Labelling of tyres: fuel efficiency

2008/0221(COD) - 31/03/2009

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report drawn up by Ivo BELET (EPP-ED, BE) amending, under the first reading of the codecision procedure, the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on labelling of tyres with respect to fuel efficiency and other essential parameters.

The main amendments are as follows:

Regulation: according to MEPs, a regulation should logically be chosen as an instrument, instead of a directive. This should ensure a standard level of tyre quality. The regulation vouches directly for the provisions with reference to the labelling obligations, as transposition into national right is not required.

Savings calculator: in order to increase understanding and awareness about rolling resistance, a fuel savings calculator, such as that which already exists for C3 tyres, would serve as a meaningful tool to demonstrate potential savings of fuel, money and CO_2.

Snow tyres and Nordic winter tyres: snow tyres and Nordic winter tyres have specific parameters that are not fully comparable to normal tyres. In order to ensure that end-users make fair and informed decisions, the parameters of these tyres should be displayed in a way that puts them on an equal footing with normal tyres.

Tyre labelling website: according to MEPs, potential purchasers should be provided with supplementary standardised information which explains each of the components of the label - fuel efficiency, wet grip and noise emissions. This information should be provided on the EU tyre labelling website, a central online source of explanatory and supplementary information administered by the Commission, regarding each of the components of the tyre label and including a fuel savings calculator. The Commission shall establish and administer this website no later than September 2010. Explanatory leaflets and posters with the same core content as the website shall be distributed to points of sale for tyres and vehicles.

Informing the public: suppliers shall present measured values from the type approval test with regard to the rolling resistance coefficient, wet grip index and noise emissions in a publicly available database. Moreover, suppliers shall present measured values from the type approval test moulded into or onto each sidewall for each model.

Testing methods: on grounds of road safety and consumer protection the harmonised testing methods must be implemented under the same conditions as those applying during actual use.

Verification procedure: to give legal certainty to car- and tyre manufacturers, it has to be clear that controls should not lead to Member States blocking type approved cars and tyres from free circulation in the EU.

Inspections: Member States shall ensure that the competent authorities establish a system of routine and non-routine inspections of points of sale for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the requirements of this Regulation.

Implementation and penalties: to ensure a level playing field for all tyre manufacturers, both within the Community and vis-à-vis their international competitors, MEPs believe that it is of the utmost importance that the provisions of this Regulation will be vigorously enforced in each and every Member State. To this

end, Member States shall, by means of a continuous exchange of information, ensure close cooperation in market supervision. They shall take appropriate measures for regular ex-post controls in order to ensure that tyres which are not duly labelled are brought into conformity or taken off the market. They shall also introduce measures laying down sanctions for infringements of the provisions of this Regulation.

Member States should strive, in implementing the relevant provisions of this Regulation, to refrain from measures that impose unjustified, bureaucratic and unwieldy obligations on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

According to MEPs, tyre manufacturers, suppliers and distributors should be encouraged to comply with the provisions of this Regulation before 2012 to speed up the recognition of the scheme and realisation of its benefits.

Review: not later than three years after the date of application of this Regulation, the Commission shall review its application, considering inter alia: (a) the effectiveness of the label in terms of consumer awareness; (b) whether the labelling scheme should be extended to include retreaded tyres; (c) whether new tyre parameters or classes should be introduced; (d) the information on tyre parameters provided by vehicle suppliers and distributors to end-users.