

Minutes of the 1st meeting of the GRPE informal group on Fuel Quality

The GRPE informal group on Fuel Quality (FQ) held its first meeting in Geneva, on 16 January 2008, under the chairmanship of Mr. B. Gauvin (France). The attendance list is reproduced in Annex 2 to this report. The list of working documents considered by the group is reproduced in Annex 1. All working papers of the informal group are publicly available at the GRPE website at: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp29/wp29wgs/wp29grpe/fq01.html>

I. WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The Chairman opened the first informal group meeting and welcomed all participants. He recalled that, during its November 2007, the World Forum had held a Round Table on Fuel Quality. He added that WP.29 had also agreed to establish a GRPE informal group on Fuel Quality (see WP.29 report ECE/TRANS/WP.29/1064, para. 11) and that group should start to prepare a roadmap for the development of fuel quality standards.
2. The Secretary introduced the draft agenda and announced that the working papers were available at the new template on the above mentioned GRPE website. The informal group adopted the agenda.

II. WP.29 ROUND TABLE ON FUEL QUALITY

3. The Chairman reported that the outcome of that Round Table had been positive and that the oil industry had duly been represented by IPIECA. The Round Table had clearly shown that there is a close link between the market fuel quality and the emissions of pollutants from motor vehicles, and that there had been the general consent to start discussion on the development of specific market fuel quality standards for vehicles. The expert from IPIECA welcomed the initiative by WP.29 to set up this informal group and agreed to take part in these activities.
4. The secretary informed the informal group that the programme as well as the presentations given during the Round Table were available at the WP.29 website at: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp29/wp29wgs/wp29gen/RoundTable.html>

III. OICA PROPOSAL FOR WORLDWIDE HARMONISATION OF FUEL QUALITY

Documentation: Working paper FQ-01-01

5. The expert from OICA introduced a proposal for the worldwide harmonisation of fuel quality (FQ-01-01). He recalled that, during the WP.29 Round table, it was recognized that a further reduction of emissions through more stringent emission regulations requires more advanced emission control technologies, which drives the crucial need for fuel quality to be available to consumers. He underlined the importance and the need to develop recommendations for market fuel quality with regard to the emission level and technology type

of motor vehicles in use. He added that the World Wide Fuel Charter (WWFC) could be the basis of discussion.

6. The EC expert reported on the regulatory process of the European Commission with regard to fuel quality. He raised a study reservation on the proposal by OICA and announced his intention to prepare a counterproposal for consideration at the next informal meeting.

7. The US expert stated that even in his country a number of fuel standards were used and expressed his doubts on the possibility to develop a worldwide harmonized fuel standard. He announced to provide for the next meeting a more solid position of the USA on the worldwide harmonisation of fuel quality standards. The expert from Japan also announced to prepare for the next meeting a firm position of his government.

8. The expert from IPIECA welcomed the proposal by OICA. He stated that the WWFC is only one example and that a number of other regional specifications exist in parallel. Furthermore, such specifications evolve constantly according to the need of the regional policies for market fuels, taking into account the costs and benefits. He reported that similar projects have already been experienced within the partnerships of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). He added that the initiative by OICA is a big challenge and he volunteered to contribute actively to the technical part of that effort.

9. The expert from UNEP also welcomed the initiative by the World Forum and supported the main objectives of the informal group resulting in a further contribution to a better environmental protection. She informed the group about a number of successful programmes performed by UNEP. She offered her experience in the later application of such specifications in the different regions of the world.

10. The experts from Germany, Italy and the Russian Federation underlined the importance to establish such an expert group. They announced their support and active contributions to the work of the informal group. As a result, the informal group noted no objection to start with the development of technical specification regarding the quality of market fuels. In this respect, it was agreed not to touch the existing reference fuels in the UN vehicle emissions regulations.

11. Referring to FQ-01-01, the OICA expert clarified that the development of a single fuel standard would be very difficult and probably not possible in the short term. However, it would be necessary to develop, as soon as possible, a set of minimum requirements for the quality of market fuels used by vehicles in their daily use, taking into consideration the level of emissions and the technology of the motor vehicles concerned. He suggested to proceed, for this purpose, in the two parallel work streams A (administrative procedure) and B (technical development).

12. Following the discussion, the informal group agreed on the following roadmap:

- (a) to start, in a first step, with the development of technical specifications for market fuel quality taking into account the emission control technologies;
- (b) on the basis of these specifications, GRPE and WP.29 should, in a second step, investigate the most appropriate administrative procedure for publishing them (e.g. as

a guideline or as an annex to either the UNECE Regulations concerned or the Consolidated Resolution on the Construction of Vehicles (R.E.3) or the Special Resolution No. 1 (S.R.1) or as a regulation under the 1958 or 1998 Agreement or as a rule under the 1997 Agreement).

13. It was also reminded that the Agreements administered by the World Forum were not very clear specifically with regard to possibility to cover even market fuel quality requirements. The group reminded that, after conclusion of the technical specifications, the UNECE secretariat would have to clarify with the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) whether there is need to amend one or the other Agreement in this respect.

IV. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

Documentation: Working paper FQ-01-02

14. The secretariat introduced FQ-01-02 proposing the terms of reference and rules of procedure for the informal group on fuel quality. He added that, once the working paper would be finalized by the informal group, it would be submitted as an informal document to GRPE for consideration and adoption.

15. The expert from the Russian Federation preferred to add in the terms of reference a more general goal regarding the protection of the environment and the improvement of the air quality. He added that after conclusion of the specifications on market fuel quality, a recommendation should be established on how Contracting Parties should apply these specifications.

16. The expert from IPIECA preferred not to refer to UNECE Regulations and to the vehicle type approval procedure, but to UN vehicle emission regulations in general and to the test procedures.

17. The expert from OICA stated that a 2 years mandate was too short and preferred to have a 3 years mandate.

18. Following the discussion, the informal group agreed on the terms of reference and the rules of procedures as reproduced in informal document No. GRPE-55-25.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

19. The informal group agreed to convene again in Geneva prior to the 56th session of GRPE, on Wednesday, 4 June 2008, subject to the consent of GRPE (see GRPE report ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRPE/55). The Chairman thanked all the experts for their active participation and announced to inform GRPE about the outcome of the first informal meeting.

Annex 1

List of working papers (FQ-01-...) of the 1st Informal group meeting on Fuel Quality

No.	Transmitted by	Agenda item	Title	Follow -up
01	OICA	3.	OICA proposal for worldwide harmonisation of fuel quality	(a)
02	Secretariat	4	Proposal for the Terms of Reference for the informal group on fuel quality	(b)
03	Secretariat	-	Agenda for the 1st meeting of the GRPE informal group on Fuel Quality (FQ)	(a)

Notes:

- (a) Consideration completed or to be superseded
- (b) Agreed as amended and submitted to GRPE as an informal document

Annex 2

Attendance list of the 1st Informal group meeting on Fuel Quality

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