

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **ECAR renews call for EC “Repairs Clause” to liberalise auto spare parts market**

*ECAR urges the EU Czech Presidency to resume discussions in Council*

*Brussels, 27 January 2009:* The European Campaign for the Freedom of the Automotive Parts and Repair Market (ECAR) has written to the EU Czech Presidency to express its strong support for the European Commission’s proposal of a Repairs Clause that liberalises the market in automotive spare parts.

ECAR argues that the Repairs Clause is a well thought-out and balanced solution to the spare parts issue. It gives full protection to vehicle manufacturers’ new car “designs” but prevents a spare parts monopoly. The free and competitive single market that would be created as a result of the Repairs Clause would ensure freedom of choice and competitive prices for consumers. It would also prevent small independent companies, such as parts producers, distributors and repairers, from being driven out of the market and stimulate market efficiency and employment in the EU.

“A crucial point for the liberalisation of the market in visible automotive spare parts has been reached”, said Louis Shakinovsky, ECAR’s Chairman. “Many Member States have already enacted a Repairs Clause and liberalised their markets. The responsibility now rests with the blocking minority of Member States to adopt the Commission’s Repairs Clause to strengthen the rights of 270 million EU motorists in the Community as a whole.”

ECAR would like to urge the Council to resume the discussions on this issue under the Czech presidency.

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The ECAR position paper is available on the ECAR website [www.ecar-eu.com](http://www.ecar-eu.com).

#### *Background*

Since 1991 the EU has been discussing the automotive spare parts issue without reaching agreement. Car manufacturers claim that the protection of their new cars’ body “design” should also be extended to the pertinent spare parts – such as bumpers, wings, bonnets, lamps or windscreens. The purpose of design law is to protect the appearance or visible form of a product, not the product itself. If the design right of the car manufacturer is extended to the corresponding spare parts, competition will be eliminated from the spare parts market. ECAR promotes free competition in the automotive spare parts market.

#### **Notes for editors**

**For more information please contact the *ECAR Coordination Secretariat, c/o FIGIEFA* on +32.2.761.95.10 or at [figiefa@figiefa.eu](mailto:figiefa@figiefa.eu)**

Established in 1993, the European Campaign for the Freedom of the Automotive Parts and Repair Market (ECAR) is an alliance of 10 independent EU organisations representing vehicle parts producers, distributors, independent repairers, the European motor insurance industry, a large cross section of small and medium-sized enterprises as well as the 270 million motoring consumers in the European Union. ECAR’s main objective is to promote free competition and to prevent vehicle makers from monopolising the vehicle spare parts market through abuse of design protection. For more information visit [www.ecar-eu.com](http://www.ecar-eu.com).