

FRENCH PERSPECTIVE ON DIESEL ENGINES AND EMISSIONS

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Diesel is a high-stakes market for European engines manufacturers: almost 45 percent of passenger and light commercial (<5 ton) cars are diesel in Europe, even more in France.

The French car manufacturers -- PSA and Renault -- account for a large part of this production; this is why they are very impacted by EURO regulations for emissions reduction. Thus, they were among the first to develop solutions to meet these standards, and Peugeot even took advantage of it to be the first to market a car equipped with a diesel particulate filter with additive: the Peugeot 607.

Today, diesel vehicles have to comply with EURO 3; the next steps (EURO 4 and EURO 5) will enforce even more stringent levels for particulate matter and NO_x in 2005 and 2008. Low-sulfur level in gazole will also have to be reached.

To meet these standards, lots of programs are being conducted throughout Europe by the European Commission. If Sweden, Switzerland, and Germany were usually the first countries to be concerned by environment, today all Europe has taken over. This is especially true in the field of public transportation, which plays a key role in experimenting with available technologies for more than 15,000 buses equipped with depollution systems.

A closer look at the strategies of the bus and truck engine manufacturers shows that the games are still open, and everyone is mixing both known and proprietary technologies to fulfill technical and economical requirements.