

LOWCVP MEDIA RELEASE

14 September 2017

A coordinated introduction of E10 petrol can benefit UK: New fuel helps meet transport carbon targets and support the UK economy

In support of the UK government's decision to increase the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation, the LowCVP today published its report 'Successfully Deploying E10 Petrol'.

The expert group convened under the auspices of the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership concluded that the introduction of petrol with a 10% bioethanol content (E10) would be one of the most cost-effective means of rapidly reducing carbon emissions from road transport currently available to the UK. It would also make an important contribution to the UK's efforts to reduce CO₂ from road transport by displacing 10% of fossil petrol with renewable bioethanol in transport by 2020. However, its introduction needs to be thoroughly and carefully planned to ensure effective market transition.

The UK has committed to an 80% greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction by 2050 and currently the transport sector contributes around a quarter of these emissions so must play a significant part in the reduction. In the long-term, dramatic reductions will be achieved through road transport electrification and complementary decarbonisation of the grid, but the UK will remain reliant on liquid fuels for some decades to come. The LowCVP-led Transport Energy Task Force (TETF) identified E10 petrol as being an immediate low risk, lower carbon and sustainable fuel step to help decarbonise petrol-powered vehicles in the shortest possible timeframe.

Bioethanol in the UK is produced through the fermentation of wheat or sugar beet. The UK has two of Europe's biggest bioethanol plants: Ensus on Teesside and Vivergo Fuels in Hull. Both distil locally grown wheat to produce bioethanol, with protein-rich animal feed as a by-product. Combined, the two companies can produce over 800m litres of bioethanol a year directly employing around 200 people, as well as contributing to a much larger number of agricultural and supply chain jobs.

All modern petrol cars are designed, certified and optimised to use E10. There are still a small number of older non-classic cars, particularly those produced in the 1990s and before, which are not warranted for E10 use, but the majority of these are expected to be scrapped by 2020.

The LowCVP E10 Group, which has published the report on 'Successfully Deploying E10 Petrol', finds that there are a number of key challenges in the introduction of E10 petrol, but which the Group agrees can be overcome by working together. These challenges include:

- While over 93% of petrol vehicles are suitable to use E10 petrol, a minority of older vehicles are not. Therefore, E10 petrol must be introduced and labelled as a completely new fuel grade.
- The UK fuel supply chain is efficient and optimised to provide two petrol grades, which already contain up to 5% bioethanol. 'Regular' 95 E5 and 'Super' 97 E5. Converting the "regular" volume grade to 95 E10 would be the most cost effective and rapid way to introduce the new lower carbon fuel.

- Bioethanol has a lower energy content than petrol and, consequently, the volumetric fuel consumption using E10 petrol is expected to be slightly (1.5%) more than E5 petrol.
- The current volumetric basis for fuel duty may discourage lower carbon and future fuels with different energy characteristics.
- Consumers must be empowered to make informed decisions, based on robust data, following the introduction of E10 petrol.

The E10 Group agreed that 95 octane E10 should ideally be introduced and deployed rapidly to achieve a high market share (85%) due to the nature of the UK fuel supply chain and for the UK to benefit environmentally and economically.

Its successful, rapid deployment will require fully coordinated action from all stakeholders involved and it will require Government to play a leading role.

To ensure a successful launch of the fuel, the E10 Group identified the need for:

1. **Clear consumer advice** – consumers must be able to make effective choices and understand the rationale for introducing 95 E10; to increase the sustainability of transport fuels, reduce the carbon intensity of petrol and secure UK jobs. A public information campaign delivered in collaboration between DfT and industry is needed to inform and empower consumers. The campaign needs to be combined with resources enabling drivers to easily check their vehicle’s suitability to use E10 and ensure clear pump labelling.
2. **A coordinated launch** - E10 should be launched in a coordinated manner, UK-wide. Government should lead the introduction of E10 by establishing a clear timeframe and communicating the actions it will take to support its introduction. Most of the Group believes this would be most effectively achieved through mandating the introduction of E10 in addition to amending the RTFO.
3. **Supply of sustainable bioethanol** - To ensure the supply of sustainable bioethanol increases sufficiently to support a 95 E10 petrol market, the RTFO obligation will need to be increased with an appropriate crop cap. The launch of 95 E10 petrol would need to be aligned with the amended RTFO legislation and the existing supply chain processes.
4. **A compelling case for motorists** - There should be a compelling case for motorists to switch rapidly to E10 petrol, including robust data on the true fuel economy. If the introduction of the fuel is not mandated, then a significant duty differential may be needed to incentivise a rapid transition.
5. **Support for the existing vehicle fleet** - Every new petrol car sold since 1st January 2011, has been required to be fully warranted to use E10. The vast majority of new cars since 2000 are also fully warranted. In 2015, over 92% of petrol cars on UK roads were fully warranted to use E10 and the number is increasing rapidly as older cars reach the end of their economic life. Older cars which were either not warranted to use E10 (or it’s not known if they can use E10) together with historic vehicles, can be catered for through the Super 97 E5 petrol grade, acting as a legacy grade.

The E10 Group recommended that 95 E10 fuel should be deployed to make a material contribution to the achievement of the UK’s Carbon Budgets. It also recommends introduction in sufficient time to contribute to meeting the UK objective to ensure that at least 10% of the country’s transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020 and immediately secure jobs in the renewable sector in the UK.

To download the LowCVP E10 Working Group report, visit [this page](#).
To see the Government’s response to the RTFO order, visit [this page](#).

NOTES TO EDITORS

Media Contact: Neil Wallis, LowCVP, 0207 304 6806; Mob: 07974 255720 neil.wallis@lowcvp.org.uk

About the LowCVP

The LowCVP is a public-private, not-for-profit partnership that exists to accelerate a sustainable shift to lower carbon vehicles and fuels and create opportunities for UK businesses. The LowCVP has been - and continues to be - mainly funded by the Department for Transport but with increasing contributions via membership fees and sponsorship/project income. Approaching 200 organisations are members, from diverse backgrounds including automotive and fuel supply chains, vehicle users, academics and environment/not-for-profit bodies. For more information visit: www.lowcvp.org.uk

The LowCVP E10 Working Group comprised a wide range of stakeholders both from the membership and from outside the LowCVP