

INDEPENDENT CAR RATING SYSTEM CAN SOLVE EMISSIONS CRISIS, SAYS NEW GLOBAL ALLIANCE 'AIR'

- Worldwide first: immediate, comparable, accessible, independent and standardised approach
- Simple A-H car rating gives consumers the truth about emissions
- Comparable data to steer correct city policy response
- The only immediate and cost-effective solution to the NO_x crisis

Car makers and city policy makers should back a new independent car emissions testing and rating system as the only way to achieve immediate improvements in air pollution, a new global alliance launched today has said.

The new AIR (**A**llow **I**ndependent **R**oad-testing) alliance has been established to push for the voluntary adoption of their independent system, similar to EU Ecolabelling, in order to reduce the harmful effects of vehicle emissions on air quality and climate change, as well as immediately address the diesel NO_x crisis.

Emissions data is gained from rigorous four-hour on-road independent car tests. Already more than 1,500 different car models have been tested. The results of these are being made publicly available through the new AIR alliance – over 1,000 were tested in Europe. Prior to September 2017, manufacturers in Europe have only had to conduct their own tests, under laboratory conditions and without publishing results, leaving consumers and regulators with a false picture of the true emissions of vehicles.

As part of its launch today, AIR is calling on:

- Car makers to adopt voluntarily the same approach to car emissions as they use for car safety
- City policy makers to adopt voluntarily independent testing and rating as the basis for informed policy
- Governments, cities, academics, NGOs, and other organisations committed to improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions to join the alliance and help drive the voluntary adoption of the existing framework by automakers and city policy makers globally. AIR is already in discussion with several organisations about funding and membership. Further announcements are expected in the coming weeks.

Massimo Fedeli, co-founder of AIR, said:

“In the 1970s NCAP revolutionised car safety by introducing an independent vehicle safety rating system. We believe this tried and tested approach, which is still being used to great effect, could have the same impact today in boosting innovation when it comes to making cars cleaner. Car makers now need to do the right thing and use independent testing to compete for the cleanest emissions.”

“We are today calling on organisations committed to improving air quality or addressing climate change to join us and help achieve this breakthrough in car emissions.”

The AIR alliance will:

- Guarantee that the data and the testing remain completely independent from the automotive industry and regulators to ensure trusted disclosure and full public scrutiny
- Ensure past and future ratings results from independent testing are freely available
- Ensure that the test methodology will be open to third parties around the world to conduct tests to the same standard.

The independent testing system provides every car with an A-H rating (with A being the cleanest, and H being the worst emitter) that will:

- Enable consumers to make the right choices in the cars they buy – new and used
- Empower cities to develop robust, fair and effective policies to help them improve air quality in the short and long term for the health of their communities
- Enable carmakers to regain consumer trust by competing effectively to deliver cleaner cars with independent verification of their achievements.

The AIR initiative comes as numerous countries, regions and cities worldwide are developing different emissions responses, which are often contradictory, leading to consumer confusion and industry uncertainty. Many initiatives, such as the EU's new Real Driving Emissions (RDE) regulations, will only have an impact in the longer term, while others could see some older cleaner cars banned from cities in favour of newer more polluting models because of the use of inconsistent data.

Nick Molden, co-founder of AIR, said:

“Using the same rigorous on-road test for different cars and models ensures emissions are accurately and fairly compared. This applies to new cars and those already on the road.

“AIR is making an existing testing and rating system and its extensive ratings data freely available. This will allow car makers and city policy makers to take direct and immediate action to improve the air quality of our towns and cities in the most cost-effective way and restore consumer trust in the automotive sector.”

In summary, AIR will provide the most comprehensive and transparent testing and rating system:

- **COMPARABLE:** It is based on the most thorough assessment of on-road driving conditions enabling genuine comparability between vehicle models, makes and manufacturers, both new and old
- **ACCESSIBLE:** This data is publicly available, transparent and free of charge
- **STANDARDISED:** It will provide one standardised methodology and data set across all markets and regions providing a truly global rating system
- **INDEPENDENT:** It is the most comprehensive, independently endorsed, data available in the market place
- **IMMEDIATE:** The data is available now, today.

The AIR-backed system has been independently assessed by eight leading European academics, who comprise AIR's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC).

Commenting on the launch, the following members of the Scientific Advisory Committee said:

Dr. Xavier Querol of the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Water Research, Spanish Research Council:

“Air pollution caused by NOx and PM emissions from vehicles is an urgent problem facing a large number of European cities. While most are doing a lot to address this issue, it probably won’t be enough for many of them. Existing labelling schemes – such as those based on Euro 4, 5 and 6 approval tests – are not solving the problem. These ratings cover far too wide a range of NOx emissions during real urban driving to enable effective policy or the right consumer choices. To tackle poor air quality effectively, cities need accurate data from real world driving emissions, which tell the real story of a car’s cleanliness. That is exactly what AIR can offer, providing a very valuable tool to help solving the emissions crisis.”

Helen ApSimon, Professor of Air Pollution Studies at Imperial College London:

“I support the independent testing of vehicle emissions in real world conditions. Making such data publicly available in a form advocated by the AIR alliance can help guide customer choice to cleaner vehicles and help to improve air quality and human health as rapidly as possible.”

Marc Stettler, Lecturer in Transport and the Environment at the Centre for Transport Studies, Imperial College London:

“I fully support the AIR initiative to make vehicle emissions data more transparent. This will drive car manufacturers to use the best available technology and help cities to develop evidence-based policies to improve air quality. As a researcher, I think it’s vital that we have accurate and independent data so we can evaluate the impacts of vehicle emissions on public health in our towns and cities.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. AIR is a public private alliance open to organisations and individuals seeking to ensure direct and immediate action to reduce the harmful effects of vehicle emissions on air quality and climate change. Those wishing to join AIR as participants or funders can contact the organisation through info@allowair.org or www.allowair.org.
2. AIR has been established by the founder of Emissions Analytics (EA), Nick Molden, and Massimo Fedeli of Fair Play Consulting, who has extensive experience in the automotive industry.
3. AIR’s inspiration has been NCAP, which is an independent vehicle-safety rating system developed in the US in the 1970s that became the industry standard for vehicle safety in the EU and around the world. The programme held automakers accountable for their safety performance, resulting in a voluntary adoption of technologies that led to safer vehicles as a means to differentiate their models in the market place to remain competitive.
4. AIR has secured from Emissions Analytics a royalty free, non-exclusive worldwide licence to its existing and future test ratings as well as its testing protocols. This allows AIR to publish and distribute the ratings on a free of charge basis and to transfer know-how to enable third-party testers around the world to conduct tests themselves to the same standards to produce fully compatible ratings.

5. The EU diesel car NO_x emissions limit is 80 mg/km and was, until 1 September 2017, only tested by car makers in laboratory conditions. The new limit under RDE regulations, introduced on 1 September 2017 which includes some on-road testing, is 168 mg/km and will reduce to 120 mg/km in 2019. The AIR system ratings (EA, EQUA, Aq) reflect on-road test results equal to or below: A: 80 mg/km, B: 120 mg/km and C:168 mg/km. An H rating is over 1,000 mg/km.
6. Further information about AIR can be found at www.allowair.org and via Twitter at @AllowAir
7. A video illustrating AIR and its objectives can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/5C8CNxjo4CE>
8. Media queries can be directed to Aled Williams and Marcus Pepperell at FTI Consulting (Brussels) on 0032 2289 0930.