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Vehicle Type-Approval framework revision: European Parliament pre-approves the Dalton report and gives mandate for IMCO Committee to start Negotiations with Council.

The European Parliament has established its position on the Vehicle Type-Approval Framework Regulation during the plenary session on 4 April. According to the new procedural rules of the EP, the Parliamentarians did not formally adopt the European Parliament's position at this stage (first reading), but gave the mandate to the Internal Market - IMCO Committee in order to start informal (so-called "trilogue") negotiations with the Council.

Prior to the vote, the MEPs debated the IMCO Committee report focusing mainly on the whether or not a new Agency should be created.

Rapporteur Dalton (ECR/UK) felt that the IMCO Committee had reached a good compromise which included a new market surveillance system in which 20% of new vehicles would need to be checked, a new forum with peer review and Commission involvement, independent auditors, no direct payment of fees from manufacturers to technical services and a proposal on consumer redress.

Commissioner Vella regarded the proposal as the most important measure to restore public confidence in the automotive industry and was pleased that the IMCO report supported the reinforcement of the independent testing as well as EU oversight and roads testing but indicated that issues regarding repair and maintenance information should be addressed separately.

Overview on the voting results on the general issues:

During the plenary session, the member of the European Parliament (MEPs) rejected the new plenary amendments from S&D (Socialist and Democrats) and Greens/EFA Groups proposing to establish a "European Vehicle Surveillance Agency" that would have had the power to test vehicle emissions in laboratories and in real driving conditions.

Key amendments proposed by the IMCO Report:

- Member States would have to ensure that type-approval authorities and market surveillance authorities adhere to a strict separation of roles and responsibilities;
- Every year, Member States would have to carry out market surveillance tests of at least 20% of the number of types placed on the market in that Member State in the previous year. Market surveillance authorities (as well as the Commission) would furthermore be allowed to rely on independent testing organisations to perform technical tasks;
- The Commission would be allowed to carry out or request tests and inspections, if it considers that a Member State does not fulfil its type-approval or market surveillance obligations;

- Vehicle manufacturers would have to make available free of charge and without delay the data necessary for the purpose of compliance verification testing by recognised third parties;
- The Commission would have to organise and carry out joint audits of type approval and market surveillance authorities, and adopt an annual plan of joint audits following consultation with the Forum;
- Moreover, the Plenary approved new amendments to art 89 (on penalties) establishing that when a vehicle, system, component or separate technical unit (STU) does not comply with the Regulation, the economic operator would be liable for any damage caused to owners of the affected vehicles as a result of non-compliance or following a recall.

Repair and Maintenance Information (RMI) amendments proposed by the IMCO report:

- keeping the OBD life port to the vehicle open and accessible, as this connector is the lifeline for the communication with the vehicle;
- improving the format of the information given to independent operators which should be in “electronically processable format”;
- improving the unequivocal spare parts identification;
- improving the clear vehicle identification;
- ensuring that independent multi-brand diagnostic and testing tools are able to accurately communicate with the vehicle using standardised communication protocols.

ADPA welcomes the position of the European Parliament which produced a legislative text enriched of crucial amendments representing an important improvements for the entire automotive aftermarket supply chain in view of the Trilogue negotiations with the Council and the Commission.