



PRESS RELEASE

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R2RC petition handed over to European Commissioners 37.000 signatories help safeguard sector-specific rules for the automotive aftermarket!

On 31 May 2010, the central piece of legislation governing competition in the automotive aftermarket, the Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation (EC) 1400/2002, will expire. Back in 2007, at the early stage of the BER 1400/2002 review process, the European Commission indicated its intention not to prepare any successor sector-specific legislation for the aftermarket and rather let the automotive businesses be subjected to the application of the general rules of competition law. Against this background the Right to Repair Campaign launched end 2008 a Europe-wide petition to urge European decision makers to adopt clear and robust aftermarket rules in replacement of what has been the key competition law instrument for the automotive aftermarket in the last decade.

One figure for an unprecedented achievement: 37.000 signatures!

From Cyprus to Finland, from Dublin to Bucharest, market operators and consumers from all the 27 EU Members States have made their voices heard at the heart of the European Institutions. Petition signatures have even been received from non EU countries such as Norway, Switzerland or Turkey. Never gathered so far for a political issue concerning the automotive sector, the 37.000 signatories of the R2RC petition have not only shown the unity of the aftermarket chain towards ensuring future-proof rules for the entire sector but have also greatly contributed to a change in the original plan of the European Commission.

In a nutshell, while the sale of new vehicles (Primary Market) is deemed to fall under the scope of the general rules on competition after a period of 3 years, the Aftermarket will see new rules apply as of the 1st June 2010. Through this proposal, the European Commission's services confirm that the automotive aftermarket needs sector-specific rules tailored to shield from unfair competition the 850.000 SMEs active in the after-sales market to the benefit of 260 million motorist consumers in the EU.

As the final decision on the future legal framework for the sector should be taken by the European Commissioners in the coming weeks, the petition has now been closed.

On 17th May, Right to Repair Campaign representatives have presented the results of the petition to the President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso, to the Vice President of the European Commission in charge of Competition issues, Commissioner Almunia, as well as to the 25 other European Commissioners which are due to vote on the adoption of the future competition law framework on the 26 May 2010.

The Right to Repair Campaign takes this opportunity to thank all of those who have taken part in this action. Through their support the R2RC has achieved two of its original aims, raise the awareness of the decision makers on the automotive aftermarket and successfully lobby for sector-specific rules on competition.

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BACKGROUND

Launched in 2007, the Right to Repair Campaign (R2RC) gathers a wide range of aftermarket stakeholders and motorist representatives having an interest in the promotion of a competitive regulatory environment for the automotive aftermarket. It is supported by authorised and independent repairers, independent parts distributors, part suppliers, producers of diagnostic tool and garage equipment, trade groups, roadside rescuing operators and motorist clubs and is open to any who care about the future of the multi-brand automotive aftermarket, and its rightful claim for free consumer choice in a competitive after-sales market. The members of the R2RC in Europe are AIRC, CECRA, EGEA, the FIA, FIGIEFA and FIRM.