

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 1 June

ENVI Committee discusses sound level of motor vehicles

The European Parliament's Environment Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) Committee has met to discuss Rapporteur Miroslav Ouzky's draft report on the sound level of motor vehicles. The report was met with a mixed reception from MEPs. Some were pleased that the Rapporteur had tried to take a more integrated approach to sound levels focusing on roads, engines and tyres. However, others criticised the way in which the report appeared to water down the ambition of the Commission's original proposal since it extended the deadlines for the first noise reduction requirements. In addition, MEPs were divided on whether car sound labelling would be effective and whether it should refer to exterior or interior sound levels. The ENVI Committee vote is scheduled for 10 July 2012 and the European Parliament Plenary vote is scheduled for 22 October 2012. (Source: BBB)

www.cbi.org.uk/bbb

IMCO & TRAN hold joint meeting on eCall

The Transport and Tourism (TRAN) Committee and the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) Committee have met for a joint meeting on eCall – a new 112 service for citizens. MEPs discussed amendments to a draft report produced by Rapporteurs Olga Sehnalova and Dieter-Lebrecht Koch. Both Rapporteurs from IMCO and TRAN underlined the need for eCall to be a mandatory system whereas other MEPs said that it should be voluntary. The majority of MEPs agreed that eCall should be extended to other vehicles including motorbikes and commercial vans and lorries, although concerns were raised about the costs of eCall with Jacqueline Foster MEP claiming that the Commission's estimate for fitting the device of between €30 and €50 is not realistic. Discussions also focused on how to prevent false alarms and how to ensure interoperability of eCall between Member States and in borderregions. Finally, the issue of data protection was raised by several

MEPs, particularly if eCall allows multiple private and public services to operate through it. The Committee votes are scheduled for 9 June 2012 and the European Parliament Plenary vote is scheduled for 2 July 2012. (Source: BBB)

www.cbi.org.uk/bbb



European ministers reach agreement on Horizon2020

The European ministers for research and innovation have reached an agreement on the overall structure for the EUs coming Framework programme for research and innovation – Horizon 2020 – which has a proposed budget of €80 billion. Besides strengthening basic excellent research, Horizon 2020 marks a new and challenge-driven approach towards strategic research in the EU, focusing on seven grand challenges, such as food security, climate change, an ageing population and the need for intelligent transportation. Compared to the Commission's initial proposal, the agreement has an even stronger emphasis on interdisciplinarity. Furthermore, the agreement strengthens simplification and reduces bureaucracy, in an attempt to make it easier and more attractive for small and medium-sized enterprises to apply for EU funding. The agreement on the overall structure is the first important step towards reaching a final political agreement on Horizon 2020. Very soon, the negotiations on the budget allocation to the various specific programmes of Horizon 2020 will start which will then be followed by discussions in the European Parliament. (Source: Danish Presidency)

<http://eu2012.dk/en/NewsList/Maj/Uge-22/Horizon-2000>

European commercial vehicle registrations down 11.9% in April 2012

Figures published by ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association, show demand for new commercial vehicles decreased by 11.9% in the EU in April, dropping in most markets. New registrations fell by 1.2% in France, 1.6% in Germany, 13.3% in the UK, 28.9% in Spain and 38.6% in Italy. Four months into the year the downturn continued its as all major markets shrank, equalling a 10.1% drop. France remained the largest market, despite a 4.7% contraction, followed by Germany (-1.2%) and the UK (-9.8%). Spain (-24.1%) and Italy (-36.7%) recorded more severe drops. In total, 589,987 vehicles were registered throughout the period. (Source: ACEA) http://www.acea.be/index.php/news/news_detail/commercial_vehicles_registrations_-_10.1_over_four_months_-11.9_in_april/

Major automotive bodies promote single standard for EV charging

Automotive (ACEA), supplier (CLEPA) and electricity (EURELECTRIC) industry bodies have jointly agreed on the need for a single harmonised plug system for recharging electric vehicles and have put forward an implementation proposal for vehicles and infrastructure. E-mobility has the potential to play a key role in meeting the challenges towards sustainable transport and standardisation of the connection used is one of the pre-requisites to help e-mobility gain a long-term market share. The three associations have therefore strongly urged the relevant European Institutions, and in particular the European Commission, to take appropriate measures to ensure the implementation of a single solution for the charging of electric vehicles in Europe, in line with the European industry proposal. The associations stress that this issue needs to be solved urgently, before wide-scale infrastructure roll-out starts in different Member States. (Source: SMMT) <http://www.smmt.co.uk/2012/05/major-automotive-bodies-promote-single-standard-for-ev-charging/>

SMMT responds to EU cabotage consultation

SMMT has presented government with its response to a call for feedback on the issue of cabotage, focusing on capacity issues around the peak new car registration periods in March and September. Based on its consultation of members and the Logistics Forum, the response explains the 'significantly increased need' for purpose-built car transporters to meet logistical and customer demands at peak times of year. At present, to meet the requirement of transporting more vehicles for the two plate-change months, it is essential to utilise non-UK hauliers. SMMT's response explains that because of this, new cabotage rules present a problem and are 'not fit for purpose' as they limit the number of journeys a foreign registered vehicle may undertake. Knock-on effects of a shortage of transporter capacity could cause contractual issues for hauliers with requirements not being met, ultimately ending in reduced customer satisfaction due to late deliveries. A relaxation of the cabotage rules as outlined in the consultation document is important for industry, consumers, the wider economy and to ensure that there is no unforeseen broader impact for UK hauliers. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2012/05/smmt-responds-to-eu-cabotage-consultation/>

Week ahead

European Commission

8 June – Better Governance for the Single Market and the Services Directive Package

- The Commission will adopt a communication setting out actions and targets to make the Single Market effectively deliver more growth.

Council of Ministers

7 June – Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Ministers are expected to adopt:

- A general approach on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

European Parliament (Meeting of Committees – Brussels)

No relevant activity