

Minutes of the first SIPTRAM Round Table “Technical standards for vehicles and infrastructure”

The first Round Table on vehicle standards was held 13 February 2004 in Berlin and brought together experts from bus manufacturers, public transport companies and other institutions:

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The RoundTable dealt with:

- Min. environmental standards for vehicle motors (air pollutants)
- Noise emissions for buses and trams
- Potential for the use of alternative fuels, trolleybuses, fuel cells, or any other innovative options

The Underlying question was: What are the standards that can realistically be applied? What opportunities are there to foster innovation?

At first a short presentation on the experiences of competitive tendering in Göteborg was given by Ragnar Domstad from the responsible authority Västtrafik. In Göteborg bus services are open for tender since 1992. Already at this time strong environmental requirements for vehicles and fuels have been included. Limit values for vehicle emissions are defined as average values for the fleet and increasing yearly. Also the maximum age of busses is limited to 12 years, the average age of the fleet should not exceed five years. As result the average NOx emission of the Göteborg bus fleet today is 25 % under the current EURO 3 value and PM is reaching EURO 4/5. Mr Domstadt recommended having average values for the fleets leaves more flexibility to the companies as the fleet could consist in busses of different ages and can be renewed step by step.

After this the discussion paper has been evaluated and the following recommendations have been agreed :

- All new buses should apply to the EEV standard and noise should be above 78 dB(A) (even if there are currently only a few busses on the market)
- PM emissions of old busses (EURO 1 to 3) should reach EURO 4 standard (if a particulate trap is used durability have to be assured and also ultrafine particles must be filtered)
- Noiseless wheels should be obliged
- Drivers should be regularly trained in eco-driving
- Usage of sulphur free diesel (< 10 ppm)
- Regularly maintenance
- It's no question of demanding a special technique (diesel or natural gas), busses have to apply to the limit values

Final discussion

Representatives of public transport companies said that they have a high interest in environmental standards but the costs are crucial. But as there is a cost-monitoring which evaluated that the cost difference between busses EURO 3 with particulate trap and busses with EEV can be neglected by regarding life cycle costs there is no longer an excuse for not having strong environmental standards.

It was also stated that public authorities are responsible for implementing quality criteria. For this they have to get the right know-how not only to organize the tendering process but also to convince politicians.

After all the participants admitted that a regularly exchange on special topics between manufacturers, suppliers and technical staff from authorities is a very useful tool to get informed on different possibilities at an early stage.

Please note: Not all topics have been discussed on the Round Table. They are still open to be discussed between the experts.

The final outcome of the three roundtables will be a written document approved by the participants. The document will assist cities and towns, which are going through a process of competitive tendering for urban public transport. This should include recommendations on technical, social and environmental standards to be included in the tender, and give practical advice on how to set incentives to achieve these or even higher standards.