

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 21 November

European Court of Justice rules on UK air quality case

Following a referral by the UK Supreme Court, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) has delivered a ruling regarding the interpretation and application of the Air Quality Directive in the UK. The case, which saw Client Earth invoke court proceedings against the UK government for failing to adhere to European regulations on NOx emissions, was handed to the ECJ for specific guidance. With the UK having been found to breach NOx limits established by the EU Air Quality Directive in 40 of the 43 zones set up for the purpose of the directive, the Commission will now look at setting a timetable for addressing the pollutant levels before a series of fines may be issued to UK government. The European Commission welcomed the ruling, reaffirming Europe's ambition to drive down levels of pollutants and emissions. It is now for the UK Supreme Court to apply the interpretation of the Air Quality Directive to the case. (Source: Court of Justice of the European Union)

<http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2014-11/cp140153en.pdf>



CLEPA e-mobility conference

On Tuesday 18 November, CLEPA, the European automotive suppliers association, hosted an e-mobility event showcasing the first results of the EUNICE project. More than 160 representatives from the automotive industry, European institutions and other stakeholders attended the conference in Brussels to

discuss the promotion of electric vehicles within the EU. Amongst the discussions held, issues such as the development and diversification of existing EV technologies were explored as well as specific emphasis placed on the need to advance current technologies related to battery capabilities. The event also placed specific focus on the intelligent grid charging infrastructure, as it is recognised that this area has the ability to develop into a substantive barrier in the future if not addressed now. CLEPA CEO Mr Paul Schockmel said: "In order to fully become a success story, E-mobility still needs to overcome a few hurdles: safety, availability and affordability are the challenges for the coming years". (Source: CLEPA)

<http://www.clepa.eu/strategic-issues/eunice-project/>

EU Passenger Car registration figures for October released

ACEA has published October figures for EU passenger car registrations. Headline figures included an increase of +6.5% for October 2014, as supported by a +6.1% increase for the ten months to October. With 1,072,837 units sold for October 2014, these figures marked the fourth consecutive month of growth with substantial advancements seen in Spain (+26.1%), the UK (+14.2%), Italy (+9.2%) and Germany (+3.7%) leading to an upturn across the large parts of the region. (Source: ACEA)

http://www.acea.be/uploads/press_releases_files/PRP_C-1410_-_FINAL_-_corrected.pdf

First estimates of EU R&D spend for 2013 published

Initial estimates from Eurostat have stated R&D that expenditure was just over 2% of GDP in the EU28 in 2013. The 28 EU member states spent a combined total of almost €275 billion last year, with this figure representing an increase on figures from 2004 where annual figures were 1.76% of GDP. This level of spending however remained lower in the EU28 than in other major economies, where for example South

Korea have posted higher figures (4.04% in 2011). The highest levels of R&D intensity were witnessed in the Nordic member states where Finland, Sweden and Denmark all posted figures for 3% of GDP and above. The UK's figures for 2013 as a percentage of GDP were 1.63%. The main sector in which R&D was performed in 2013 was the business enterprise sector, with almost two-thirds of member states engaging in this area. In order to provide a stimulus to the EU's competitiveness, an increase in R&D intensity in the EU28 is one of the five headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.

(Source: Eurostat)

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/9-17112014-BP/EN/9-17112014-BP-EN.PDF



Manufacturers and operators in joint call to EU on Weights and Dimensions proposals

ACEA and IRU (International Road Transport Union) have jointly called on EU decision-makers to focus on commercial vehicle fuel-efficiency when reviewing the 96/53/EC weights and dimensions proposal. The road freight transport and commercial vehicle manufacturing industries reiterated the need to permit the wider use of fuel-saving technologies, rather than relying solely on additional aerodynamic performance improvements. These discussions have been formulated as a precondition for allowing increased vehicle length in the near future. ACEA Secretary General Erik Jonnaert said, "There are many more effective ways of reducing fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions than entirely redesigning the cabin. The industry is committed to continuing to improve truck safety. However, for this, safety technologies that prevent accidents happening in the first place are the best way forward. A whole vehicle approach represents the best possible solution."

(Source: ACEA) <http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/manufacturers-and-operators-in-joint-call-to-eu-on-weights-and-dimensions-p>

Week ahead

No relevant items. The European Parliament meets in Strasbourg for its November plenary session.