

EU LEGISLATION UPDATE

JUNE 2007



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE

FIVA to examine proposals to ban incandescent domestic lightbulbs

The European Lamp Companies Federation (ELCF) is currently working with the European Commission in preparation for a EU Regulation which is intended to ban from sale all traditional incandescent domestic lightbulbs from 2015. The purpose of the Regulation is to cut CO2 emissions from domestic lighting by 60 per cent between now and 2015 - based on a first phase of binding efficiency standards to enter into force in 2009 covering bulbs over 100 Watts. The objective is to then introduce lower wattage bulbs, down to 25W in 2015. By then all traditional incandescent light bulbs would effectively be banned.

The ELCF is aware that the anticipated measures may prove difficult for some users (they had identified lamps used in ovens and medical devices). FIVA has therefore been in contact with the ELCF who have asked FIVA provide it with the range of fittings and wattages and voltages used in historic vehicles in order to identify whether FIVA may be impacted by their proposals. If problems are identified, ELCF will work with FIVA to find a solution satisfying all parties. FIVA's Legislation Commission members are therefore currently compiling the necessary information.

INFORMATION

Discussions on CO2 emissions of new vehicles develop

The European car industry has presented its views on the European Commission's proposed reduction of CO2 emissions of new cars (see EU Issues updates of January –May 2007). Its position is primarily designed to avoid distorting competition between manufacturers as a result of the proposed new emission limits. The industry wants any future reduction target to be differentiated between manufacturers according to the average weight of their model range, with makers of smaller cars subject to tighter targets than those making larger ones. It also wants the manufacturers to be able to average any individual target across their product range, so that extra improvements made on one model could compensate for possible increases in others.

In parallel, the European Parliament's Environment Committee has started its deliberations on the Commission's proposal. The rapporteur on the proposal, UK Liberal MEP Chris Davies, has stirred up the debate by drafting a report (which will be non-binding) which:

- calls on manufacturers which fail to meet annual targets on CO2 emissions to be fined, while those that meet them should be financially rewarded;

- claims that the Commission proposal is too costly as it does not give manufacturers enough time to make the necessary design changes – instead Mr. Davies wants manufacturers to have three extra years to meet the EU target – but believes that the manufacturers should be fully responsible for meeting the 120g/km mark (rather than having to meet the 130 g/km with parallel measures delivering the remaining 10g/km reduction through the introduction of efficiency requirements on air conditioning systems, compulsory tyre pressure monitors and maximum tyre rolling resistance limits and through reductions in fossil CO₂ derived from an increased use of transport biofuels);
- proposes setting binding interim emissions targets for each model from 2011, so that by 2015 average new car emissions are no higher than 120g/km;
- calls for average emissions to be lower than 95g/km by 2020, while a target for 2025 should be defined by 2016 - he has suggested a limit of 70g/km - he believe that these objectives should be met by carmakers through technical improvements alone;
- proposes banning new cars from emitting 240g/km by 2015.
- proposes limiting the top speed of all new cars to 162 kilometres per hour by 2013.

The car industry has reacted to these proposals saying that the revised emissions proposals are too strict and should not focus solely on vehicle technology and has criticised the proposals to limit the top speed of cars to 160 kilometres per hour and to ban vehicles that emit more than 240g/km of CO₂ by 2015 as “close to political symbolism” - noting that the top speed of a car makes little difference to its greenhouse emissions.

In the Parliament’s committee itself, half the members supported the main theme of Mr. Davies report – including the leaders of the main socialist and Christian Democratic groups, but the European Commission and German MEPs felt the measures were not realistic. Also while there was general support for Mr Davies' proposal to define emission reduction targets for different models of vehicle based on their size and weight, some members were less enthusiastic about the proposed long-term targets of 95g/km by 2020 and 70g/km by 2025.

European parliament starts its examination of the Fuel proposal

First stage discussions in the European Parliament on the fuels proposal (see January 2007 EU issues update) have led to calls by the rapporteur for fuel producers to reduce the life-cycle carbon emissions of their products, and to criticism by the Green Group of the proposal to increase the vapour pressure limit to allow higher blends of ethanol in fuels on the grounds that it will increase emissions of volatile organic compounds. Amendments have not yet been tabled to the proposal.

EU Ministers agree new transport energy strategy

EU transport and energy ministers have agreed a new European energy strategy for transport which calls for efficiency improvements in all transport sectors. The strategy is designed to ensure "a supply of energy for transport that is secure, sustainable and affordable in the long term, as well as a demand that is environmentally conscious". It has four main priorities: improving the energy efficiency of all modes of transport; increasing the use of alternative and renewable fuels; promoting energy-conscious user behaviour; and promoting integrated transport systems in order

to minimise energy use. The strategy is optimistic about the potential impact of biofuels, but stressed the need to ensure their sustainability and to prioritise second-generation fuels. It also acknowledged that Europe's carmakers have made progress in improving energy efficiency but believes that further efforts are necessary – and called for continued use of economic instruments to encourage people to buy fuel-efficient cars. However, the Strategy notably made no reference to the Commission's proposal on CO₂-based car taxation which was presented by the Commission in 2005 (see July 2005 EU issues update).

Netherlands plans new tax on most polluting cars

The Dutch finance ministry has proposed that petrol cars emitting more than 240 grams per kilometre (g/km) of CO₂ would have to pay an extra €80-90 for every gram emitted above the threshold and that the same would apply to diesel cars emitting more than 200g/km. In practice the new tax would apply to most sports utility vehicles/4x4s. The proposals are part of a new tax plan to be submitted to the lower house of parliament. The Netherlands wants to achieve energy savings of 2 per cent per year and cut CO₂ emissions by 30 per cent by 2020.

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The FIVA Legislation Commission members are: Horst Brüning (Chairman), Tiddo 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.