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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

accompanying document to the

Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

on the approximation of the laws of the Member States with respect to emissions from on-road heavy duty vehicles and on access to vehicle repair information

Impact Assessment's Summary

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Impact Assessment's Summary

Air quality has improved over the past decade but there are still significant air quality problems throughout the European Union, especially in urban areas and in densely populated regions.

By 2020 the EU will still be a long way from achieving the objectives of the 6th Environmental Action Programme. Significant negative health and environmental impacts will continue to persist even with effective implementation of current legislation.

In order to solve these problems, further measures have been considered, and in doing so the following options have been assessed:

- No policy change
- Regulatory approach at the European level
- Regulation in Member States
- Fiscal incentives by Member States
- Non-regulatory approach

The impact assessment has demonstrated that further reduction of emission limits for heavy duty vehicles (Euro VI) is necessary to improve air quality while at the same time retaining the functioning of the internal market.

Particulate matter (PM) pollution is of increasing scientific concern and harmonised emission limits at European Union level are necessary to prevent barriers to the distribution and circulation of heavy duty vehicles and to achieve substantial reductions in particulate emissions from those vehicles across the EU. A 66% reduction in the limit value for particulate matter is proposed with an emission limit of 0.01 g/kWh, which, given current technology, will require particulate filters to be fitted to all diesel vehicles.

Additional action on nitrogen oxide (NO_x) and hydrocarbon (HC)[1] emissions is also justified, given the fact that many Member States will otherwise be unable to fulfil the requirements of the National Emissions Ceilings Directive (2001/81/EC) and the proposal for revision of the air quality directives (COM(2005) 447)[2]. An 80% reduction in NO_x to an emission limit of 0.4 g/kWh is proposed. Increased use of engine technology and after-treatment technology shall be needed to fulfil the required NO_x emission limits.

A series of amendments to the existing legislation are discussed in this impact assessment. The general effect of these is to further tighten emission limits from vehicles, in that they reduce the risk of vehicles producing unnecessary levels of pollution by providing more robust and comprehensive regulatory requirements without imposing excessive costs. In addition, they ensure standardised access to vehicle repair information.

The impact assessment concludes that it is appropriate to align our future emission values with those of the US. Most stakeholders – including industry – support the alignment with the US limit values, and our impact assessment shows that it is cost-efficient.

The result will be a considerable improvement in air quality while, at the same time reducing the cost of engine development and testing. In fact, the proposal will enable manufacturers to produce highly environmentally friendly engines for both the US and the European markets.

It will also enable Member States to fulfil the requirements of the Air Quality Directive.

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1 Hydrocarbons (HC) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) are used in this document interchangeably.

2 This proposal for an Ambient Air Quality Directive would amend existing air quality legislation, i.e. Directives 96/62/EC ("Framework Directive"), OJ L 296, 21.11.1996, p.55, and three "daughter directives" 1999/30/EC, 2000/69/EC 2002/3/EC and Council Decision 97/101/EC.