

## EU ISSUES UPDATE

MARCH 2016



### OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE

#### **European Parliament Committee discusses the proposal to amend the Firearms Directive**

On March 15, the European Parliament Internal Market Committee held a public Hearing on the proposal to amend the Firearms Directive. It was an opportunity for the invited external parties to present their case and for Committee members to ask questions. The main points discussed were the impact of the provisions on museums and hunters and the issue of on-line sales'. The representative of a British military history museum took a firm line that it is unacceptable for museums to have to deactivate their store of weapons. He used an analogy that deactivating a weapon held by a museum which has both cultural and research value would be like taking an engine out of a historic vehicle. Vicky Ford (the British Committee Chair and rapporteur on the dossier) did raise concerns about the fact that the European Commission had not conducted an impact assessment of the proposals and also asked how many "collectors" there are and how important they are to the museums. A member representing the Socialist Group did not think that collectors need special treatment, while a number of other members noted that a definition of a "collector" is needed. The European Commission commented that collectors cannot be excluded from the provisions because the point of the proposed changes is to develop reliable data on weapons to ensure security – exemptions would therefore not resolve the concern.

FIVA has communicated its concerns about the impact of the proposed changes to the Directive to the rapporteur and the shadow rapporteurs. The core concern is that even deactivated weapons attached to or a part of a historic military vehicle may not be allowed to be owned by the collector. FIVA has suggested amendments which would redress the concern. These are incorporated in FIVA's position paper on the matter which can be found on the FIVA website.

**FIVA Action:** FIVA is now seeking meetings with the rapporteur and shadow rapporteurs to explain and seek support for our proposed amendments.

#### **European Commission consultation on Guidelines for low emission Zones**

The European Commission is holding a second open meeting on 11 April to discuss the work of its consultants which are making recommendations to help the Commission draft best practice guidance for Member States and local authorities wanting to implement low emission zones. FIVA has been involved in this process in order to reiterate the fact that historic vehicles are different to all other vehicles because of their age, use patterns and cultural value and to stress that they should therefore be exempted from LEZs because of the disproportionate and unfair impact on historic vehicles which are not their real target. FIVA also highlights the positive

precedents already provided by some countries. In these papers, FIVA has always explained a historic vehicle by using the FIVA definition.

FIVA action: FIVA will attend the meeting a portion of which will be devoted to a discussion about “definitions”.

## **INFORMATION**

### **Car emission discussions stall**

Negotiations between the EU institutions on new car emission levels and testing have stalled because of inter-institutional wrangling about decision making. Member States are concerned that the Parliament should not have the right to amend the rules for the introduction of the new real world driving emissions tests (RDE) as in the past it has only had a power of veto. The concern of the Member States is that the Parliament may exploit an opportunity to roll back a proposal by the Council to delay compliance timeframe for emissions limits tested through the RDE.

### **European Parliament Inquiry into VW emissions issue starts**

The European Parliament has started its investigation into the Volkswagen emission test scandal with Green MEPs calling for European Commission Elżbieta Bieńkowska and her predecessors Antonio Tajani and Günter Verheugen to be questioned – specifically to determine if any of them had any prior knowledge of Volkswagen’s test-rigging practices and failed to act on it.

The report, which will include policy recommendations, will be published by March 2017 – an interim report will be published in about 6 months’ time.

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The FIVA Legislation Commission members are: Tiddo Bresters (Chairman), Claude Delagneau, Wolfgang Eckel, Peter Edqvist, Carla Fiocchi, Lars Genild, Adalberto Gueli, Peeter Henning, Johann König, Stanislav Minářík, Bob Owen, Christos Petridis and Andrew Turner of EPPA works with the Committee.