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Eurovent Position on the Revision of the 'EU Fan Regulation'

Background

Reaching the fourth year after its 2011 implementation, Commission Regulation (EU) No 327/2011 on fans driven by electrical motors (hereinafter also: 'EU Fan Regulation') entered the revision process commencing with a study process lead by VHK, a Netherlands-based consultancy firm. The Regulation results from Ecodesign Directive 2009/125/EC, which establishes implementing measures that mark one important part in ensuring the fulfilment of the EU's strict energy efficiency targets.

Recommendations

As the 'EU Fan Regulation' has a significant impact on the European fan, HVAC&R and many other industries, Eurovent believes that adjustments are necessary in order to achieve the objectives of the Ecodesign legislation without negatively affecting the competitiveness of European industries. The revision of the Regulation should enable us to pursue a long-term reliable business planning, and alleviate unnecessary burdens that are currently imposed specifically on the fan and HVAC&R sectors.

Eurovent strongly encourages VHK and EU decision-makers to consider the following recommendations when revising the 'EU Fan Regulation':

Provide clear definitions and clarify what exactly is in the scope of the measure.

Products within the scope shall be measurable and it should be possible to survey these products. Today, this is not possible for impellers alone. The interpretation made in the FAQ document to Regulation 327/2011 is not substantiated by any kind of arguments. Eurovent strongly advises legislators to exclude impellers from the legislation.

Ensure alignment with relevant EU legislation, EN and ISO standards in order to avoid differing and contradicting classifications.

For complex products such as fans, Eurovent holds that the use of transitional methods should be reconsidered, because these may intervene with the development of standards. We suggest the widest possible use of the existing technical standards in order to make best use of industry experts' technical knowledge and not to jeopardise industries' long-term investments in their development.

Revised Regulation should be coherent with other Ecodesign measures.

Eurovent believes that overlapping requirements at different component, assembly and system levels conflict with the overall goal of ensuring energy-efficient designs. Other product studies demonstrated that acting on the efficiency of incorporated fans was not the most cost-effective way to improve the energy efficiency of the complete product.

The current Regulation has created additional requirements on fans integrated in products, which are already regulated by other existing Ecodesign measures. By all means, legislators should avoid conflicting requirements between various Regulations or Directives.

The study report should provide a thorough analysis of the possible impact of such double regulation on the total energy efficiency of the products including fans.

Ensure that the Ecodesign methodology is respected.

Eurovent advocates best-available technologies and strongly supports the European Commission's efficiency and energy-saving objectives, which support innovation within our industries. Yet, additional costs for improving the efficiency of fans shall be such that they can be recovered along the lifespan of the products, and consequently be affordable. This specifically applies when defining minimum energy efficiency requirements for fans, meaning that the level of the requirements should not exceed the least life cycle cost.

Inclusion of spare-parts in the measure should be evaluated.

A number of existing fans do not have a readily-available, compliant replacement. Even when a compliant replacement is existing but is not functionally identical, the replacement requires additional costs to qualify the new assembly for safety (Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC, Low Voltage Directive 2014/35/EU) and for compliance with the Electromagnetic Compatibility Directive (EMCD, 2014/30/EU).

Eurovent holds that the Revision study should include an evaluation of the lifetime of products that contain fans and, depending on the outcome of this study, a decision should be made on whether the ban on non-compliant spare-parts can be confirmed.

Furthermore, the study should clarify whether stocks of non-compliant spare-parts may be legally sold. It remains to be generally remarked that holding stocks is no longer a common practice.

Unjustified loopholes should be closed.

The 'EU Fan Regulation' contains many unjustified exemptions that lack an argumentative basis. Unless it can be clearly and statistically justified why these exemptions persist, Eurovent strongly recommends VHK, the European Commission and subsequent decision levels to significantly reduce these exemptions as they distort the market. This includes kitchen hoods below 280W as well as laundry and washer dryers below 3kW.

The exemption for fans designed for safety-critical applications, as referred to within Art. 1, 3(a), (b) of the current Regulation, remains justified.

Final remarks

This Position Paper reflects Eurovent's core value of approaching HVAC&R as a whole, acknowledging the increasing interlinking of components in our sector. That said, positions result from a broad compromise reached between HVAC&R industries of all kinds reaching from manufacturers of fans through fan coil units to air conditioners and cooling towers.

Eurovent and its Members are convinced that the proposed measures would lead to a simpler and more efficient Regulation. All in all, it would enable the EU to maintain a precursor in terms of Energy Efficiency while being in accord with industrial realities.

About Eurovent

Eurovent, the European Committee of HVAC&R Manufacturers, is the representative of Europe's major national associations in the industry of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration. Based on objective and verifiable data, its 19 members from 17 European states represent 1.010 companies, the majority small and medium-sized. In 2013, these accounted for a combined annual turnover of around 21 billion euros and employed more than 120.000 people – making Eurovent one of the largest industry committees of its kind.

Eurovent's roots date back to 1958. Over the years, the Brussels-based umbrella association has become a well-respected and known stakeholder that builds bridges between companies it represents, legislators and standardisation bodies on a EU and international level. The association favours a level-playing field for the entire industry and strongly supports energy-efficient and environmental-friendly solutions. Eurovent holds in-depth relations with partner associations around the globe. It is a founding member of the ICARHMA network, supporter of REHVA and contributor to the EU's BUILD UP initiative.

Members of Eurovent



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Subunits: Eurovent Certita Certification and Eurovent Market Intelligence (Paris, France).