

Car emissions: MEPs push for “real-life” test protocol

[24-09-2015 - 14:46]

The environment committee on Wednesday adopted an update of EU car emission rules, setting limits on certain pollutants including NO_x. They call for a new, real-life, emissions test procedure to be enforced by 2017. They also want fuel consumption meter and gear-change indicators fitted to all new cars by 2019.

“Public health depends on good air quality, especially in cities where many people live. It may be influenced by car emissions and other pollutants,” said lead MEP [Albert Dess \(EPP, DE\)](#). “Today the environment committee has shown its strong support for the completion of the real driving emissions procedure. It is very important that road vehicles comply with tough emission laws not only in the laboratory but also in the real world.”

The report was adopted by 66 votes to 1.

The results of the test procedure that provides the basis for EC type approval should reflect emissions rates observed under real driving conditions, say MEPs.

The Commission must therefore introduce a real driving emissions test for all vehicles type-approved or registered from 2015, with a “Conformity Factor” reflecting only the possible tolerances of the emissions measurement procedure in place by 2017, they say.

Fuel-consumption meters, gear-shift indicators

In their amendments, MEPs stress that the potential to reduce fuel consumption and therefore pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions through efficient driving behaviour (so-called eco-driving) is insufficiently exploited. They recommend introducing mandatory fuel-consumption meter (FCM) devices along with gear-shift indicators (GSIs), which give information to drivers about how to drive efficiently.

The new requirements should come into force from 2018 for type-approval of new models, and from 2019 for all new vehicles.

The draft law amends existing regulations on the reduction of pollutant emissions from road vehicles. The proposal focuses on areas where market and regulatory failures hinder efforts to address the overarching challenges of improving the EU's air quality and addressing the Better Regulation Agenda.

As modern diesel vehicles emit high and increasing amounts of NO₂ as a share of total NO_x emissions, posing a new challenge to air quality in affected urban areas, MEPs call on the European Commission to consider the possibility of setting a separate limit for NO₂ in addition to the existing NO_x limit.

Background

The legislative proposal aims to address certain shortcomings in the existing legislation with:

- the possibility of including methane in the calculation of CO₂ emissions,
- the introduction of a specific emission limit for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂),

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- the modification of tailpipe emission limits after a cold start at low temperature as current emission limits appear outdated,
- the possibility for the Commission to review the current test cycles and take as a basis “real world emissions”, as real-life driving emissions do not match those carried out in a laboratory-life environment.

Next Steps

The committee voted by 64 to 1 to open negotiations with the Council of the EU with a view to reach a first reading agreement, which would then be put to a vote in Parliament and Council.

Further information

- Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/envi/home.html>

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