

EU LEGISLATION UPDATE

NOVEMBER 2007



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE

European Commission decides against proposing to require daytime running light use

In 2006, the European Commission announced its intention to draft a proposal for a Directive which would require all vehicles to use daytime running lights (see November 2006 EU issues update). It then consulted stakeholders to ascertain the most appropriate way to do so. However, after much deliberation, the European Commission has now decided that it will not propose such a Directive and will only continue discussions at EU and UN level with the objective to adopt rules requiring all **new** vehicles to be equipped with have dedicated daytime running lights. Therefore, there is no longer a possibility of all vehicles having to use “dipped-beam” lights during daylight hours. The Commission’s decision was primarily a result of its concerns that the safety of vulnerable road users – including motorcyclists – may not benefit from “dipped-beam” DRL use. The Commission announced its decision during a presentation to a European Motorcycle Industry Association conference at the end of November.

Member States unable to agree Passenger Car Taxation Directive

In late November, the EU Member States held a discussion in the European Council on the European Commission’s proposal on passenger car taxation. The proposal aims to require Member States to gradually replace car registration taxes with annual circulation taxes and for Member States to link 25 per cent of the tax paid on cars to CO₂ emissions by 2008, rising to 50 per cent by 2010. However, Member States are still unable to agree a common approach – and may not be able to do so in the immediate future as the Directive needs to be adopted with a unanimous vote. FIVA has maintained dialogue with the Commission department responsible for the Directive so that the Commission understands that historic vehicles are taxed differently to “passenger cars” in most member states and to ensure that there is no intention that the proposal will not impact the existing historic vehicle tax structures.

INFORMATION

Germany and France disagree over car CO₂ cuts

The European Commission is due to publish its proposal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from new cars before the end of the year. However, France is now threatening to block progress on the proposal if the chosen approach unfairly disadvantages manufacturers of smaller vehicles – on which profit margins are much tighter. In parallel, German manufacturers are calling for overall emission reduction target to be differentiated between vehicle models, with less stringent average limits for larger cars even though a recent report by the environmental group Transport & Environment has shown that average CO₂ emissions from new cars made in France and Italy fell by an average 1.6 per cent in 2006 while emissions from new German-made vehicles increased by 0.6 per cent. The report also noted that Peugeot-Citroen was the lowest emitting manufacturer in 2006, with a fleet average of 142 grams of CO₂ per kilometre (g/km); Fiat and Renault came

second and third in the ranking, with 144g/km and 147g/km respectively; but German manufacturers Daimler (188g/km) and BMW (184g/km) had the worst average emissions.

Germany Parliament approves exemption for historic vehicles from urban vehicle restrictions

The German Parliament has adopted a law which allows historic cars unrestricted access to “low-emission” zones of urban areas. The decision was introduced as an amendment to the regulation on low-emission vehicle labelling and was acceptable to the Parliamentarians as they recognised that the 210,000 historic vehicles (155,000 with historic “H” license plates and 55 000 with red 07 plates – the transferable license plates for historic cars) are not used enough to have an impact on the overall PM emissions footprint of a city. FIVA will use this positive development to help other administrations/decision makers recognise that historic vehicles should not be disproportionately and negatively impacted by environmental laws designed to improve air quality. FIVA understands that this new provision will also apply to non-German historic vehicles.

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The FIVA Legislation Commission members are: Winfried Kallinger (Chairman), Tiddo Bresters (Vice Chairman), Lars Genild (Vice Chairman), Patrick Rollet (Member/Secretary), Andrew Burt (Member), David Davies (Member), Carla Fiocchi (Member), Zoltán Gárdos (Member), Adalberto Gueli (Member), Maik Hirschfeld (Member), Horst Brüning (Member coopted), Peeter Henning (Member coopted), and Andrew Turner of EPPA works with the Committee.