



**Washing Machines and Washer-dryers
Recommendations on the final Ecodesign and Energy Labelling proposals**

November 2018

Ahead of the Member States' vote expected early 2019, we would like to support the draft Ecodesign and Energy Labelling regulations¹ and particularly the new energy efficiency formulas, which are less linear and steep with capacity, thus avoiding the current encouragement to ever larger capacities. We also welcome the provisions to avoid programmes with too stretched durations, with a preference for the cap on duration in Ecodesign over indication on the energy label. With regard to resource efficiency, the proposals to make repair and recycling of washing machines easier have been substantially weakened compared to previous versions of the texts, and, consequently, we urge decision-makers to increase the regulation ambition.

Stretch the energy label scales

The proposed energy labelling scales have small class widths, especially in the top classes. This jeopardises the possibility of the labels to last for at least 10 years, and makes it too easy to jump one class up through limited product adjustment or using tolerances. We call for stretching the scales to a more adequate level, with truly challenging A and B classes. For instance, ensuring at least a 15% class width in the upper classes requires the change of the label classification for washing machines and the washing cycle of washer-driers to:

Energy Efficiency Class	Energy Efficiency Index (EEI)
A (most efficient)	$EEI \leq 35$
B	$35 < EEI \leq 50$
C	$50 < EEI \leq 65$
D	$65 < EEI \leq 80$
E	$80 < EEI \leq 91$
F	$91 < EEI \leq 105$
G (least efficient)	$EEI > 105$

Improve the duplication of programmes clause

We fully support restricting the use of programme names such as normal/daily/standard/regular, but recommend reintroducing the wording from the previous regulatory draft, mentioning also the use of the term cotton, and related numbers, i.e.:

¹ [Ecodesign](#) & [Energy Label](#) draft Regulations notified to the WTO on 22 October 2018

Other programme indications for normally soiled cotton laundry declared to be washable at 40 °C and 60 °C such as 'normal', 'daily', 'regular', 'standard', 'cotton' '365', '24/7', '7/7 or similar that could divert the end user from using '40-60 eco' shall not be used.

Improve the label design

We believe that some aspects of the energy label design need improvement:

- The label designs and descriptions are missing the grey F and G classes that should apply after April 2024; this is not in line with Article 11 point 10 of the Energy Labelling Framework Regulation.
- We strongly advise to remove the circle with the word “eco 40-60°”, since we doubt that its meaning will be understood, and we see a very significant risk that consumers believe it certifies the product is in some way “eco-friendly”.
- We regret that no icons have been envisaged that could help consumers buy more durable, repairable products, such as the free warranty period offered by the manufacturer or spare parts availability. DG Justice’s [behavioural study on consumers’ engagement in the Circular Economy](#), released last month describes how effective this could be in shifting purchasing decisions towards products with greater durability and reparability.

Standby modes: lower delay start allowance, and better regulation of networked modes

The power limit for the delay start condition has been set to much too high a value (6 W). Simply operating a timer does not require this much. The 2017 preparatory study reports values ranging from 0.3 to 3 W. This supports setting the limit at 1 W or less. In addition, the provisions on networked standby miss some important points of horizontal Regulation 801/2013, for example, the possibility for the user to deactivate networked connections. We call for adding the following provision in Ecodesign requirements Annex II point 7:

Any household washing machine or washer-dryer that can be connected to a network shall offer the user the possibility to activate and deactivate the network connection(s). The network connection(s) shall be deactivated by default."

Strongly reinforce provisions on resource efficiency

Strengthen the availability of spare parts provision

Availability of spare parts is a key material efficiency consideration, and we urge Member States to introduce ambitious provisions on spare parts availability as described below:

- all spare parts should be available **during the average product lifetime**, i.e. 12 years after the last unit is supplied. As a minimum, these should be available for 10 years, in line with the Austrian standard ONR 192102.
- spare parts access **should not be restricted to professional repairers** but should be open to retailers, repairers and consumers.
- the list of spare parts should be extended to include batteries, as the ability to remove these once no longer holding charge is key to the potential for products to be repaired.
- A maximum delivery time of **one week** for spare parts should also be specified.

We also find that the new wording makes the requirements very weak and difficult to enforce: the verification requirements allow manufacturers three chances to meet the delivery time requirement (Clause 2.2), plus the option of a “force majeure” justification if this is not met. This significantly increases the verification burden for market surveillance authorities, allows the manufacturer not to comply with the required delivery times in 66% of the cases without any justification, and allows a loophole of a “force majeure” justification if requirements are not met. We believe that ANNEX IV, 2.2 should be reformulated as follows:

*A manufacturer or importer is considered as not fulfilling the Regulation's requirements if, for the same product, ~~three~~ **two** discrete orders of necessary spare parts do not meet the (...) maximum delivery time. ~~without acceptable justification of an event of force majeure.~~*

Ensure unrestricted access to repair & maintenance information from date of placing on the market

We are disappointed to note the additional barriers to the availability of repair and maintenance information that have been put in place. While the previous regulatory drafts foresaw access “to independent operators” and “to any repairers”, the information is now restricted to professional repairers covered by a valid liability insurance.

Rather than facilitating the provision of information on repair, the regulation now justifies the significant restriction of information on repair, which conflicts directly with circular economy principles. In a recent study, the most commonly cited reason for an unsuccessful repair was the lack of information; this was the cause for one out of three failed repairs (32%) .

We believe that this will create an additional administrative burden for repairers and market surveillance authorities, and inhibit the access that non-profit repair initiatives such as repair cafés will have to the repair information essential for their operation. We understand the intention to prevent non-qualified / unskilled repairers from undertaking repairs, but we also consider that the ability to charge “reasonable or proportionate” fees sufficiently deals with this.

We call on the reintroduction of the *unrestricted access to appliance repair and maintenance information to independent operators*, supported by an explanatory section to the definition of “independent operator” as in the Regulation EC715/2007 on the availability of vehicle repair and maintenance information:

“independent operator’ means an undertaking other than authorised retailer and repairer which is directly or indirectly involved in the repair and maintenance of household dishwashers, in particular repairers, manufacturers or distributors of repair equipment, tools or spare parts, publishers of technical information, not-for-profit repair initiatives, operators offering training for repairers”.

Moreover, we understand that the requirement on provision of repair information only applying after 2 years is linked to the restriction of repairs by manufacturers during the time under legal guarantee. However, we would like to stress that as soon as 6 months after the purchase of a product, consumers need to prove that the product was defective to be eligible to this legal guarantee. Hence, it is common that consumers have their products repaired outside guarantee during the first two years, and we consider it essential that this two-year stipulation be removed.

Finally, we call for the reintroduction of the technical manual within the provision on the repair and maintenance information. In order to avoid risks for loopholes from a restrictive list in case essential

repair and maintenance information documents are not listed, Annex II section 5 (3) (c) should be reworded as follows:

The available repair and maintenance information shall include, albeit non-exhaustively

Target non-destructive ease of disassembly, not only ease of dismantling

While the previous drafts foresaw an easy access to a list of key parts for repair, the latest Commission proposals only foresee that dismantling shall be facilitated to extract the list of materials and components referred to in Annex VII of the WEEE Directive. This is a big step backwards in terms of reparability of products, and we call on the reintroduction of the previous provision. We call on EU decision-makers to respect the European waste hierarchy and reinstate the objective to facilitate repair through simpler design. Furthermore, the reference to the WEEE Directive means that some previously included components are not covered anymore, in particular LCD smaller than 100 square centimetres, motors, piping and related equipment including all hoses, valves and filters.

Other proposed changes

- We strongly question the term *eco* for the main washing programme used to test the machine. Calling it *cotton* (as in the previous regulation draft) or *normal* would ensure more users select this programme instinctively.
- Drop weighting factors A, B and C in the energy efficiency index formulas. The complexity of these has increased, which could create an unnecessary source of potential errors.
- Lower the delay start value to 1W or less. The power limit for the delay start condition has been set to a much too high value (6 W). The 2017 preparatory study reports values ranging from 0.3 to 3 W today.
- Set a unique time cap of 2,5 hours for all programmes. The current time cap proposal may lead to larger capacities as it related to the rated capacity of the machine.
- Broaden Article 5 of the Energy Labelling Regulation to any website, to avoid any gap:
Where a website allows the selling of household dishwashers, the website owner shall enable the showing of the electronic label and electronic product fiche sheet provided by the dealer on the display mechanism in accordance with the provisions of Annex VIII and shall inform the dealer of the obligation to display them.
- Refine Recital 12 of the Ecodesign Regulation and making it a regulatory article, as in Article 6 of the Energy Labelling proposal:
The relevant product parameters should be measured using reliable, accurate, reproducible and representative of real-life conditions and users' behaviour methods. (...)
- Include information on refrigerants and GWP in the product information sheet. As in the regulations for commercial and professional refrigeration, we call for the inclusion in the product information sheet for washing machines, an information requirement on the presence of refrigerant fluids, including their name, charge, and Global Warming Potential (GWP). The GWP is key to determine the most appropriate treatment for the components as stated in the WEEE Directive, Annex VII point 2.

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