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Best Practice Principles for environmental claims in car marketing launched to help consumers

The Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP), Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) and ISBA (the Voice of British Advertisers), have joined forces to launch best practice principles for environmental claims in marketing aimed at consumers.

The principles, launched today at the LowCVP's annual conference at Twickenham stadium, provide a framework and reference point for the automotive companies and their marketing companies when developing environmental messages used in advertising and other marketing communications including press releases and websites.

Paul Everitt, SMMT's Chief Executive, commented "The UK motor industry is delivering an increasing range of low carbon vehicles to the marketplace presenting customers with more choices than ever before. To help them better understand the environmental benefits these vehicles provide, industry is introducing new guidance for environmental marketing claims." He continued "The Best Practice Principles set out clear and concise guidelines for businesses endorsing products within the sector so consumers can rely on a consistent approach to sometimes complex data and information. SMMT will support industry as it adopts these measures to ensure future communications meet industry standards."

Greg Archer, Director of the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership, said "Consumers need to believe in marketing messages if they are to accept and adopt lower carbon options. These principles will help car buyers believe that the environmental benefits they see described are real."

ISBA Director of Public Affairs Ian Twinn said "These new principles will complement well the robust approach that the UK's self-regulatory system already takes on environmental claims. Car advertising, like any other type of advertising, is already subject to this system

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and now consumers can also benefit from access to more pre-purchase information and greater understanding of the environmental performance and impact of vehicles. Mr Twinn continued: "And the automotive industry too will gain from increased consumer confidence in the information it provides about the vehicles it sells."

DEFRA Parliamentary Under-Secretary Lord Henley said "I welcome this initiative by the SMMT, the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership and the ISBA, and I support their aim of promoting clear and accurate environmental information in the marketing of cars and vans. Good environmental information is important to help consumers choose genuinely better products and for businesses to gain fair recognition of their achievements. Those benefits can be so easily undermined if consumers see confusing or misleading 'green claims' in the market. So it is very good to see the industry pushing for a responsible approach across the whole sector. "

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Notes to Editors

The LowCVP (www.lowcyp.org.uk) was established in 2003 to take a lead in accelerating the shift to low carbon vehicles and fuels in the UK and to help ensure that UK business can benefit from that shift. It is a partnership of over 300 organisations from the automotive and fuel industries, the environmental sector, government, academia, road user groups and other organisations with a stake in the low carbon vehicles and fuels agenda.

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