

## Mixed response as MEPs try to strengthen aviation rules

The European Parliament's environment committee has told the Commission it needs to be stricter on the rules for aviation to enter the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). But its action received a mixed response from environmental NGOs, who say the committee's stance weakens the position the full Parliament took 15 months ago.

The environment committee met earlier this month to discuss the Commission's proposed legislation that will enable aviation to enter the ETS. It voted to tighten the legislation in two important respects: it suggested a tighter cap on emissions from aircraft (75% of the average annual emissions of 2004-06, as opposed to the Commission's 100%), and it voted for all airlines to enter the scheme in 2010, not 2011 for EU airlines and 2012 for all others.

MEPs also approved the idea that 50% of emissions permits should be handed free of charge to airlines. This is lower than the 85% their colleagues on the transport committee had called for, but still offers scope for airlines to profit from the scheme.

### KYOTO TARGETS

The vote was welcomed by environmental groups, but also criticised. A statement by four NGOs – T&E, WWF, FoE and CAN – said the committee had weakened the stance MEPs took in July 2006 when they said aviation should cut emissions in line with Kyoto Protocol targets. They also said the position adopted now was hard to reconcile with the EU's commitment to cut overall greenhouse gas emissions by 20-30% by 2020.

'A year ago, MEPs were talking big on tackling aviation emissions,' said T&E aviation expert João Vieira. 'Now there seems to be one rule for the most polluting form of transport on the planet, and other

for all other modes.'

Richard Dyer of FoE said: 'Recent research by climate change academics found that a strong aviation ETS could help drive aviation technology inno-

vation and provide the necessary price signals to curb growth, but now MEPs have backtracked from supporting all the improvements needed to achieve this.'

The environment committee's decisions (approved with 50 in favour and none against) will now go to the November plenary, and then be discussed by EU environment ministers.

## EU says Icao assembly resolution won't stop ETS

A group of nations led by the USA is still trying to prevent aviation entering the ETS, as became clear at last month's triennial general assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (Icao), which was dominated for the first time by environmental concerns.

In simple terms, the EU failed in its attempts to get the rest of the world to support aviation entering the ETS, but in an unusual diplomatic move, EU member states supported by a further 15 European countries, made an official 'reservation' against an Icao resolution on market-based measures that would have effectively disabled

the emissions trading plan.

The resolution – strongly supported by the USA, with support from Canada, Australia and Japan – sought to introduce a 'mutual agreement' clause saying any Icao member would have to sign a separate agreement with all countries operating in its airspace before applying emissions trading. The resolution was passed, but the EU says it does not have legal implications for the EU plans, and aviation's entry into the ETS will go ahead.

'We are disappointed by the outcome,' said the head of Portugal's aviation authority Luis Fonseca de Almeida, 'and

believe Icao has abdicated the leadership role given to it in the Kyoto Protocol. That is a very great failing that should concern us all.'

T&E's policy officer João Vieira added: 'After a decade of failure, it's now time for Icao's environmental responsibility to be consigned to the dustbin of history.'

America is still threatening to take legal action against the EU, saying aviation in the ETS would contravene the 1944 Chicago Convention that regulates international air traffic. The EU is confident that this is not the case.

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Campaigners from across Europe demonstrated at the European Investment Bank's annual meeting in Ljubljana, calling for a stop to lending to fossil fuel projects and to support for carbon trading. EIB transport policy, page 2.

## Bill of rights for rail passengers

MEPs have approved a new bill of rights for rail travellers, including company liability for passengers and their luggage, and the right to take a bicycle on board.

The move is the last major obstacle towards the completion of the EU's third railway package.

By approving a compromise package of measures worked out in early summer, MEPs have effectively brought to an end a three-year negotiation process

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## Commission prepares new rules on quieter and more energy-efficient tyres

The Commission's first consultation for several years on Europe's maximum permitted tyre noise has ended. T&E has called for an overall reduction of at least five decibels.

The current EU noise standards from tyres were introduced six years ago, as the health problems resulting from road traffic noise became widely recognised. But as the latest tyres can considerably reduce road noise, the Commission has come under pressure to tighten existing standards.

T&E policy officer Nina Renshaw said: 'Even when they were introduced, the existing standards were easily met by most of the tyres on the market, which does not indicate a set of limits designed to encourage better technology. The standards should have been renewed in 2004, but the Commission keeps delaying it and our roads are getting louder.'

'Given the problem, and wider tyres increasingly coming onto the market, it's essential the EU proposes, without delay, effective standards to cut noise from passenger and commercial tyres, and we're suggesting 5dB or more across the board.'

There are already tyres on the market 8dB quieter than the current maximum limit, so a 5dB reduction would be technically feasible and need not compromise other aspects of tyre performance. T&E also says further tightening should follow in 2016, for which indications should be agreed now.

The Commission has promised draft legislation, which is likely to appear around the end of the year, and its proposals will also include standards on

rolling resistance. The potential of reduced resistance to improve fuel consumption has led to it becoming one of the 'parallel measures' with which Brussels wants to achieve its target for maximum CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per kilometre in new cars.

In a separate though related development, T&E has expressed anger that the Commission has delayed the revision of legislation on overall vehicle noise by at least another year. The EC said earlier this month that it would continue collecting data on vehicle noise until 2009-10, and would only then consider legislation to tighten existing standards.

This means a minimum of three years before legislation for quieter vehicles can come

**New rules on buying clean vehicles 'by the end of the year'**

**The Commission has unveiled a consultation paper on urban mobility, despite its influence being severely limited by the subsidiarity principle.**

Most urban transport issues are resolved at national and local level, but the EU's transport commissioner Jacques Barrot believes the scale of the problems faced by urban areas means that Europe has a role to play.

The green paper provides a number of general aims, but the centrepiece of EU involvement is likely to be new rules on public procurement of clean public transport vehicles, one of the only areas in which Europe has direct influence. Barrot has promised revised proposals on this by the end of this year.

Two years ago the Commission published draft legislation that would have forced public authorities to ensure at least 25% of their new vehicles met an EU 'enhanced environmentally friendly standard', but the plans were heavily criticised for being too weak to make any difference, and they have not been taken further.

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## EIB launches transport policy, but is it different?

**The European Investment Bank has published its first investment priorities specifically on transport projects, but environmental organisations are not convinced that much has changed.**

The EIB, the European Union's principal source of loan finance for large-scale projects, says it needs to ensure its support 'focuses on the sustainability of Europe's transport'. Up to now it has said it has followed EU policy, but has now produced a specific lending policy for transport that includes a background note on global warming and transport.

Although it describes its new lending policy as a consultation exercise, the EIB did not conduct any consultation processes, despite requests from the main NGO monitoring its lending, CEE Bankwatch, to be involved.

A quick review carried out

for environmental NGOs suggests the changes to the EIB's criteria are small, and the new policy is full of words that could mean many different things depending on circumstances. In addition, promoting projects of 'high economic value' still seems to get a bigger mention than resource use and emissions potential.

Better news for NGOs is the EIB's willingness in principle to finance projects not in the trans-European transport network, though whether any do receive funding remains to be seen.

Magda Stockiewicz of CEE Bankwatch said: 'While it is a positive first step for the EIB to finally have its transport policy in place, the general approach is little more than "business as usual". As an EU public financier, the EIB should limit its support in transport only to projects with demonstrable contribution to combating climate

change and to sustainable development, and we hope environmental campaigners will call on the EIB to deliver on that.'

The new lending policy was launched at the EIB's annual forum, this year in Ljubljana, Slovenia. It can be found at [www.eib.org](http://www.eib.org), and comments can be sent to Juan Martin Sterlin at [jsterlin@eib.org](mailto:jsterlin@eib.org).

## Third rail package nears completion

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which involves four directives. They cover the opening of international passenger rail services to competition from 2010, a system to certify the health and competence of train drivers, compensation rights for passengers whose trains are late or cancelled, and the bill of passenger rights.

However, both the bill of rights and the compensation scheme do not go as far as rail campaigners had wanted, and in some cases passenger rights

will be delayed for 17 years.

The obligatory compensation scheme will mean 25% of a fare is refunded if the train is an hour late and 50% if it is two hours or more. But to protect the rail companies of central and eastern Europe, the compensation scheme will be limited to cross-border services.

The Belgian MEP Dirk Sterckx, who was one of the rapporteurs of the rail package, said: 'By reaching this agreement, we have done all rail passengers in the Union a service.'

## Conclusions about city charging apply to Eurovignette



**Nina Renshaw**  
T&E Policy Officer

'Towards a new culture for urban mobility' is the ambitious sounding title for a Commission green paper launched last month. Sadly the title reflects nothing of the sort in the contents of the paper, which shows the EU still feels rather lost in our cities. After all, previous EU ventures into urban transport policy have ended with a stern reminder of the subsidiarity principle under which local issues are resolved at local level, but there is still a certain amount the Commission can do on urban mobility. And if it is in listening mode, it might listen to some of its own conclusions as reported in the green paper and apply them to the wider questions affecting Europe's transport.

As a transnational body, the EU is well placed to spread the word about best practice in urban transport. Quite rightly, the green paper finds much to

recommend in the London and Stockholm city charging schemes. Charging fair prices for the use of transport in our cities offers the best option to control urban traffic growth, and make our cities clean, safe and healthy places to live. London and Stockholm are showing the way, also by reinvesting the revenues into better quality public transport to break out of the vicious circle. At least 20 other European cities hope to follow their lead.

The truth is, though, that the EU cannot take any credit for these home-grown successes. This is not just because they were measures decided locally, but because the approach the Commission has taken to its equivalent dossier, the *Eurovignette* directive on road charging, has been to avoid the principle of charging for externalities that the London and Stockholm charges incorporate. If the EU is serious about replicating these successes elsewhere, it must listen to its own warm words about the

value of city charging schemes and transpose them into action when it comes to revising the Eurovignette next year. Member states must be allowed to include the costs of congestion and environmental damage in the price of using all roads. To date, the Eurovignette rules only apply to lorries and to major European highways, and only relate to infrastructure costs. Cities rightly fall outside this scope, so local administrations are free to decide on the best schemes to tackle their own local problems and their costs. The EU should not interfere in any way that would impact on a cities' right to do this.

One of the best things the Commission could do, when it tackles the Eurovignette revision, is to show how external costs should be calculated, so they can be included in transport prices if national, regional or municipal authorities see fit. The scope of the directive does not need to change — cities must still be able to design their own solutions under subsidiari-

ty. But a model showing them the way is a first step to encouraging more widespread use of fair pricing to manage transport demand.

Of course, a good urban public transport system and safe infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians should ideally be in place before road charging. But here the EU has another vital role to play. Cohesion funds worth almost €40 billion for 2007-13 are available for many regions. Small scale urban projects present much better value for money and have positive effects for more people, compared to infrastructure mega-projects. The Commission can still steer member states' spending in a more sustainable direction.

The EU is still questioning its own role in cities, but its real job is to smooth the functioning of the transport system as a whole. Next year, it has a chance to answer both questions by smoothing the way to including the real costs of transport in the prices.

## Where now for Icao after EU breaks free on emissions?

*Tim Johnson, director of the Aviation Environment Federation, looks at the implications of the Icao general assembly.*

By making a 'reservation' on the Icao resolution relating to market-based measures, Europe has neither won nor lost the debate on whether non-EU airlines can be included in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. It has stood its ground, ensuring that the arguments will continue to the next stage, which may involve the USA making its threatened legal challenge. But there was one loser in Montreal — Icao itself.

Icao has prided itself on being the lead UN agency in matters involving international civil aviation, including environmental protection. Since 1997, when the Kyoto Protocol asked

developed countries to tackle aviation's contribution to global warming through Icao, it has guarded this role despite constantly failing to develop a global action plan. In fact, as T&E recently highlighted, it has spent 10 years limiting the policy options available to states. With the forthcoming post-2012 talks in Bali, and increased talk of how and where international emissions from aviation should be addressed, there was a hope that last month's Icao assembly would mark a change in direction based on a realisation that other UN agencies might compete to take the lead.

The resolution that was passed makes the right noises but lacks any real substance. It talks of 'vigorously developing policy options' and putting concrete proposals and advice to

the UNFCCC encompassing both technical solutions and market-based measures. But there is no action, and any talk of targets is confined to references to aspirational fuel-efficiency goals. It calls for a new high-level group to develop an aggressive programme of action, but the views amongst Icao's member states on how to proceed are so diverse that the only thing this programme would deliver is an implementation framework giving states the flexibility to choose between various options, some of which may have little effect.

It remains to be seen whether other UN agencies are better placed — or willing — to take over Icao's environmental role, but, for the time being at least, there is little prospect of finding consensus on a global

approach that has become the industry's mantra.

Yet against this background, an opportunity has opened up for Europe, as it looks to work out its own strategy. Such a strategy has focused on emissions trading, but it is generally recognised, at least outside the aviation industry, that trading alone won't be sufficient.

Before this assembly, the EU was willing to support the existing Icao policy which included a moratorium on implementing emissions charges. However, in the new resolution, the EU's 'reservation' covers the entire section on market-based measures — effectively freeing Europe from previous restrictions. Whether or not Icao retains its mandate on climate change, Europe should make the most of this opportunity.



## Shipping contributes more to global warming

Greenhouse gases from the shipping industry could be much worse than thought, according to information by Intertanko, the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners.

Up to now, the International Maritime Organisation has assumed that between 200 and 250 million tonnes of bunker fuel has been used annually, but Intertanko's findings suggest the figure is at least 350m.

Based on recalculations

based on the sizes of ships, fuel efficiency and horse power, it is now believed shipping emits around 1.2 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide, instead of the 800m previously thought. This compares with around 650m tonnes for aviation.

Bill Box of Intertanko told the London newspaper *The Times*: 'Planes, trains and cars have tightened up much more than shipping. Shipping is conscious it is the last to tighten up and that things must be done – and quickly.'

### BIOFUELS 'COULD BE WORSE FOR WARMING'

A new report by atmospheric scientists says growing and burning many of the biofuel crops currently being introduced to transport could be raising overall greenhouse gas emissions, not lowering them. The study from Edinburgh university, on which the Nobel prize-winning chemist Paul Crutzen worked, says some biomass crops release around twice the amount of the greenhouse gas nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O, also known as laughing gas), which not only wipes out any savings of greenhouse gases but in fact increases global warming emissions. Among the fuels that score badly are rapeseed biodiesel and corn bioethanol, while only cane sugar bioethanol of the fuels studied looks like a better alternative to conventional fuels. A co-author of the study told *Chemistry World* magazine: 'What we are saying is that [growing many biofuels] is probably of no benefit and is making the climate issue worse.'

### NO TO 'GIGALINERS'

Transport ministers of Germany's 16 federated states have voted not to allow extra-long lorries on German roads. The 16 said the risks of the lorries – known by various nicknames but increasingly as 'gigaliners' – would outweigh potential benefits. The decision comes just a month before the Commission begins work on its Freight Logistics Action Plan, which is expected to announce

a study to look at the impacts of gigaliners.

### COMPANY CARS

The Netherlands has joined Great Britain in making tax benefits for drivers of company cars CO<sub>2</sub>-based. The current benefit of 22% of a car's value when new will increase to 25% if the car emits less than 110 g/km of CO<sub>2</sub> (petrol) or 95 g/km (diesel), with all other cars seeing their benefit sink to 14%. The British have a more gradual system, with several emissions bands. The announcement came in last month's Dutch budget, which also raised fuel taxes, offered incentives for diesel particle filters, and differentiated sales tax on environmental criteria.

• The Dutch are also joining the British and French in introducing departure charges for air passengers. The plan is to charge €11.25 per passenger for flights under 2500km, and €45 for all other flights.

### GREEN DEREGULATION

A former high-ranking Brussels official says the Commission's 'Better Regulation' campaign is aimed at undermining EU environmental rules. The campaign to 'simplify' some EU legislation was introduced by the enterprise commissioner Günter Verheugen, but was criticised by environmental groups who feared it was an attempt to reduce rules designed to protect the environment. Now Ludwig Krämer, a former head of the environment

director's waste unit, has confirmed this suspicion. He told a conference in Brussels last month: 'In my opinion the purpose of "better regulation" is to deregulate EU environmental policy.'

### CARBON QUESTIONS

A television documentary has cast doubt on the effectiveness of 'carbon offset' schemes. 'The Great Green Smoke Screen' by the British company Channel 4 said it found flaws in the calculation process by which carbon emissions were worked out, and suggested the carbon savings in projects around the world were often less than originally claimed.

### NOTICE ANYTHING?

*T&E Bulletin* has had a minor facelift. Let us know what you think. Email: editor@transportenvironment.org

### AND FINALLY ...

Paris's rent-a-bicycle scheme seems to be having an interesting side-effect – it is proving a new form of dating agency. Since July, Parisians can buy an annual access ticket for €29, allowing them to use any one of 14 000 grey-coloured bicycles provided by the mayor of Paris, Bertrand Delanoë. Not only has the scheme doubled the number of cyclists, but it has provided a great forum for love to blossom. "Love begins here" says one bike sticker, while a new Paris cyclists' website offers a forum called 'Love at first sight on cycle hill'.

## EU consultations

- **Advanced safety features and tyres**, DG Enterprise, runs until 18 October
- **Living with climate change in Europe**, DG Environment, runs until 30 November
- **Green paper on urban mobility**, DG Environment, runs until 15 March

## Correction: shipping report on CO<sub>2</sub>

In the September *Bulletin*, we reported that Germany's Environment Protection Agency (UBA) had published a study on how to reduce shipping emissions in the Baltic Sea. That study has not yet been published.

What was published, also by the UBA is a related study by the Swedish transport economist and former T&E president Per Kågeson called 'Linking CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from international shipping to the EU ETS'.

The paper proposes making the ship itself (rather than its owner or leaser) the entity liable for emissions charges, an option that appears to have been overlooked in earlier papers on shipping and CO<sub>2</sub>.

T&E apologises for the error and will report the publication of the paper on a pilot scheme for reducing shipping emissions in the Baltic Sea when it happens.

## Bulletin

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T&E has 49 member organisations in 21 countries.

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