

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2074/01  
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to the Commission

Subject: Public safety and environmental protection in Europe

There can be no question that the EU accords a great deal of importance to public safety, environmental protection and saving energy.

A survey carried out by ETRTO (European Tyre and Rim Technical Organisation) has shown that 70% of the tyres fitted to motor vehicles in Europe are under-inflated, resulting in higher fuel consumption (and thereby an increase of between 5 and 25% in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) and a sharp reduction in the useful life of the tyres (which is between 20 and 50% shorter than under normal conditions). According to the UTWG (Used Tyre Working Group), an organisation which monitors the use and disposal of tyres in the United Kingdom, drivers get through approximately 35 million tyres each year in Europe, causing enormous disposal problems.

According to the CARE Community database on road accidents (Decision 93/704/EC<sup>1</sup> of 30 November 1993), tyre and tyre pressure problems are a factor in 1.4% of fatal accidents in the EU Member States.

In the USA, the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) has found that in 1999 alone, 647 fatal road accidents (2% of all fatal road accidents) were linked to low tyre pressures. The US legislative authorities have accordingly passed a federal law (HR 5164, known as the 'Tread Act'), section 13 of which requires all motor vehicles registered after 1 November 2003 to be fitted with tyre pressure monitoring devices.

Given the above, how does the Commission intend to ensure that, following in the footsteps of the pioneering US legislation, the greatest possible importance is accorded to public safety in this area, particularly in view of the environmental implications involved?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 329, 30.12.1993, p. 63.