



ACEA

European
Automobile
Manufacturers
Association

Brussels, 18 December 2008

EU Legislators must ensure consumers have access to the right fuel for their vehicles

The European automobile manufacturers welcome the adoption yesterday in the European Parliament of reports on the fuel quality directive and the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, but urge legislators to ensure consumers access to fuels that fit their vehicles and without confusion at the pump. Legislators should, furthermore, make sure that the actual environmental objectives of the regulations are met in a straightforward, transparent and cost-effective way.

Fuel Quality Directive

“The vehicle industry strongly supports the proposed setting of mandatory targets for fuel suppliers to reduce by 2020 their life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions. This is a necessary part of an integrated approach to reducing CO₂ emissions”, said Ivan Hodac, Secretary General of the sector’s trade association ACEA. “However, the adopted report leaves a number of important issues incomplete, which could result in a fragmented internal market for fuels and lead to consumer confusion at the filling station.”

1. The vehicle manufacturers are very disappointed that the European Parliament has not embraced the banning of the use of metallic additives in petrol. ACEA is in favour of a ban for two important reasons:

- The use of metallic additives, in particular MMT, a manganese-based additive, is unacceptable to ACEA members. A clear message from EU legislators to ban MMT would send the right signals to those markets that still use metallic additives and where vehicles are affected;
- MMT degrades the performance of expensive exhaust catalysts, sensors in the exhaust stream, fuel injectors, spark plugs, etc., which means that consumers may face an unwarranted repair bill. Furthermore, emissions from vehicles that have used petrol containing MMT will increase. All new vehicles registered since 1991 can be affected.

2. The vehicle manufacturers cannot comprehend why the European Parliament has now agreed that while diesel shall include a maximum 7% FAME, Member States may also market diesel with a FAME content greater than 7%. Hodac: “This creates an ambiguous and difficult situation. It means that different Member States can have different diesel quality in their territory without any standardisation. This bypasses the whole idea of having a single European standard in the internal market. Consumers need to have access to a consistent fuel quality across the EU.”

Except for dedicated fleets, the ACEA members do not accept the use of diesel with more than 7% FAME (Fatty Acid Methyl Ester) in their vehicles due to valid technical reasons. In June 2008, ACEA made a commitment that from 2010 all new petrol vehicles will be compatible with petrol containing a maximum of 10% ethanol (E10) and all new diesel vehicles will be compatible with diesel containing a maximum of 7% FAME (B7). This Commitment applies in advance of the revised fuel quality directive across the EU.

3. ACEA is very concerned by the insufficient level of information to consumers regarding the biofuel content of both petrol and diesel. The Parliament has now agreed that specific labelling of the filling station pump will not be mandatory. “This is totally insufficient, as consumers must know what fuel they are putting into their vehicles, old or new. ACEA has committed to do its part by advising consumers on which fuel to use. However, the EU must ensure consumer access to fuels that are fit for purpose and according to specifications and standards that provide for a consistent and harmonised market fuel quality across the EU”, added Hodac.

Press Release

Directive on renewable energy sources

The requirement to ensure that by 2020 in each Member State at least 10% of energy consumption in transport comes from renewable energy used in all forms of transport is very ambitious. But ACEA welcomes the definition of a clear future target. Now the EU and individual Member States must develop bold and consistent policies to ensure that the necessary investment is provided to help achieve this target.

“Under the current state of research & development, it is not possible to define technology winners or losers and legislators should not create them. All options that meet the objectives of the legislation must be included”, said Hodac. First-generation biofuels (e.g. ethanol and FAME) certainly have a role to play in the short-term and they can be produced in a sustainable way. In addition, widespread investment must be made immediately towards the production of second-generation biofuels. These can further reduce CO₂ emissions through various biomass pathways and will also solve the technical problems associated with first-generation biofuels.

Hodac: “The contribution of electric and hydrogen vehicles to help meeting the future target will require an enormous effort, not just on the vehicle side but also with respect to public policy, infrastructure and the supply of renewable energy through the electricity grid itself. In the light of the current economic crisis, ACEA calls on the EU governments and institutions to support short, medium and long-term investments in vehicle development and manufacturing to ensure the EU motor industry remains highly competitive and a worldwide market leader in future renewable technologies.”

The European automotive industry is key to the strength and competitiveness of Europe. The ACEA members are BMW Group, DAF Trucks, Daimler, FIAT, Ford of Europe, General Motors Europe, Jaguar Land Rover, MAN Nutzfahrzeuge, Porsche, PSA Peugeot Citroën, Renault, Scania, Toyota Motor Europe, Volkswagen and Volvo. They provide direct employment to more than 2.3 million people and indirectly support another 10 million jobs. Annually, ACEA members invest €20 billion in R&D, or 4% of turnover.

Technical details on the issues above are available on the ACEA website www.acea.be

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