



PRESS RELEASE

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European Aftermarket federations claim for a coherent and sound EU legislation on roadworthiness testing

The three Aftermarket Federations **EGEA** (European Garage Equipment Association), **CECRA** (European Council for Motor Trades and Repair) and **FIGIEFA** (European Federation of Automotive Aftermarket Distributors), under the hosting of **Phil Bennion MEP** (ALDE/UK), organised on the 19th of March a Policy breakfast in the European Parliament to highlight the implications of the Commission's Roadworthiness package for their industry sector. Whilst welcoming the Commission proposal, the three associations claimed changes which would make the legislation more workable, effective and compatible with the principles of free competition.

The sector associations are involved in the three stages of the periodic technical inspection (PTI) process which involve the preparation of the vehicle for the inspection, the roadworthiness testing itself and finally the eventual remedial work. All these stages require technical information, the use of specialised test equipment and replacement parts in the event of a repair. As such, EGEA, CECRA and FIGIEFA are directly affected by the Commission's Roadworthiness Testing proposal.

In his capacity as host **Phil Bennion MEP** welcomed the participants of the event by highlighting the relevance of the daily work carried out by automotive aftermarket operators who contribute to ensuring an effective preparation, roadworthiness test or repair of a vehicle. He emphasised that the reviewed legislation must take into account their role, consistently with the existing diversity of the checks across the European Union.



Neil Pattemore, Technical Advisor of EGEA, highlighted that the testing methods and equipment currently prescribed by the EU legislation, and thus being used, do not reflect the needs of testing the rapidly evolving technology and complexity of today's vehicles. *"The vehicle design has evolved to provide safer and more environmentally friendly vehicles, but this will work only if the new technology is operating reliably and correctly over the entire lifecycle of the vehicle"* said Neil Pattemore. EGEA advocates more updated technical checks. In this context and particularly concerning the emission testing, the use of the On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) alone, as suggested by the Council in its report of December 2012, is not a reliable method to monitor exhaust emissions, so tailpipe testing is still needed as the default method. Additionally, Neil Pattemore pointed out that nano particulates and NOx produced by modern engine vehicles, and which could severely affect public health and the environment, should be measured and included in the roadworthiness testing. These are however not covered by the current proposal. As a last point, it was also suggested to keep suspension testing into the Commission's proposal, but based on a new universal test method.

Bernard Lycke, Director General of CECRA, pleaded for duly taking into account the existing diversity in carrying out technical checks within the European Union. The willingness to harmonise the rules cannot go to the detriment of national technical checking procedures such as is the case in the UK, Netherlands, and Austria where the roadworthiness tests are carried out by workshops of car dealerships and independent garages. Moreover, the European Union should provide the opportunity to all workshops of both car dealerships and independent garages to carry out the roadworthiness tests. The member states shall independently define additional measures for the inspectors – who are qualified and experienced car mechanics – employed by the workshop - to standards set by the relevant government body in the spirit of harmonisation.

Of great concern for the European repairers is also the cross-border trade in tampered cars. *"We believe that developing a European vehicle electronic information platform in order to record e.g. PTI mileage, PTI faults would be a good solution to this problem"*, he said. Finally, CECRA is in favour of the proposal of the Commission to include previously exempted classes of vehicles, trailers, caravans, two-or three wheel vehicles and tractors into the scope as it would enhance road safety.

Sylvia Gotzen, Secretary General of FIGIEFA, highlighted the need to ensure a less interpretable definition of 'Roadworthiness testing'. *"The problem with the current Commission definition is that it refers to a check of 'parts and components' which must correspond to the safety and environmental characteristics in force 'at the time of approval' ". This could be misinterpreted as if referring to a test of the parts and components themselves, instead of a verification of the functionality of the systems. This is impractical as it would require dismantling of the vehicle systems"* she explained. *"Moreover, introducing type-approval (characteristic) as benchmark could lead to a test on criteria when the car was brand-new and of whether the installed parts are marked as original spare parts. This would have the consequence that competitive parts of matching quality could be cut off from the market, and this would represent a negative spill-over effect on the entire aftermarket and on consumers"*. The draft report from the Transport Committee only partially addresses this issue. FIGIEFA therefore calls for an adaptation which better reflects the practiced generic in-use assessment of the functionality of the safety and environmental systems of the vehicle.

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During the discussion following the presentations, Malcom Harbour MEP (ECR/ UK) agreed on the need to make a clear distinction between the inspection for testing purposes and a check of the parts and components of the vehicle, as *"testing stations cannot be an extension of the market surveillance"*.

Questions were also raised by Phil Bennion MEP on the way to properly define the access to PTI technical information for test equipment manufacturers, since they provide the actual equipment used as part of the roadworthiness test, as well as on the Technical Annexes, which have not been dealt with by the Rapporteur in his draft Report. Mr. Bennion also reminded the importance of preserving the diversity within the Member States having PTI systems where inspections are carried out by a 'PTI authorised inspector in the same workshop where the vehicle could be serviced or repaired afterwards.

Next steps: The amendments to the draft TRAN Reports of the threefold 'Roadworthiness Package' have to be tabled by the 27th of March, before being considered on the 22nd-23rd of April. The TRAN Committee will vote on the reports on the 30th of May.

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Background:

On 13 July 2012 the European Commission, with a view to increase road safety, environmental protection and fair competition, presented the Roadworthiness Package. It is a set of three legislative proposals whose aim is to upgrade the current requirements on periodic roadworthiness tests, on technical roadside inspection of commercial vehicles as well as on vehicle registration schemes.

EGEA, the European Garage Equipment Association, represents 11 national professional associations of manufacturers and importers of garage and test equipment. EGEA members manufacturer, distribute and maintain vehicle diagnostic and test equipment, including the majority of the test equipment used in Europe's Periodic Test Inspection (PTI) centres.

CECRA, the European Council for Motor Trades and Repairs, established in 1983, regroups 26 national professional associations representing the interests of the motor trade and repair businesses and 12 European Dealer Councils. Thus it covers both the franchised and the independent workshop sectors. In several EU countries, such as the UK, the Netherlands and Austria, vehicle inspectors are authorised to carry out periodic technical inspections.

FIGIEFA is the European federation and political representative of independent wholesalers and retailers of automotive replacement parts and their associated repair chains in Brussels. FIGIEFA Members deliver a wide range of replacement parts which are used for the preparation of the vehicle prior to the PTI, or for the repair of the vehicle in the event that it would have failed the roadworthiness test.