

PRESS RELEASE

IMPACT OF THE NRMM LEGISLATION ON THE IWT SECTOR – EBU IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPOSSIBILITY TO COPE WITH THE IMPLIED RULES AND CALL FOR AN ADAPTATION OF THE REGULATION

The 'Non Road Mobile Machinery' (NRMM) Regulation (EU) 2018/1628 will enter into force on 1.1.2019 for new marine engines with a power output of less than 300 Kw and for marine engines with a power output above 300 kW on the first of January 2020.

So far no engines are on the market that meet the criteria of this legislation. At this stage so called “marinised” EURO VI truck engines with the necessary after treatment and adaptations as well as NRE engines up to 560 kW might meet the criteria. However in this case the necessary type approvals are lacking. Apart from the legal and technical implications and complications– if solved – this only might be of support for smaller vessels and not serve the entire sector. The problem is even more evident in the case of tank vessels for which engines additional safety requirements have to be fulfilled. So far no engine manufacturer could propose adequate solutions for the sector.

EBU already at an early stage when negotiating the NRMM regulation raised their concerns regarding the availability and costs of such engines and expressed their sincere fears that this would lead to a stand still of innovation in the sector. These concerns after the adoption of the NRMM regulation were supported by a study released by STC-NESTRA/REBEL/EICB in December 2015 on the Emission Performance of the existing inland waterway transport fleet in Western-Europe. It stated that ***“The mandatory NRMM requirements as of 2020 are expected to lead to a replacement by the existing engines with a CCNR stage 2 engine before 2020 and not cutting the air emissions in line with the European policy”***. According to this study a significant greening of the fleet needs a clear intervention by the Public authorities.

The inland navigation industry finds itself in a situation of not being able to comply with the new legislation on legal grounds. On top the actual policy discussions are focusing on decarbonisation which is not addressed by the NRMM regulations and will lead to a contrary effect. For investment reasons barge owners need legal and technical clarity and certainty which is missing at this stage. New solutions developed so far are tailor made and impose disproportional high costs on the sector. Adaptation or marinisation of NRE engines will need to clarify legal and liability issues both for the manufacturers and the barge owners.

To avoid this situation EBU advocated the adoption of the maritime standard (the American, EPA Tier4 standard) for engines used on inland vessels. These engines are developed on a global scale and are widely available. EBU also proposed that this standard -with necessary transitional provisions- should apply for existing engines. This will lead to a reduction of the air emissions of 80 % compared to the actual situation.

Due to inappropriate legislation the inland navigation industry on legal grounds will not be able to comply with the legal framework and the sector is pushed back in terms of innovation. EBU also via their joint European IWT platform - are strongly engaged in greening. In order to be able to substantially reduce air emissions they call upon the decision makers to adapt the standards for inland vessel engines in line with the US EPA Tier 4 and meanwhile to extend the entry into force of the NRMM standards for engines with a power output above 300 kW.

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***EBU**, the European Barge Union represents the inland navigation freight and passenger carrying industry on a Pan-European level. Its members are the national associations of barge owners and barge operators as well as (international) associations in the field of inland navigation and related areas.*