MINUTES

Meeting of the Consultation Forum under Article 18 of Directive 2009/125/EC on energy-related products

External Power Supplies

Brussels, 18 April 2012 (10.00 - 15.30)

Participants: See “Attendance List" attached.

At the beginning of the meeting, the chairman gave an up-date on the Ecodesign/Labelling measures to be adopted in 2013 as well as on the Review of the Energy Labelling Directive and the on-going study on consumer understanding.

Turning towards the review of Regulation 278/2009 on External Power Supplies (EPS), the relevant aspects were presented and discussed in six blocks:

1) Context, saving potential and proposed procedure
2) Upgrade of existing requirements
3) New requirement for active efficiency at 10%-load
4) Extension of scope
5) Up-date/clarifications of definitions
6) Material efficiency

1) Context, saving potential and proposed procedure

The Commission services outlined the general context, in particular emphasising the conclusions drawn from the horizontal Consultation Forum of April 2012 to prioritise work and to opt for "fast-track"-reviews in cases for which only modest additional saving potential could be expected. The Commission services explained that the internal procedures would need to be fine-tuned according to the extent of the revision.

The review study which could rely on extensive data from different sources had concluded on a potential additional saving of just under 3 TWh by 2025 for the on-going review of EPS, spread across different improvement options. The study had also related the potential
additional savings to the feasibility of the different improvement options (see table in Annex I).

On that basis, the Commission services proposed to focus on the most important improvement options to reap most of the saving potential and to refrain from options that would involve major data collection efforts while not delivering substantial savings.

Feedback received: Stakeholders were generally in favour of a clear prioritisation and a comparably lean process given the moderate savings potential.

In the following, the Commission services presented the main issues to be discussed under the review and their proposals for the revision of certain elements.

2) Upgrade of existing requirements

For a possible up-grade of requirements established in Regulation 278/2009, there are two main references:

- the voluntary EU Code of Conduct (EU CoC), developed by JRC (Joint Research Centre) together with industry, Member States and other stakeholders, for which "Version 5" of September 2012 had been sent to the stakeholders*1;

- the rule making that the US department of Energy (DOE) had proposed in March 2012 and reopened for technical input with a deadline of 28 May 2013.

The Review study had concluded that the requirements of the EU CoC reflected an appropriate level of ambition which would not bring about major additional costs; already more than half of the products on the market in 2012 fulfilled the Tier1-requirements while 90% of the 2012-models would need to be re-designed or re-sourced to meet the Tier2-requirements.

On that basis, the Commission had proposed in their working document to enhance the requirements along the EU Code of Conduct with more generous transitional periods and a third tier requiring a further improvement of 2.5% in efficiency, subject to review. The Commission services emphasised that while it would be useful to harmonise the EU- and US-requirements, it was difficult to judge at that stage where the US-process was heading for.

Feedback received:

DE felt that the Tier II requirements might be too ambitious but that more information from German manufacturers would be sought. IT criticised that the LLCCs had not been fully established and that the Commission’s proposal was not well substantiated while NL stressed that LLCCs were of major importance for white goods but less for electronics. UK and IT emphasised that they were not in favour of a third tier after revision as a matter of principle

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*1 a newer version with slightly more ambitious parameters was only available in April 2013
while other representatives (BE, SE and ECOS) supported a third tier. Digital Europe/Philips said that for some applications with infrequent usage (e.g. electric shavers) additional manufacturing costs could hardly be recovered. SI suggested using a wording which is more in line with the standard ("nameplate output power").

Regarding the harmonisation with DOE-rule making, BE pointed out that it was desirable but not absolutely necessary to align the requirements, more important was that measurements were done in the same way. Industry on the other hand, suggested studying the alignment with up-coming DoE-ruling on EPS.

Following that debate, the consultants presented a rough calculation of the LLCCs for mobile phone EPS based on information previously obtained from chipset manufacturers. The calculation showed that the savings achieved through the proposed up-graded requirements would outweigh the additional costs by far, even with quite a wide variation in electricity price.

3) New requirement for active efficiency at 10%-load

Requirements for active efficiency at 10%-load are included in the EU Code of Conduct but not in the DOE-rule making. The Commission presented advantages (relevant for future applications, particularly for products spending a lot of time in network standby) and disadvantages (lack of data, potentially additional costs, not relevant for all products) of such a requirement. The Commission services drew the conclusion that a 10%-requirement should not be implemented at this stage but be subject to the next review.

Feedback received: Most of the participants supported the Commission's view to have a requirement at a later stage also because the 10% loading level had not been specified in test standards to date. Against this background, the Consultation Forum discussed the introduction of an information requirement in order to have the data available in time for the next review. There were different opinions about when the information requirements should apply, together with Tier 1 (NL) or together with Tier 2 (DE). ECOS advocated for a 10%-active efficiency requirement under the present Review.

4) Extension of scope

The Review study had outlined options to extend the scope of the regulation to do justice to new types of application and technological developments. The degree of complexity towards implementation and the impact on industry vary considerably across the options.

Possible sub-products to be included in the scope would be:

- Multiple voltage output EPS (EPS with a multiple output of different voltages). An inclusion of these devices would bring about a good additional saving potential; a requirement would be rather easy to implement. However, a testing method would need to be specified;
• High power EPS: There is only a small amount of products in the market, thus savings would remain minimal. A requirement at this stage would involve some need for research while DOE-data could be used at a later stage.

• (Low Voltage) Wireless chargers: There might be a high potential in the future, e.g. in the context of electric vehicles, while they play a minor role at the moment. It would require major research efforts to address them properly in the regulation.

The Commission proposed to include Multiple voltage output EPS in the scope of Regulation 278/2009 but to refrain from including High power EPS and Wireless chargers at this stage.

To include Multiple voltage output EPS in the scope, criterion b) of the regulation would need to be removed:
"(b) it is able to convert to only one DC or AC output voltage at a time;"

Feedback received: Stakeholders generally supported the Commissions' proposals.

5) Clarifications/ up-date of definitions

a) Clarifications to ensure that new product types are in the scope

The review should also be used to review and clarify the existing definitions to make sure that the wording is unambiguous also for more recent technological developments. This would be the case for the following types of EPS:

• Multiple voltage single output EPS (agile charging), i.e. EPS that can deliver output of different voltages and adapt to the primary load device's needs.

• USB-adaptor-plugs;

• EPS with integrated back-up batteries.

On this basis, the Commission proposed to give clarifications in the guidelines and possibly to slightly edit the EPS definition to clarify that these types of EPS are included in the scope.

Feedback received: Stakeholders generally supported the Commission's proposals.
b) Definition of Low voltage EPS

The definition of Low voltage EPS has a particular relevance as electric and electronic household and office equipment which is placed on the market with a low voltage external power supply is exempted from the scope of the Standby-Regulation 1275/2008.

Originally, this exemption had been established to keep mobile phones out of the scope that were per se deemed to be very efficient. In the meantime, more and more products are being developed that rely on a low voltage EPS but that might not be equally energy efficient. The Commission put this issue up for discussion.

Feedback received: DE and NL both argued for closing this loophole. However, while DE were in favour of exploring and addressing the issue along with the review of the Standby Regulation in 2016, NL argued that with an adaptation of the definitions (i.e. inclusion of an upper limit for the output current, see below), a good and relatively quick improvement could probably be achieved:

"low voltage external power supply’ means an external power supply with a nameplate output voltage of less than 6 volts and a nameplate output current greater than or equal to 550 \textit{and lower than 2000} milliampères).”

6) Material efficiency

The Commission services put the aspect of material efficiency up to discussion and outlined three possible approaches:

- a compatibility requirement;
- a requirement on detachable cables;
- a requirement on weight.

Regarding compatibility, the Commission stressed the fact that it has been argued that such a requirement would have disproportionate effects on a whole range of products. It also explained that the Commission intended to launch a new Memorandum of Understanding with industry that would address EPS for mobile phones but might extend to other mobile products.

For the detachable cable, the Commission pointed to risks linked to detachable cables (e.g. safety issues, wrong use, standardisation problems and additional costs to manufacturers for components and design rights).

For a requirement setting limits for weight, the Commission services stressed that the energy efficiency requirements of 278/2009 had already contributed substantially to reduce the average weight of the EPS and that more data was needed to judge the actual potential and the
implications linked to a weight requirements. They proposed to tackle material efficiency in the next review process in three years' time and on the basis of a thorough assessment.

Feedback received: ECOS and ANEC/BEUC argued for a requirement on material efficiency and for action to decouple EPS from the primary load device; BE supported an information requirement on weight. DE requested to push standardisation through a mandate. NL reminded of the opinion of the legal service and called upon industry to progress on the route of standardisation; the representative argued for an in depth-analysis and an information requirement on the parameter weight to allow for a requirement with the next review. IT refused to have a material efficiency requirement at this stage, stressing that this could also imply measurement problems. The representative also pointed to packaging issues linked to separate chargers.

CONCLUSIONS:

At the end of the meeting, the following conclusions were drawn:

1) Regarding the general approach and proposed procedure, there is general support to aim for a fast-track procedure and to focus on the revision options that would realise most of the potential.

2) Regarding the up-grade of existing requirements, there is general support for tightening the requirements. The EU Code of Conduct was acknowledged as a good reference; however, more information on impacts/costs, on the most recent modifications within the EU CoC-process and on parallel initiatives (DOE) is needed. To establish a third tier would require more preparation and research than possible within a fast-track process; this is why the review should involve only two tiers for which references do exist.

3) Regarding a new active energy efficiency requirement for 10%-load, there was a broad agreement not to have a requirement at this stage but to include an information requirement (timing to be determined).

4) Regarding the inclusion of products into the scope, there was support for the Commission's proposal to include Multiple output voltage EPS in the scope (with measurements to be specified). For High power EPS, it was decided to use data from DOE for the next review. The potential of Wireless chargers should also be further explored under the next review.

5) Regarding the up-dating of definitions, there was general support for the Commission's proposal to provide for clarification that Multiple voltage single output EPS, USB-adaptor-plugs and EPS with integrated back-up batteries are in the scope of the regulation. For Low voltage EPS, the Commission proposed to look more deeply into the feasibility of an adaptation of the definition, and otherwise to address this issue in the context of the review for Regulation 1275/2008.
6) Regarding Material efficiency, it was concluded that the data material was not sufficient to include a requirement for weight in this review but that a strong message should be included in the revisions clause that material efficiency should be covered in the next regulation.

ATTENDANCE LIST

Commission Services
Belgium
Bulgaria
Czech Republic
Germany
Spain
Finland
France
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
The Netherlands
Slovenia
Turkey
Sweden
United Kingdom
VMAS
SEA GREEN TREE
ANEC / BEUC
AVAYA
CECED
CLASP
DIGITALEUROPE
ECOS
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