

Summary and extracts from *UK New Car Registrations by CO₂ Performance*, full report available via economics@smtt.co.uk

Average new car CO₂ emissions fall again

- 1st half 2003 data shows average new car CO₂ emissions continue to fall
- Decline, however, below par as average diesel CO₂ rates rise
- Shift to diesel and growth of superminis remains positive aspect of market

Looking at average CO₂ emissions from new cars registered in the first half of 2003 shows a further reduction in average new car CO₂ emissions, but the reduction was a little disappointing considering the further growth in the diesel market and the greater share of the market taken by supermini type cars.

Using the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) database on the CO₂ characteristics of the UK new car market, data can be analysed on a sales weighted basis and can be used to study the market by segment types, fuel types, taxation bands and so forth.

Average new car CO₂ emissions have consistently fallen since SMMT began monitoring the data, in 1997. The average new car emitted just 173.0 g/CO₂ per km, 8.9% down on 1997 baseline and 0.7 per cent below the full year 2002 average.

Average new car CO₂ emissions in the UK (1997-2003)

Year	Average CO₂ g/km	y/y % change	% change on 1997
1997	189.8	-	-
1998	188.4	-0.7	-0.7
1999	185.0	-1.8	-2.5
2000	181.0	-2.2	-4.6
2001	177.6	-1.9	-6.4
2002	174.2	-1.9	-8.2
1 st half 2003	173.0	-0.7	-8.9

The use of lightweight materials, new engine technologies and more advanced aerodynamics have helped offset the impact of tougher safety and environmental standards, which couple with consumer demand for creature comforts typically add to the weight of the vehicle, hindering reductions in CO₂ emissions.

Diesel powered cars have typically emit seven per cent lower CO₂ emissions than petrol cars. Diesels accounted for a record 26.2 per cent of the 2003 market, up from 23.5 per cent in 2002. The further growth in the diesels helped reduce the total market's average CO₂ figure. However, the average CO₂ figure for diesels rose by 1.4 per cent in 2003 vs 2002, from 161.7g/km to 163.9g/km. This may be due to the growth of MPVs and 4x4s, which whilst tending to be diesel fuelled have relatively high CO₂ emissions. Petrol cars reported a 1.0 per cent cut in CO₂ emissions in 2003.

Superminis took a record 34.0 per cent share of the new car market in the first half of the year, predominantly at the expense of mini and lower medium cars. Demand for upper medium cars also dipped, but the strongest percentage gains have been taken by 4x4s, MPVs and luxury cars – all of which have relatively high CO₂ levels.

In the first half of 2003 3.0 per cent of cars produced 120g/km or less CO₂, vs 2.0 per cent in 2002, and 14.9 per cent of the market vs 13.6 per cent last year emitted 140g/km or less – the target for all ACEA member vehicles by 2008. The table below shows the top ten lowest CO₂ emitters which were on sale to the general public in 2003 and shows how clean some vehicles in the market place now are.

Top 10 lowest CO₂ emissions models on UK sale in 2003 (lowest emitter in range)

	Model	Fuel type	CO ₂ g/km
1	Honda Insight	Petrol/Electric	80
2=	Citroen C3	Diesel	110
2=	Renault Clio	Diesel	110
4=	Peugeot 206	Diesel	113
4=	Smart	Petrol	113
4=	Toyota Yaris	Diesel	113
7=	Daihatsu Charade	Petrol	114
7=	Ford Fiesta	Diesel	114
7=	Toyota Prius	Petrol/Electric	114
10=	Audi A2	Diesel	116
10=	Ford Fusion	Diesel	116
10=	Honda Civic	Petrol/Electric	116
10=	Smart Roadster	Petrol	116