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SMMT is the vehicle to drive down CO2 emissions and open road pricing debate

SMMT has urged government to turn to the motor industry during its presidency of G8 and the EU. The industry is already working to address shared concerns over climate change and CO2 emissions from vehicle manufacturing and road transport. Now, SMMT believes it should also be the starting point for an open debate on road pricing.

Road user charging

The motor industry, government and drivers are united in a desire to cut congestion. So it is essential that any future plans, including those for road pricing, should demonstrate a clear benefit to all stakeholders and be subject to rigorous and open debate. SMMT can work with government to ensure a fair and workable system which is cost-neutral for the UK's motorists, hauliers and industry.

Christopher Macgowan, SMMT chief executive said, 'Congestion is an unacceptable cost to business and the environment and something must be done to address it. The industry holds the key to technology solutions, so it makes sense for SMMT and its members to engage with all stakeholders, and act as a canvass for a thorough and candid discussion on road charging.'

Track record

Motor manufacturers are committed to lowering emissions and improving environmental performance and SMMT was the first to publish an annual sector-wide sustainability report to monitor progress.

The fifth sustainability report, 'Towards sustainability', published in November 2004, showed the following year-on-year improvements from manufacturing sites across the UK:

- Energy used to produce a single vehicle fell by 30 per cent
- CO2 equivalent down from 1.2 to 0.7 tonnes per vehicle produced
- Waste to landfill fell from 40.5 to 17.9 kg per vehicle produced
- Package waste for recycling up from 2.8 to 5.1 kg per vehicle produced

Tackling CO2 emissions through partnership

As a result of investment in cleaner engine technologies, CO2 emissions from new cars have fallen by 9.7 per cent since 1997. However, the industry also has a responsibility to provide consumers with more information on the environmental impact of their choice of car at the point of sale.



Working with the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP), the industry has produced colour-coded labels for new cars, similar to those found on white goods. The labels include carbon dioxide emissions for each vehicle as well as the road tax and average fuel costs the buyer can expect to pay annually. To be rolled out from 1 July 2005, the scheme will be wide-spread across showrooms in the UK in preparation for the September plate change.

SMMT chief executive, Christopher Macgowan added, 'This is a ground-breaking voluntary initiative to lift environmental factors up the car-buying agenda. The label's message is clear; choose a low carbon vehicle and enjoy lower cost motoring with a lower impact on the environment.'

Note:

The fifth sustainability report can be found by following the link below.

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/IndustryIssues/sustainability>