

**Question for written answer E-001826/2013  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Robert Goebbels (S&D)**

Subject: Environmentally friendly refrigerant endangers safety

As the refrigerants currently used in vehicle air conditioning systems have proven to be harmful to the environment, the Commission has imposed the introduction of a more climate friendly version. From 2013, vehicle manufacturers are obliged to charge the air conditioning systems in their vehicles with a new refrigerant with the designation R1234yf.

However, this new refrigerant has been shown in tests to be a fire hazard, as, in the event of an accident, it can ignite in seconds on the hot exhaust system. In the event of a vehicle fire, the flammable chemical can release highly toxic hydrogen fluoride, which would be harmful to the health of the occupants of the vehicle and anyone attending the accident.

Was the new refrigerant not tested under sufficiently realistic conditions, or how else can the Commission explain the risks emerging after its introduction?

How is it possible that, after years of refining this agent, vehicle manufacturers and independent institutes were able to certify it as safe?

What steps are being taken following these alarming test results?

Why is the Commission rejecting the option of a moratorium, although it is aware that the safety of vehicle occupants is at stake?