July 2013: the heavy goods vehicles eco-tax date of effect is approaching

The heavy goods vehicle eco-tax, one of the Grenelle Environment round table flagship projects, is a French Customs ecological tax that applies to the ground transportation of goods for all French and foreign vehicles over 3.5 tons, which travel on the 15,000 km network of taxable roads. The taxable network comprises 10,000 km of publicly-managed national roads, that are currently non-taxed, and 5,000 km of department and local roads that are likely to see significant traffic migration because of existing and future tolls.

The network is split into sections where virtual charging points are specified. Once a vehicle crosses a point then it is liable for tax.

You may view the taxable network on www.ecomouv.com.

April 2013: The HGV eco-tax tested in Alsace

This test-phase applies to vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating and to articulated vehicles with a gross combination weight rating equal to or greater than 12 tons.

The tested network is specific and focused on north-south axes (A35 and D1083-N83-D83), which have been subject to the greatest traffic migration since the LKW-Maut was implemented in 2005 (Decree No. 2009-1589 of 18 February 2009 relating to the consistency in the Alsace road network where vehicles transporting goods are taxed). These parameters remain valid until the National Heavy Goods Vehicle Eco-Tax becomes effective.
Practical info

How can I comply?

Tax collection is based on an electronic On-Board-Unit (OBU) installed inside the vehicles. Technically identical to a GPS, it is used for calculating the amount of tax owed. All taxable French heavy goods vehicles and all taxable foreign heavy goods vehicles travelling on the taxable network in France must be equipped with this OBU.

There are two ways to obtain the OBU and to pay the eco-tax:

1) Subscribe to a Registered Electronic Toll System Company (SHT) “Subscriber liable for tax”

Users may subscribe to a company that has been authorized by the French state and that has concluded an agreement with Ecomouv’ to pay the tax on behalf of its customers (“Subscribers liable for tax”). This company will be the user’s sole contact for tax management. The user will be invoiced for the tax only after they have travelled on the taxable network. To date, Ecomouv’ has concluded service agreements with: Axxès, DKV, Eurotoll, Ressa, Telepass and Total.

2) Register with Ecomouv’ as a “Non-subscriber liable for tax”

Users may also register with Ecomouv’ directly (“Non-subscribers liable for tax”) before using the taxable network. They will be provided with an Ecomouv’ Pass On-Board-Unit, once they have paid a guarantee deposit to Ecomouv’ services. By making a pre-payment considered as a credit on the tax, Ecomouv’ Pass holders may travel freely on the network and the tax will be deducted from the credit while using the network.

From January 2013, “Non-subscribers liable for tax” will be able to access Ecomouv’ services via:
- a website, which will include a tax calculation simulator.
- a call centre, available 24/7 on the toll-free number 0808 807 000.
- an eco-tax points distribution network, located along the taxable network, where users will receive the Ecomouv’ Pass, return the OBU, and obtain a new unit in the event of malfunctioning.

Implementation of the system

Enforcement system

The automatic enforcement system is used to detect users liable for tax who do not comply with provisions, and to transmit the information to State enforcement agents. This automatic system comprises checkpoints located across the taxable network. It complements enforcement checks made by State agents. The first 16 fixed automatic enforcement are mainly installed in the north of France.

Collection

Satellite toll technology has been developed. On-Board-Units are currently being manufactured by Magneti Marelli in Châtellerault. Ecomouv’ Passes are ready and will be distributed throughout France from the beginning of 2013.

Eco-tax points

A network of around 420 eco-tax points will be set up so that it will be easy for “Non-subscribers liable for tax” to comply. These points will be clearly signposted with the icon as shown below.

The list of eco-tax points will be available on www.ecomouv.com.

Metz operational facility

Ecomouv’s operational facility will be established close to Metz on the former 128 air base. This centre will be responsible for providing information and support, invoicing users liable for tax and notifying them in the event of non-compliance. 200 bilingual people will ensure these services. The recruitment campaign, undertaken hand-in-hand with the French unemployment agency “Pôle Emploi”, has already begun. Work is currently underway to convert these military buildings so they may be used for civil purposes.