

Air pollution: measures to be taken against emissions from motor vehicles (amend. Directive 70/220/EEC)

1994/0286(COD) - 27/04/1995 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

Overall, the Commission proposal could be endorsed. Like many provisions that had been adopted in the past and others that were likely to be adopted in the future, the Commission proposal had been shaped by the conflict between technical feasibility and environmental and health requirements. The limits were set by state-of-the-art technology and its economic viability, and the level to which we wanted to reduce the environmental and health burdens created by our living and working conditions in general and by industry and the transport sector in particular. Industry required about three years to develop and test new pollution-reducing technologies. The proposed directive was therefore urgently required if the stated deadlines were to be met. The Commission should act quickly and resolutely in proposing further measures for the reduction of emission values pursuant to Article 4 of the proposal. Although the new test procedure for category N1 vehicles also covered a durability test over a distance of 80 000 km, the ESC felt that emission values should be regularly checked, in accordance with Directive 92/55/EEC. It called on the Commission to bring the test procedures up to a higher EU level in the interests of environmental and health protection. In particular, the frequency of the regular technical inspections and the operations involved should be standardised at a higher level. The ESC was critical of the one-year extension of the validity of the special test procedure to be conducted on the initial entry into service of low-powered vehicles (power-to-weight ratio $<30 \text{ kW/t}$). It meant that Class II and III vehicles, in particular, would continue to be subject to this procedure (Panda cycle) until 1 January 1999. Tax incentives to promote the early introduction of vehicles complying with the proposed limits were to be welcomed in principle. These incentives should, however, benefit only the users and not the manufacturers or retailers of such vehicles, to prevent the subsidy from being granted twice by different Member States.