

Energy efficiency products: office and communication technology equipment, labelling programme Energy Star. Recast

2006/0187(COD) - 04/10/2006 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to recast Regulation 2422/2001/EC on laying down the rules for implementing the Energy Star programme for office equipment.

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

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal is to recast Regulation 2422/2001/EC on laying down the rules for implementing the Energy Star programme for office equipment and to adopt implementation of the Energy Star programme to a new Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Community on the co-ordination of energy-efficiency labelling programmes for office equipment. For a summary of Regulation 2422/2001/EC (see COD/2000/0033).

The Agreement provides for the continued use of the Energy Star programme in the Community for a second five year period. A proposal for a Council Decision on signature and the conclusion of the new Energy Star Agreement is being submitted to the Council in parallel to this proposal. Both the recast Regulation and the Agreement take account of experience gained during the first period of implementation of the Energy Star programme in the Community, (2001–2006) as well as consultations which took place on the EU Energy Star Board. The primary objective is not only to improve implementation of the Energy Star programme it is also to make it more effective and to reap potential energy savings.

The main reasons for renewing the Agreement, in summary, are:

- Efficient use of energy is one of the main pillars for a sustainable energy policy in the EU. Energy savings secure the competitiveness of the EU due to lower energy spending, offers environmental protection through a reduction of carbon emissions, helps secure the EU energy supply and reduces the EU's dependence on energy imports.
- Office equipment accounts for a significant share of the EU electricity consumption.
- The EU Energy Star programme provides a framework for co-ordinating the Member States' national efforts.
- Global partners should be involved in the global trade of office equipment.
- The voluntary Energy Star programme is widely accepted by manufacturers – especially so in the USA where it is important for public procurement matters.
- Voluntary labelling schemes can be highly flexible and allow for swift adoption at times of technological progress.
- The programme offers market transparency.

The first Agreement with the United States expired in June 2006. The proposal for a new Agreement includes the explicit requirement that the common technical specifications must be of the highest standard.

Accordingly, Annex C contains demanding and innovative common technical specifications for monitors and imaging equipment (copiers, printers, scanners, faxes) covering both standby and on-mode energy consumption. Estimates suggest that the new common technical specifications for imaging equipment, which were endorsed by the Energy Star Board, will save 17 TWh in the EU-25 over the next three years.

As well as recasting Regulation 2422/2001/EC the Commission is proposing some changes to the Regulation in a bid to simplify procedures. On the matter of recasting the Regulation, the proposed changes seek to reduce the implementation costs for both the Community institutions and for the Member States, in accordance with the voluntary nature of the programme.

Concretely speaking the Commission is proposing changes to:

Article 6: Promotion of the logo: The Commission proposes abolishing the requirement that Member States and the Commission promote the logo. This is because the Energy Star Programme is a voluntary labelling scheme for manufacturer and they must therefore be responsible for its promotion. The Commission will continue to provide lists of participating manufacturers and registered products plus an internet portal which includes a database of registered products and information.

Article 8: European Community Energy Star Board (ECESB): The Commission is proposing to abolish the requirement that the ECESB prepare a report on the market penetration of Energy Star products. Instead the Commission proposes to launch a tender for a market survey on office equipment to support future upgrades of the energy-efficiency criteria. In addition, it is being proposed that the requirement that the Commission keep the European Parliament and Council informed of the Board's activities be abolished, given that all of the information can be sourced on the Energy Star internet portal.

Article 10: Working Plan: The Article has been reworded in order to bring it into line with the current implementation stage of the programme and to make it consistent with the proposed amendment to Article 6 and 8.

Article 11: Preparatory procedures for the revision of technical criteria: This change states that the Commission and the ECESB may make changes to the Agreement when it comes to technical specifications. The ECESB's obligation to revise technical specifications is also being reduced in view of its limited resources.

Article 13: Implementation: This Article is being repealed given that the Member States have no reporting duties.

Article 14: Revision: This Article has been reworded to lighten the burden of programme implementation on the Commission and to make it consistent with the voluntary nature of the Energy Star scheme.

Annex: The annex depicting the logo has been deleted since the Energy Star logo is already mentioned in the Agreement. Further, any changes to the design of the logo belong to the US Environmental Protection Agency and should, as a result, not be the subject of an EU co-decision procedure.

Recast: This proposal recasts Regulation 2422/2001 in line with the Inter-institutional Agreement on the recasting technique for legal acts. This means that it incorporates in a single text both the substantive amendments to the Regulation and the unchanged provision thereof. This proposal will replace and repeal Regulation 2422/2001.