

EU ISSUES UPDATE

JANUARY 2017



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE

EU Institutions close to finalising Firearms Directive

In January, the European Parliament Internal Market Committee adopted the negotiated text agreed between the European Council and the European Parliament on the Firearms Directive. In the text, deactivated firearms (including those on tanks and other military vehicles) will be classified as Category C which means that they need to be declared to the authorities. Given that the proposal as drafted by the European Commission in 2015 had called for deactivated firearms to be prohibited, this agreement is a very positive development and is the consequence of work by FIVA to ensure that historic military vehicle with deactivated firearms are not unfairly and unnecessarily impacted by the Directive.

INFORMATION

EU Air Quality Directives

Changes continue to be made to the Air Quality Directives which provide the air quality limits which determine when, where and how local authorities implement Low Emission Zones. The European Parliament has called for a recent proposal to amend the 2003 Directive to (amongst other matters) state that:

- Member States should take account of the need to reduce emissions, in particular of nitrogen oxides and fine particulate matter, in zones and agglomerations affected by excessive air pollutant concentrations and/or in those zones and agglomerations that contribute significantly to air pollution
- The Commission should set up a European Clean Air Forum to provide input for guidance and facilitate the coordinated implementation of legislation and policies related to improving air quality. The Group should include competent authorities of the Member States at all relevant levels, the Commission, industry, civil society, and the scientific community. The Forum should exchange experience and good practices, including on emission reductions from road transport.

Environment Agency European Air Quality Report

The EEA has published a report 'Air quality in Europe — 2015' which examines the exposure to air pollutants, provides a snapshot of air quality based on data from monitoring stations across Europe, and shows that most city dwellers continue to be exposed to air pollutants at levels

deemed unsafe by the World Health Organization (WHO). The most problematic pollutants affecting human health are particulate matter (PM), ground-level ozone (O3) and nitrogen dioxide (NO2). The report notes that even with continuous improvements in recent decades, air pollution is still affecting health, reducing quality of life and life expectancy and also generates considerable economic impacts, increasing medical costs and reducing productivity through loss of working days.

Real Driving Emissions criticized by International Council on Clean Transportation

The ICCT has stated that the incoming Real Driving Emissions (RDE) test will fail to keep all car emissions of nitrogen oxide (NOx) within legal limits, despite being stricter than previous tests as it will not completely stop the manufacturers using defeat devices and will allow cars to emit around 320 mg/km NOx emissions by 2022 – which is four times the 80 mg/km limit permitted under the Euro 5 and 6 Regulation. ICCT acknowledged that the RDE (which comes into effect in September 2017) is a positive initiative but believes it needs to be tougher and more transparent. ICCT have also said that the “cold-start test” needs to be introduced more quickly and that random RDE spot checks should also be used.

Joint Research Centre identifies emission gaps

Press reports have noted sight of a paper drafted, but not yet published, by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC), which says that emissions of air pollutant NOx and CO2 emitted by three diesel cars and one petrol car were well above EU limits when tested on the road compared to laboratory tests. The laboratory tests used both the old ‘new European driving cycle’ procedure, and the new worldwide harmonised light vehicles test procedures (which is meant to be much more accurate) and which will apply to EU cars and vans from September 2017. The on-road emissions were quantified using the RDE test. The work was a part of the enquiry into the VW emissions scandal and would seem to show that more work is necessary on the emission issue.

Sweden and Denmark want stricter REACH authorisation

Swedish and Danish regulators have told the European Commission to tighten up the authorisation of harmful chemicals under EU legislation with the concern that “generous authorisation of broad and unspecific uses” of “substances of very high concern” (SVHC) is hindering the effectiveness of REACH to protect human health and the environment. The example of allowed use of lead chromates which are due to be phased out has been cited as a concern which is preventing sufficient investments in identifying substitutes. They also noted their concern that the current REACH rules place EU manufacturers at a disadvantage as non-EU companies exporting products containing SVHC into the EU do not require authorization and that banning imported articles where substances remain unauthorised under EU law could help ensure a level playing field.

- 00 -

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