

Minutes of the 2nd meeting of the GRPE informal group on Fuel Quality

The GRPE informal group on Fuel Quality (FQ) held its second meeting in Geneva, on 4 June 2008, under the chairmanship of Mr. B. Gauvin (France). The list of working papers 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/fq02.html>

I. WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: Working paper FQ-02-01-Rev.1

1. The Chairman opened the second informal group meeting and welcomed all participants. He recalled that, during its first meeting in January 2008, the FQ informal group had agreed on a roadmap for the development of recommendations for market fuel quality.
2. The Secretary introduced a revised agenda (FQ-02-01-Rev.1), which was adopted by the informal group.

II. (A) MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING

Documentation: Working paper FQ-01-04

3. The Secretary informed the group that the minutes of the first meeting were available as working paper FQ-01-04 at the FQ informal group's website.

II. (B) TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRPE/55, Annex VI

4. The Secretary recalled that the terms of reference and rules of procedures, which had been agreed by the group during its first meeting, were reproduced in Annex VI of the GRPE report ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRPE/55 and would be adopted by WP.29 at its June 2008 session.

III. OICA PROPOSAL FOR WORLDWIDE HARMONISATION OF FUEL QUALITY

Documentation: Working papers FQ-02-02, FQ-02-03, FQ-02-04 and FQ-02-05

5. The Chairman recalled the roadmap on which the informal group agreed during its first meeting:
 - (a) to start, in a first step, with the development of technical specifications for market fuel quality taking into account the engine 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.

6. Referring to FQ-02-02, the expert from IPIECA reported on his organization's position regarding the worldwide harmonization of fuel quality. He supported the informal group's intention to regionally harmonize – as a possible first step to more widespread harmonization - market fuel quality in order to ensure transparency of fuel market as well as to avoid illegal traffic of fuels. He stressed the need that all countries or regions, developed and emerging ones, should be involved in that harmonization. He underlined that this concern is a major policy issue of IPIECA and UNEP. He suggested taking on this task, together with the expert from UNEP. He volunteered to closely cooperate with UNECE and the GRPE informal group on FQ.

7. The expert from OICA introduced a proposal for the worldwide harmonization of fuel quality (FQ-02-03). Referring to the evolution of emission limit values in Regulation No. 83, he recalled 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 in order to ensure the emission level during the lifetime of the vehicle. He stressed the need to develop recommendations for market fuel quality with regard to the emission level and technology type of motor vehicles in use. He suggested considering the fuel parameters mentioned in Annex B of FQ-02-03, which had been developed by consensus of all stakeholders, for use in Europe. He also introduced FQ-02-04 responding to FQ-02-02, and welcomed the suggestion of a key role for UNEP as a means to bring developing countries closer to the work of the group. He also expressed the willingness of OICA to cooperate in the promotion of regional harmonisation as a step towards global harmonisation. He said that the IPIECA proposals for parameters to be considered by the group were not sufficiently ambitious and underlined the importance of considering the complete fuel specification, or at least to focus on the key parameters, such as those mentioned in FQ-02-03, in order to make quick progress. He said that these shall include at least the most important fuel quality parameters, such as the content of lead, sulphur, benzene and metallic additives.

8. The expert from UNEP underlined the importance of all contributions to a better air quality and the need for more stringent performance requirements. She added that such higher targets for the environmental protection have to be established on a step by step approach taking into account the regional constraints and economic conditions. With regard to policy issues related to fuels and vehicles, she offered her experience in solving such issues with the different regions or countries of the world, which were not yet Contracting Party to one of the Agreements administered by WP.29.

9. The Chairman clarified that all countries were free in their decision to adhere to one of the Agreements administered by WP.29. Even after they became a Contracting Party to the 1958 Agreement, the countries may decide if they want to apply a specific UNECE Regulation. He added that the development of fuel quality recommendations were important for a good application of the emission regulations. The Chairman invited all governmental delegates to give the position on the worldwide harmonisation of market fuel quality standards.

10. The EC expert confirmed the importance of the involvement in this exercise of UNEP and its Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles. He informed the FQ experts about the

ongoing process of the European Commission with regard to fuel quality legislation. He suggested considering, in a first step, a reduced number of fuel parameters which have a direct influence on the engine emissions, such as lead and sulphur.

11. The expert from the United States of America outlined the position of his government on the development of quality standards for market fuels (FQ-02-05). Referring to the efforts made by UNEP under the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles, he suggested that the fuel quality parameters should be limited to those fuel controls deemed necessary to enable the corresponding emission limits of the motor vehicle engines (e.g. sulphur, lead). He recommended focusing on the terminology of bio-fuels and low-carbon fuels. He questioned the need to review the mandate of the 1998 Agreement with respect to fuel quality. Thus, he proposed that GRPE should encourage WP.29 to consider revising the 1998 Agreement to provide such authority. The Chairman recalled that, according to the roadmap, the group would consider the administrative procedures in a second step.

12. The expert from the Russian Federation reported that an amendment to the national legislation for motor vehicle emissions was in the final process to align it with the same level of stringency (EURO IV) than that of the European Union at the present time. He underlined that cleaner vehicles need cleaner fuels and that, in cases of introducing higher levels of stringency for emissions, governments have to ensure that appropriate market fuels should be available for consumers and that the latter ones have to be clearly identified.

13. The expert from South Africa stated that at the beginning of 2008, the national level of stringency for vehicles emissions was equivalent with the EURO II level. Furthermore, she announced the intention of her government to introduce, already in 2010, the EURO IV level of stringency.

14. The expert from Japan reported that their national experts already started the discussion of specific fuel quality parameters. He announced to contribute with these data at the next meeting.

15. The expert from Canada, China and India underlined the importance to develop recommendations for market fuel quality and confirmed to go forward with a first set of fuel parameters in relation with engine emission technology type, as suggested by the EC expert.

16. The experts from Switzerland, Romania, the Netherlands, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary and Italy also supported the position of the EC.

17. The Chairman welcomed the initiative by a number of governments to align in near future the level of stringency for vehicle emissions in their national legislations with the current EURO level.

18. The FQ informal group agreed with the Chairman's suggestion to go forward with the first step to develop technical specifications. The experts from IPIECA and OICA were invited to prepare, for the next FQ meeting in January 2008, a list of fuel quality parameters deemed necessary to enable the corresponding emission levels of the motor vehicle engines. The

experts from IPIECA and OICA volunteered to prepare that list of parameters for the emission levels EURO II to EURO V.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

(A) Exchange of views on biofuels

19. The Chairman questioned the need to also consider biofuels when developing the recommendations for market fuel quality.

20. The expert from OICA underlined the importance of sustainable biofuels with regard to global warming and the future abatement of CO₂ emissions. For that reason, he preferred to consider, in the exercise of developing recommendations on market fuel quality, the market equivalents of all reference fuels as mentioned in the UNECE emissions regulations, including biofuels.

21. The expert from IPIECA supported that position and added to only address technical specifications of those fuels, but in the shortness of time not to address sustainability criteria. The experts from the Netherlands and NGVA-Europe requested to consider also gaseous fuels, such as LPG and CNG, including biogas.

22. In this respect, the informal group agreed to also consider biofuels and to focus:

- (a) in a first step, on the liquid fuels and,
- (b) in a further step, on gaseous fuels.

(B) Next meeting

23. The informal group agreed to convene again in Geneva prior to the 57th session of GRPE, on Wednesday, 14 January 2009, subject to the consent of GRPE (see GRPE report ECE/TRANS/WP.29/GRPE/56, paras. 40 and 44).

24. The Chairman thanked all the experts for their active participation and announced to inform GRPE about the outcome of the second informal meeting.

Annex 1

List of working papers (FQ-02-...) of the 2nd Informal group meeting on Fuel Quality

No.	Transmitted by	Agenda item	Title	Follow-up
01- Rev.1	Secretariat	-	Agenda for the 2nd meeting of the GRPE informal group on Fuel Quality (FQ)	(a)
02	IPIECA	3	Proposal for the worldwide harmonization of fuel quality	(a)
03	OICA	3	OICA proposal for worldwide harmonisation of fuel quality	(a)
04	OICA	3	OICA comments on document No. FQ-02-02 (tabled by IPIECA)	(a)
05	USA	3	Initial position of the United States	(a)

Notes:

(a) Consideration completed or to be superseded
