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National Technical Services and Type-approval Authorities German type approval authority “Kraftfahrtbundesamt” leaves many questions open

EMIS inquiry committee - 10 October 2016

The hearing of the Committee of inquiry into Emission Measurements in the Automotive Sector (EMIS) with the German type approval authority (“Kraftfahrtbundesamt”, KBA) was very left many questions open. The claim of the German representative that until September 2015 he had never heard of the term “defeat device” is very hard to believe. But it also casts a very bad light on the authority that is responsible for implementing the ban on defeat devices which is not only part of the Euro 5/6 legislation of 2007 but already existed in the previous regulation.

Also on other matters the answers given were unsatisfactory. Several times it was claimed during the hearing that the European Union´s rules both on exemptions to the defeat device ban as well as regarding the demand for limit values to be met under normal use were too vague to be implemented. When asked however if the KBA ever brought up this concern during the legislative process or later when type approving vehicles according to the legislation or if the EU-Commission was ever asked to provide clearer guidance on those questions, he just stated that he had no personal knowledge of this.

In the question why no further investigations were undertaken even though emissions levels were known to be considerably higher in normal use than during the test procedure, we were walking in the same circle as in several meetings before. The KBA claimed that as there were no clear indications that illegal defeat devices were being used, the KBA saw no need for further testing. But as they did not do any further testing, it was impossible to obtain clearer indications for the use of defeat devices – in addition to the fact that emissions were inexplicably high outside of the test cycle.

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