Type-approval of motor vehicles and engines with respect to emissions from heavy duty vehicles (Euro VI) and access to vehicle repair and maintenance information

2007/0295(COD) - 21/12/2007 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to lay down harmonised rules on the construction of motor vehicles with a view to ensuring the functioning of the internal market while at the same time providing for a high level of environmental protection regarding atmospheric emissions.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council

CONTENT: Common EU standards limiting the emission of atmospheric pollutants from motor vehicles are required to prevent the emergence of varying product standards across Member States, which results in fragmentation of the internal market and imposition of unnecessary barriers to intra-Community trade.

Euro IV emission limits for trucks and buses are applicable as from 9 November 2006 and Euro V emission limits will apply from 1 October 2008 for new type-approvals in both cases. However, with no change in the policy of reducing emission levels for heavy duty motor vehicles, there is a high risk that Member States will seek to take unilateral action. In addition, the risks of air pollution to human health and the environment are of concern to Member States. Despite improved air quality over the last decade, significant problems remain, especially in urban areas and densely populated regions.

This proposal has been developed in the context of the "Clean Air For Europe" (CAFE) programme (see INI/2006/2060), which assessed levels of emissions, current and future air quality and the costs and benefits of further measures to improve air quality. On this basis, the Commission has identified measures which are required in order to attain the necessary air quality levels. Euro VI is one among several such measures that are important to reduce emissions of ozone precursors (such as nitrogen oxides-NO_X and hydrocarbons-HC) and particulate matter. The proposal is fully in line with the aims of the European Union's Sustainable Development Strategy and contributes significantly to the objectives of the Lisbon strategy.

The proposal required analysis of vehicle technologies to be used to reduce emissions and the associated costs of achieving the various scenarios for Euro VI emission limit values. Data were collected from a range of stakeholders in the automotive area and collated by a group of consultants led by TNO in The Netherlands. The panel of consultants summarised the cost data provided and preferred emission limit values were selected on the basis of their technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness. This proposal follows the policy of revising the existing Euro V legislation through setting new Euro VI emission limit values at European Union level.

The main aspect of this Regulation is that it requires a further tightening of vehicle emission limits for particulate matter (PM) and nitrogen oxides (NO_X). A reduction of 66% in the mass of particulate emissions from compression-ignition engined vehicles will be required. While this lower emission limit does not prescribe a particular technology, it will de facto require the introduction of diesel particulate filters (DPFs). For compression-ignition engined vehicles, a reduction of 80% in NOx is planned. To comply with this emission limit, internal engine measures (e.g. Exhaust Gas Recirculation - EGR) and after-treatment devices (e.g. Selective Catalytic Reduction - SCR) will be needed at the current state of the

art. The proposal also includes reductions in emissions from positive-ignition engines. There are general transitory periods in the proposal in order to allow sufficient lead times for vehicle manufacturers.

The proposal includes a requirement that vehicle on-board diagnostic (OBD) information and vehicle repair and maintenance information be made available through websites in the standardised format developed by a technical committee of stakeholders (the so-called 'OASIS format').

This proposal introduces requirements, developed in the framework of the UN-ECE WP.29 – World Forum for Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations – relating to:

1) use of world-wide harmonised steady state (WHSC) and transient (WHTC) driving cycles for the evaluation of pollutant emissions;

2) emissions testing and measurement methodology;

3) World-Wide Harmonised on-board diagnostic (WWH-OBD) systems.

The proposal also introduces requirements for the type-approval of exhaust after-treatment components such as catalysts and diesel particulate filters (DPFs).

Lastly, the proposal provides for simplification of legislation and administrative procedures for public authorities.