

## **New provisions on recycling for motor vehicles from 2008**

***The Commission has just adopted new provisions laying down minimum levels for the recycling and recovery of the components and materials in new vehicles. The purpose of these measures is to facilitate the reuse, recycling and recovery of components with a view to achieving the objectives set for 2015 with regard to recycling and recovery for end-of-life vehicles. They will apply to all new vehicles placed on the market three years after the adoption of this new Directive, which means they are expected to come into effect in 2008.***

The motor industry is one of the key industries with an important role to play with regard to the competitiveness of the European economy and sustainable development in the field of transport. It represents 34% of world output of motor vehicles. According to the Member of the Commission with responsibility for enterprise policy Erkki Liikanen, this “is an important step in the recycling of the parts and materials used in the construction of motor vehicles. I am particularly pleased with this measure, which should allow us, with the help of the motor industry, to achieve the ambitious objectives set for 2015 and do a little more to protect the environment. It is in fact essential for the manufacturers to incorporate recycling right from the development stage in producing new vehicles, and the industry will thereby demonstrate its commitment to producing safer, more environment-friendly vehicles, even if this results in increased production costs. Finally, this will improve the operation of the single market, since these measures will come into force at the same time for all new vehicles put on the road in the European Union.”

In 2002 just under 16 million new cars and vans came onto the European market. On the other hand there are between nine and ten million vehicles each year that reach the end of their life – on average 13 to 14 years after they were first placed on the market – thus generating between eight and nine million tonnes of ‘waste’. It was to rectify this situation that on 18 September 2000 the European Parliament and the Council adopted Directive 2000/53/EC on end-of life vehicles.

This Directive sets targets for the reuse, recycling and recovery of the parts and materials in end-of-life vehicles. In future, only a very small portion of these materials must find its way to landfills. On the contrary, most of the parts and materials must be reused, recycled or recovered. The minimum percentages to be reached from 2006 onwards are 80% for reuse and recycling and 85% for reuse and recovery. These minimum levels are intended to be raised in 2015, when they will be set at 85% and 95% respectively; these targets will be re-examined by the European Parliament and the Council before they are put into effect.

Obviously, targets like this cannot be achieved without a major contribution from the motor industry, which will thus be required to incorporate a greater proportion of recyclable materials into vehicles and to conceive of vehicles right from the design stage in terms of recycling and dismantling, so as to facilitate the reuse and recycling of components.

While responsibility for developing efficient recycling methods lies first and foremost with the recycling industry, the fact remains that conceiving of vehicles in terms of recycling right from the drawingboard is indisputably the most effective way of making it easier to handle them at the end of their life.

The measures will apply to cars and vans, whether new models or models currently in production, that are placed onto the market three years after the new Directive is adopted. This means that they should take effect from 2008 onwards. They will not apply, however, to vehicles with small production runs (less than 500 vehicles per year in each Member State) in view of the considerable investment that these SMEs would be required to undertake in order to modify their production.

It is estimated that at present a car weighing 1 000 kg contains between 700 and 750 kg of metal. This means some 150 to 200kg of non-metallic materials – including about 95kg of plastics – that will have to be recycled from January 2006 onwards, and more from 2015 in view of the increasing part that lightweight materials are bound to play in vehicle construction.

The general provisions of this new Directive fit into the Community type-approval procedure laid down under Council Directive 70/156/EEC. Conformity with the technical provisions will be certified by the competent authorities on the basis of forms for calculating recyclability and recoverability rates developed by the International Organisation for Standardisation in Geneva<sup>1</sup>.

Further information can be obtained from the following Commission websites:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/automotive/index.htm>

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/waste/elv\\_index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/waste/elv_index.htm)

The ISO 22628:2002 standard is available from the following address:

<http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/prods-services/isostore/store.html>

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<sup>1</sup> ISO, International Organisation for Standardisation,  
1, rue de Varembe, Case postale 56  
CH-1211 Genève 20, Switzerland  
Reference of the calculation-method standard: ISO 22628:2002.