commission members are: Horst Brüning (Chairman), Tidde Bresters (the Netherlands), Andrew Burt, (UK), David Davies (UK), Marek Gacek (Poland), Zoltán Gárdos (Hungary), Dage Groop (Finland), Adalberto Gueli (Italy), Peeter Henning (Belgium), Maik Hirschfeld (Germany), David Hurley (UK), Winfried Kallinger (Austria), Jim Krier (Luxembourg), Victor Papadopoulos (Cyprus), Patrick Rollet (France), Zdenek Ruzicka (Czech Republic) and Carla Fiocchi (Secretariat). Andrew Turner of EPPA works with the Committee.