

Air pollution: emissions of gaseous and particulate pollutants from diesel engines (amend. Direct. 88/77/EEC)

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Fresh from its success in achieving cleaner engine fuels and strict emission limits for cars and vans under recent codecision legislation, the Committee is turning its attention to the next stage in Europe's pioneer pollution-busting auto-oil strategy - curbing pollution from lorries. Thus the committee adopted a report (first reading, codecision) by Bernd LANGE (PES, D) substantially amending a Commission proposal for a directive on the emission of gas and particulate pollutants from the heavy-duty diesel engines used in lorries. Mr Lange was Parliament's rapporteur for emission limits for cars and vans. The Commission proposal sets compulsory emission limits for new heavy-duty diesel engines for 2000. The pollutants involved are carbon monoxide, unburnt hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides, particulates and smoke. The committee, following the precedent set for cars and vans, proposes stringent compulsory limits for 2005 as well. The committee's amendments propose additional improvements for 2005. For instance, all heavy-duty vehicles must be equipped with on-board diagnostic or measurement systems to monitor exhaust emissions while the vehicle is in service so as to permit rapid detection of faulty components and systems. In-service checks on compliance with approved emission standards must also be made and the emission-reducing devices must function throughout the normal life of the vehicle. Member States may use tax incentives to encourage advance introduction of the cleaner heavy-duty engines before they become mandatory and also to promote the re-equipment of older vehicles to meet the new standards.