Quality of petrol and diesel fuels

1996/0163(COD) - 31/05/2017 - Follow-up document

The Commission submitted a report in accordance with Article 9 of Directive 98/70/EC on the quality of petrol and diesel fuels.

On the basis of the assessment of certain parts of the Directive as part of its Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT), the Commission concluded that **the Fuel Quality Directive provides EU added value** in improving and maintaining the quality of transport fuels. It is found to be generally fit for purpose and, based on the evidence available, it is considered to **achieve its aims** in an effective and broadly efficient manner.

The available evidence showed that a change in the Directive is not justified at the present time.

The quality of fuels and related greenhouse gas issues: the Directive also includes an obligation on fuel suppliers to reduce the greenhouse gas intensity of the fuel mix they supply by **6%** in 2020 compared to 2010.

Under Council Directive (EU) 2015/652, to be transposed by 21 April 2017 at the latest, Member States are required to monitor and report in detail the emission intensity of Greenhouse gases (GHGs). The first reports are due in 2018. Member States have already reported net savings in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the use of renewable energy in transport of around 35 Mt CO2 equivalent in 2014.

The Commission proposed not extending the GHG emission target under the Fuel Quality Directive beyond 2020. Instead, the Renewable Energy Directive should become the key instrument for driving the uptake of renewable and low-emission transport fuels up to 2030. It is therefore not considered appropriate to propose a changing the 6% target for 2020.

Biofuel blend limits: the 6% reduction target for GHG emissions from fuels provides an incentive for using more low carbon fuels, such as biofuels, in the transport sector. The Commission commissioned a **study** on the feasibility and the economic and environmental impacts of a hypothetical increase in the current blending levels for biofuels.

The scenarios contemplated suggest that there will be **no significant adverse effect** on vehicle emissions or on refineries.

Moreover, the most recent monitoring report on EU fuel quality, for 2014 and 2015, showed overall compliance with the specifications for petrol and diesel in the Fuel Quality Directive, with very few deviations from the relevant provisions.

Consequently, the Commission **does not consider it appropriate to change the specifications for general market fuels** with regard to maximum EU bio-blend levels.

Linkages with CO2 emission standards: the report suggested it may be possible to enhance engine design for use with gasoline with an increased research octane number (RON) to allow for higher compression ratios leading to a reduction in fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

As the current fuel specifications already permit the marketing of gasoline with enhanced RON, at present there does not seem to be a case for amending them in this regard.

Fuel quality and environmental issues: one of the aims of the Fuel Quality Directive is to reduce atmospheric pollution caused by vehicles. Over the period 1995-2013 transport emissions of SOx declined by -98%, emissions of lead declined by -95%, emissions of NOx declined by -51%, emissions of PM10 declined by -42%, ad emissions of PAH declined by -62%

Environmental specifications for fuels for non-road mobile machinery: the Commission has analysed the possibility of extending the requirements for diesel fuels to non-road mobile machinery fuel. The analysis concluded that **such an extension is unlikely to have significant impact** for most Member States.

Fuel additives: European standards for fuel quality (EN228 for petrol and EN590 for automotive diesel) allow the use of fuel additives to improve performance quality. The Commission considers that the current practice of **voluntary standard-setting** has led to an appropriate level of detergent use and related benefits. No further action is required in this regard.

Metallic additives: the legal requirements for fuel quality monitoring and measurement by Member States for metallic fuel additives are limited to lead and MMT. The Commission is not aware of the use of other metal fuel additives that would be sold through the fuel distribution network.

Components regulated under environmental legislation: from the information available the quantity of fuel components addressed under the Water Framework Directive cannot be stated. Consequently, there is at present no case for amending the fuel specifications in this regard.

Vapour pressure: this is fixed at 60 kPa for summer grade petrol to reduce non-methane volatile organic compound (NMVOC) emissions from road vehicles. According to a report prepared for the Commission, a further reduction in the maximum permitted vapour pressure would have an impact on the fuel industry, which would result in increased capital and operating costs.

In conclusion, the Commission will continue to **monitor compliance with the environmental specifications for fuels** laid down in the Fuel Quality Directive along with its impact on the protection of the environment and human health and on the internal market for transport fuels, vehicles and non-road mobile machinery.

It will also monitor the **transposition of the provisions related to the greenhouse gas reduction target** in the Fuel Quality Directive, due in April 2017.