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EC urged to 'safeguard' retreading industry

By Tire Business Staff



LEIDEN, The Netherlands (June 8, 2016) — The International Retread Association, Bipaver, is calling on the European Commission (EC) to take action to “safeguard” the European retreading industry from the negative effects of rising imports of “low-quality, low-cost” truck tires from China.

Bipaver issued a public appeal this week to European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmström to “reassess what the EU (European Union) can or cannot do in the coming weeks in order to establish a level playing field” to help the retreading industry in the face of imported tires’ being sold at prices below the cost of retreading.

In its appeal, Bipaver in particular pointed to the 400-plus small to medium-size retreading enterprises, which employ more than 10,000 collectively.

Bipaver noted that in the past five years, “cheap imports” have grown fivefold to approximately 5 million tires while at the same time truck tire retreading has dropped 50 percent to roughly 4 million tires. The European replacement market represents about 10 million new truck tires.

Market conditions have worsened over the last year, Bipaver said, mainly due to an increase of anti-dumping regulations in neighboring continents.

The association is making its plea directly to Ms. Malmström after waiting for more than a year for the EC to act on an earlier request to the commission’s Directorate-General Trade to consider the retread industry’s plight.

“...(I)t has become that the European Commission is not able to defend our industry due to the lack of legislation for this specific situation within the retread industry,” Bipaver said, noting that instead, the EU is “discussing opening even further the EU market to imports from diverse exporting countries....”

Thus, Bipaver added, “...the retreading industry cannot understand the added value of a European trade policy if they are not able to defend their own [small] industries.”

Bipaver also stressed that retreading is “essential to the ‘circular economy,’ equally providing a major improvement of the carbon footprint, saving raw materials and decreasing waste by replacing the tread of the used tire.”

Retreading is performed under strict legislation and technical regulations, Bipaver said, noting that retreaders have a limited economic trading range of a few hundred miles and therefore are limited to trade within the European Union.

Bipaver — Bureau International Permanents des Associates de Vendeurs et Rechaumeurs de pneumatiques — represents the national retreading associations and leading suppliers to the retreading industry from 10 member states of the EU: Czech Republic; Denmark; Finland; Germany; Italy; Netherlands; Portugal; Spain; Sweden; and the United Kingdom.



Originally formed in Switzerland in 1954 to represent the interests of both tire retreaders and retailers, Bipaver was restructured five years ago to represent the retreading industry exclusively.

U.S. trade group the Tire Retread and Repair Information Bureau (TRIB) is an associate member of Bipaver.

Ms. Malmström is a Swedish politician who has been in her post since 2014. Prior to that she was European Commissioner for Home Affairs from 2010-14; Swedish Minister for European Union Affairs from 2006–2010; and a member of the European Parliament from 1999–2006.

Among her duties are representing the EU in the World Trade Organization and other international trade for negotiating bilateral trade agreements with key countries; developing the EU's foreign direct investment policy; and pursuing an “ambitious” trade agenda to the benefit of European citizens, small and medium-sized businesses and the broader economy.

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