Emissions from air conditioning systems in motor vehicles

2003/0189B(COD) - 17/05/2006 - Final act

PURPOSE: to control the leakage of specific fluorinated greenhouse gases in the air-conditioning systems fitted to vehicles and to prohibit, from a certain date, air-conditioning systems designed to contain fluorinated greenhouse gases with a global warming potential higher than 150.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Directive 2006/40/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council relating to emissions from air-conditioning systems in motor vehicles and amending Directive 70/156/EEC

CONTENT: the Council adopted a Directive relating to emissions from air conditioning systems in motor vehicles following an agreement reached with the European Parliament in the conciliation committee. The Directive was adopted alongside a Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases. The legal acts form part of a comprehensive package aimed at implementing the European Climate Change Programme, which was established in June 2000. It has also been introduced as part of the Sixth Community Environment Action Programme, which recognises that the Community is committed to achieving an 8% reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases between 2008 and 2012 compared to 1990 levels.

The purpose, therefore, of this Directive is to reduce fluorinated greenhouse gases currently used in motor vehicles air conditioning systems ("hydroflourocarbon 134 a(HFC-134a) with a global warming potential of 1 300); and to do so by introducing a Community type-approval system for motor vehicles. The technical requirements for the type-approval motor vehicles vis-à-vis air condition systems will be harmonised in order to avoid the adoption of equipment that differ from one Member State to another and thereby to ensure the proper functioning of the internal market.

The Directive will apply to motor vehicles of categories M1 and N1 as defined by Directive 70/156/EEC, which this Directive amends. The provisions set out in this Directive:

- limit the possibility of retrofitting motor vehicles with air conditioning systems with FFGs with a global warming potential higher than 150 and to prohibit filling air-conditioning systems with such gases;

- to limit the emissions of certain fluorinated greenhouse gases from air condition system in motor vehicles by establishing limit values for leakage rates;

- to require manufacturers of vehicles to offer technical information on air conditioning systems to approved authorities.

Review clauses oblige the Commission to examine whether the present legislation should be extended to other categories of vehicles, namely categories M2 and M3 as well as classes II and III of category N1. Further, amendments may be tabled to take account of technological and scientific developments. The Commission will prepare a report on the application of this Directive by 4 July 2011 and, if necessary, present appropriate legislative proposals.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 4 July 2006.

TRANSPOSITION: 4 January 2008. The measures will apply as from 5 January 2008.