

EU ISSUES UPDATE

December 2020



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE

European Commission adopts its sustainable and smart Mobility Strategy

On 9 December, the European Commission adopted its Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy. The paper is relatively brief (see link below¹) and covers all forms of mobility i.e. land, rail, air and sea. It confirms that the European Commission views the most serious challenge to be to significantly reduce transport emissions and to make transport more sustainable - and that ultimately road transport vehicles should be zero-emission. Hence many of the measures are aimed toward significantly reducing the current dependence on fossil fuels and in so doing, creating an environment in which historic vehicles will be very different to the majority of the vehicle park. Of note to FIVA are that the European Commission:

- Will further focus on making transport cleaner and safer
- Aims to have 30 million zero-emission cars on the road by 2030 and by 2050 for nearly all cars, vans, buses and new heavy-duty vehicles to be zero-emission
- Will further focus on using ITS to improve safety and clean, efficient mobility (revision of ITS Directive 2021)
- Will continue to focus on the “polluter-pays” and “user-pays” road pricing – specifically via adoption of the Road Pricing Directive (which is currently stuck in negotiations) - it calls for all external costs to be internalised by 2050 and notes the European Commission will pursue measures to deliver fair and efficient pricing across all transport modes
- Aims for automated mobility to be deployed at a large scale by 2030

¹ EUR-Lex - 52020DC0789 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

- Intends to ensure the modernisation of fleets using retrofitting and scrappage schemes - it also notes that fleet retrofitting and renewal schemes should be consistent with the European Green Deal which also has a focus on reuse and recycling as well as carbon reduction (Action in 2021)
- Wants Roadworthiness Testing to ensure the lifetime compliance of vehicles with emission and safety standards
- Will develop rules for environmental, energy and safety performance of tyres - generation of microplastics is a core concern (Action in 2023)
- Will consider additional measures to support sustainable, renewable and low-carbon fuels so they may be quickly deployed on a large scale
- Will further focus on making urban mobility cleaner and safer (Revision of the Urban Mobility Package in 2021)
- Wants 100 cities to be climate-neutral by 2030 – this is alongside the zero-pollution plan currently under consultation.

The accompanying Staff Working Document notes the differences between the large number of Urban Vehicle Access Regulations and Low Emission Zones and notes that the differences pose problems to consumers/drivers. However, it makes no mention of Guidance from the EU to help reduce the differences, noting only that “it should be possible to use a comparable methodology for vehicles from all EU countries, which could remove the need for registration of vehicles that comply with the LEZ-criteria, and thus reduce the administrative burden for foreign vehicle owners and city administrations”.

Industry Reactions to the Strategy have been varied:

- automotive industry group ACEA said the objective to have at least 30 million zero-emission cars on the road in 10 years’ time is “far removed from today’s reality...To meet the commission’s objective, we would need to see an almost 50-fold increase in zero-emission cars in circulation on our roads in just 10 years...Not all the conditions are in place for such a massive leap” and so called for a huge expansion in the provision of charging and refueling infrastructure for both cars and heavy-duty vehicles
- the biogas sector described the strategy as a major setback for decarbonising transport at acceptable cost and said that overlooking advanced biofuels will hamper swift decarbonisation, and “put at risk one of the industries that is helping Europe reach climate-neutrality by 2050”

- Gas vehicle lobby group NVGA Europe complained that the Strategy has ignored gas infrastructure and that it addresses a net-zero emissions target only through ‘tailpipe-zero’ and low emissions technologies
- The renewable ethanol association however expressed confidence that the strategy signals that sustainable low-carbon fuels will play a role in Europe’s road transport mix and that renewable ethanol will become more widely used.

The Strategy will be debated by the European Parliament in 2021. FIVA will use the debates to further raise FIVA’s profile in the new EP.

European Commission authorises the use of Chromium Trioxide under the REACH Directive

At the end of December, the European Commission finally authorised the CTAC’s application for the use of chromium trioxide. CTAC is one of a number of consortia which have applied for authorization for use of chromium trioxide for the purposes of chrome plating – but the CTAC application has the broadest scope as it is a joint application submitted by 7 applicants for the Consortium which consists of circa 150 members across the supply chain – i.e. importers, formulators, dealers, and users of chromium trioxide. However, the Commission’s approval has only been granted for 5 of the 6 uses requested – these are: Use 1 (formulation); Use 2 (hard chrome plating); Use 4 (surface treatment aeronautics and aerospace); Use 5 (miscellaneous surface treatment); and Use 6 (passivation of tin-plated steel (ETP)). Use of chromium trioxide for functional plating with decorative character (Use 3) is still under consideration by the European Commission although a decision is expected at some point in the near future. This decision is therefore a step in the right direction – but approval for use for functional plating with decorative character is still necessary.

INFORMATION

Truck makers aim to be fossil-fuel free by 2040

Truck manufacturers Volvo, Scania, Ford, Man, DAF and Daimler have said they will stop producing models running on petroleum-based fuels within 20 years. But they have noted that the change will only be possible if it is driven by demand and affordability as operators will not invest in zero-emission technologies if there is no straightforward and affordable way to run, refuel and recharge the vehicles – hence there is a need for joint action by industry and policy-makers. The manufacturers have noted that they are investing in new solutions, such as alternative fuels, batteries and hydrogen but have stressed that the energy demands of an HGV mean charging and refuelling infrastructure would have to “differ significantly” from that for cars suggesting that synthetic liquid fuels could play a part notably as these would require minimal modifications to vehicle design. Environmental lobby Group T & E have welcomed the intent to “green up their fleets” but is concerned about the use of biofuels or e-fuels - wanting

instead a phase out of internal combustion engines by 2035 for small and medium trucks and by 2040 for long haul trucks.

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The FIVA Legislation Commission members are: Lars Genild (Chairman), Giuseppe Dell'Aversano, Wolfgang Eckel, Carla Fiocchi, Laurent Heriou, Johann König, Stanislav Minářík, Bob Owen, Kurt Sjoberg, Harit Trivedi and Andrew Turner of EPPA works with the Committee.