



EUROLAB Special Briefing

New car emissions tests became mandatory on 1 September

As of 1 September 2017, new car models have to pass new emissions tests in real driving conditions ("Real Driving Emissions" – RDE) as well as an improved laboratory test ("World Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure" – WLTP) before they can be driven on European roads.

The new emissions tests aim at ensuring more reliable results helping to rebuild confidence in the performance of new cars. The tests represent one of several steps in the European Commission's work for a clean, sustainable and competitive car industry:

- **More robust and accurate emissions tests:** NO_x and particulate emissions, which are a major cause of air pollution, will be measured more reliably in real driving conditions (RDE test). This test will complement a new, more realistic laboratory test procedure (WLTP test) for all emissions including CO₂ and fuel consumption as well as NO_x and other air pollutants. **Both tests will become mandatory from September 2017 for all new car models and will be phased in for all new cars between 2018-2019** (for details see [MEMO/17/2821](#)).
- **Full overhaul of the type approval system:** Once adopted, the European Commission's proposal for a Regulation of January 2016 will aim at ensuring greater quality and independence of vehicle testing, more surveillance of cars already in circulation, and introduce EU oversight into the system.
- **Air quality standards:** Member States have to comply with EU limit values for a number of pollutants, including NO₂, and establish air quality plans for the zones or agglomerations where these limit values are exceeded.
- **Low emissions mobility:** The European Strategy for low-emission mobility aims at increasing the efficiency of the transport system; speeding up the deployment of low-emission alternative energy for transport, and moving towards zero-emission vehicles. This focuses on a range of low-emissions alternative energy options for passenger cars and buses, as well as an emphasis on electrification in rail transport and biofuels in aviation, lorries and coaches. The Commission also plans to adopt an Action Plan for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure to enhance the broadest use of alternative fuels in Europe by November 2017.

In parallel, the European Commission is closely following Member States' efforts regarding polluting cars already in circulation.

Following the revelations in September 2015 that the Volkswagen Group used defeat device software to circumvent emissions standards for certain air pollutants, the European Commission invited all Member States, as the responsible authorities for market surveillance and enforcement of the type-approval legislation, to carry out the necessary investigations into the real emission levels of vehicles on their territory, and to ensure compliance with EU law.

The European Commission has supported their work by developing a common testing methodology to screen for defeat devices altering the results of laboratory tests and ensure consistency of results of national investigations. It has published [guidance](#) to help Member States' authorities assess whether a car manufacturer is using defeat devices or other strategies that lead to higher vehicle emissions outside of the test cycle and analyse whether they are technically justified.

The European Commission opened infringement procedures against eight Member States for breaching EU type approval legislation in [December 2016](#) and [May 2017](#). It continues to monitor whether EU law in this area is being correctly enforced by Member States.

The European Commission also wants to ensure that competition rules are respected and will continue to do so, in addition to ensuring that consumers are treated fairly.

The European Commission is also working to ensure the application of EU air quality rules. In this regard, it has launched infringement procedures against 16 Member States in breach of ambient NO₂ limit values.

The European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) welcomes the two new tests for measuring emissions from cars and vans.

ACEA also welcomes the fact that with RDE there is now one common EU-wide test to measure on-the-road emissions of cars. This should help prevent the confusion caused by using a multitude of different tests, each with varying and incomparable methods and results – such as those recently proposed by some local governments, cities and other stakeholders.

Further information: [MEMO/17/2821: EU action to curb air pollution by cars](#)

Sources: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-2822_en.htm#content

<http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/auto-industry-welcomes-more-stringent-emissions-tests-coming-into-effect-on>

Should you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@eurolab.org