

Making the case for air

Global Tire Report 2018



ERJ asks Jeffrey Valentage, global tire market development manager, specialty elastomers & butyl, ExxonMobil Chemical Co. about the company's campaign for minimum air-permeability standards in tires:

As a supplier of tire-liner materials, what does ExxonMobil see as achievable in terms of minimum standards of air-pressure retention?

ExxonMobil would recommend national air retention performance



“Trying to educate the consumer about the benefits of proper tire maintenance has not worked”
JEFFREY VALENTAGE

standards covering both OE and RE of: < 2% air pressure loss rate per month for ICE and < 1.75% for EVs. These can be achieved with technology currently available to the industry today.

This will help ensure consistent

performance over the life of the tire, maximise consumer-value and minimise fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions.

Why did the EC not, as it seems, consider air-permeability within its new tire-labelling proposals?

There is a lack of awareness at the regulatory level about the significant effect air retention can have on tire performance and of the wide variation in performance between tire brands.

Current testing for labelling is only done under optimal conditions to “pass” the test. The real world does not have optimal conditions and consumers in general are not very good at maintaining tires properly.

What scope does ExxonMobil see for progress on this front?

To achieve real world benefits for the consumer, and to significantly improve the effectiveness of tire-labelling, minimum air retention performance standards need to be included.

Trying to educate the consumer about the benefits of proper tire maintenance has not worked and cannot be relied upon. It's time for the industry and governments to make this a priority and add minimum air retention standards to the next generation

of tire performance standards and regulations.

Which other stakeholders are pushing for minimum air-retention standards in tires?

Currently GM and FCA [Fiat Chrysler Automobiles] require a maximum air-pressure loss rate of 2.5% per month. ExxonMobil is currently working with several OEMs and other stakeholders in the value chain to increase awareness and promote the implementation of air-retention standards at the OE and regulatory level.

Finally, any update on ExxonMobil's research in this field?

In a programme at San Antonio, Texas, initial testing conducted on internal combustion engine vehicles showed that tires which retained recommended air-pressure longer improved fuel economy by 2% and increased tire-life by 8%.

Our latest testing, conducted with Chevy Bolt electric vehicles, showed that tires with poor air-retention performance decreased vehicle range by up to 7% and reduced tire-life by 16%. These results demonstrated that, as the vehicle fleet moves toward a more electrified future, tire air-retention will become even more important.