

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3664/09
by Graham Watson (ALDE)
to the Commission

Subject: Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulations

The European Commission is currently in the process of reformulating Regulation (EC) 1400/2002¹ concerning Motor Vehicle Distribution and Servicing (MVBER). The Commission's evaluation report concludes that although competition in the automotive industry has been stimulated to a degree, many provisions in the Block Exemption Regulations have proven ineffective, irrelevant or sometimes even counterproductive.

There lies an implicit message in Commission communications that many of the measures in MVBER will be scrapped, but that the overall goal of improving competition in the sector will be served by a patchwork of other legislation. Can the Commission therefore confirm that this will continue to provide the immediate and effective protection independent after-market operators require?

In the UK, there are more independent repairers than franchised dealers and they often charge half the hourly rate of franchised dealers, offering a local and affordable service. This not only provides a valuable service to consumers and the environment, but also accounts for thousands of jobs. Can the Commission confirm that whatever changes are made to MVBER, there will be clear legal protection for independent garages and repairers to access the tools, parts and information that they need to conduct repairs?

¹ OJ L 203, 1.8.2002, p. 30.