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EU ministers ignore consumers over VW scandal

At a meeting in Brussels today, EU transport ministers failed to put pressure on Volkswagen to compensate EU consumers over the use of a defeat device to hide air pollution emissions. However, European Commissioner for Internal Market and Industry Elżbieta Bieńkowska said during the meeting that Member States should assess all available legal tools to ensure that owners are compensated.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented:

“There are millions of EU consumers affected by Volkswagen’s use of a defeat device to get around air pollution laws. We’ve seen the extent of efforts by Volkswagen, government authorities and courts to compensate affected car owners in the US but in Europe the car maker and national authorities are turning a blind eye. Ministers today failed to reassure affected owners that fraudulent behaviour will also have consequences in Europe.

“Member States should respond to Commissioner Bieńkowska’s repeated call to see how car owners can be compensated. EU consumers have been cheated on and deserve adequate compensation.

“EU laws urgently need to be toughened up but this does not mean those car companies found guilty of wrongdoing should be left off the hook.”

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