

Lost opportunity for lighter and more efficient cars

Brussels, 3 October 2018 - The EU Parliament has confirmed today in a plenary vote the political will to go for higher targets to limit CO2 emissions from cars and vans by 2025 and 2030. The Paris agreement confirmed the need for the transport sector to urgently curb its CO2 emissions drastically. Unfortunately, the EU Parliament did not have the courage to make lightweighting more relevant by deleting the mass-based utility parameter. This parameter should have been deleted as it prevents OEMs to reap the full benefits of their investments in light-weight solutions to meet their targets. It is now in the hands of the EU Council to minimize the damage and insert more guarantees that lightweighting can be used as one of the tools for more efficient cars in the future.

European Aluminium Director General Gerd Götz said “We acknowledge the efforts of the EU Parliament to recognise the value of light-weight solutions as a direct way to reduce CO2 emissions from cars and vans. However, this will not be enough to make a step change in the way lightweight solutions are considered. As long as mass remains the parameter to define CO2 targets, heavier cars will be allowed to emit more, and manufacturers will not be allowed to take the full benefit of their investments in lightweighting. This is counterproductive and does not help Europe to stand as a leader in the fight against climate change.”

On top, with the transition from NEDC to WLTP, the manufacturer specific target will not be defined until 2021. To reduce the level of uncertainty and to ensure that heavier cars will have to improve their performance on a continuous basis, the current regulation must include a guarantee that the future slope of the limit value curve will not be steeper than the current one. The slope of the limit value curve defines the relation between the weight of a vehicle and its CO2 target, and by continuously making the slope flatter it is ensured that no one can add weight to the cars to get closer to the target (the so-called “brick in the boot” effect).

We now call on the EU Member States to adopt a clear political signal for a more ambitious and technology neutral regulation by either deleting the mass parameter or to include an upper limit for the slope of the limit value curve in the current regulation. This will ensure that the weight dependence of the target continues to be reduced. Something that must have been the intention of the Commission’s proposal.

About European Aluminium:

European Aluminium, founded in 1981 and based in Brussels, is the voice of the aluminium industry in Europe. We actively engage with decision makers and the wider stakeholder community to promote the outstanding properties of aluminium, secure growth and optimise the contribution our metal can make to meeting Europe’s sustainability challenges. Through environmental and technical expertise, economic and statistical analysis, scientific research, education and sharing of best practices, public affairs and communication activities, European Aluminium promotes the use of aluminium as a material with permanent properties that is part of the solution to achieving sustainable goals, while maintaining and improving the image of the industry, of the material and of its applications among their stakeholders. Our 80+ members include primary aluminium producers; downstream manufacturers of extruded, rolled and cast aluminium; producers of recycled aluminium and national aluminium associations are representing more than 600 plants in 30 European countries. Aluminium products are used in a wide range of markets, including automotive, transport, high-tech engineering, building, construction and packaging.