

ECTA's priorities for the review of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation



Europe's industrial transition to zero-emission trucks (ZETs) is driving innovation and is essential to achieving climate neutrality by 2050. In parallel, the ongoing energy crisis has highlighted the vulnerability of the logistics and heavy-duty road transport sectors to external shocks, pointing to an urgent need to accelerate their decarbonisation and, more broadly, improve the EU's energy independence.

In this context, and for it to succeed at scale, this transition requires, among other elements, the availability of sufficient charging and refuelling infrastructure.

Key to achieving this is the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), which lays out minimum requirements for charging and refuelling infrastructure along the TEN-T core and comprehensive network. In view of its upcoming review in 2026, the following paper outlines the key priorities of the European Clean Trucking Alliance (ECTA) to maximise the regulation's impact and respond effectively to the needs of the sector.

1. Keep the agreed AFIR targets for heavy-duty vehicles

AFIR sets mandatory, national targets for the deployment of charging and refuelling infrastructure. Maintaining these minimum targets is crucial to support a rapid and harmonised infrastructure roll-out across the EU. While some Member States are on the path to meet them, others are experiencing notable delays. To ensure consistent progress across all Member States and align infrastructure availability with driving and rest time requirements, the European Commission should:

- ▶ Keep the agreed AFIR targets for heavy-duty vehicles.
- ▶ Strengthen the enforcement mechanisms and support Member States in meeting their obligations, while also exploring opportunities to increase the frequency of HDV charging infrastructure to every 40km along highly trafficked freight corridors.
- ▶ Ensure adequate infrastructure near national borders. Road hauliers investing in ZETs should be able to operate seamlessly without being disadvantaged compared to fossil-fuelled trucks.

2. Expand the Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Facility (AFIF) to include depot charging

The AFIF is a European success story, proving to be an effective tool in meeting infrastructure needs along the TEN-T network, accelerating compliance with the AFIR and de-risking much needed investments.

However, depots are by far the primary charging location for ZEVs. Since depot electrification remains a large investment, particularly for companies operating on tight margins, and Member States' support remains fragmented, ECTA advocates that the European Commission:

- ▶ Consider including depot charging as part of AFIR scope.
- ▶ Prolong AFIF already before the new Multiannual Financial Framework begins in 2028.
- ▶ Ensure EU or national financial schemes include depot electrification, enabling transport operators to invest in on-site charging and benefit from lower electricity costs.

3. Prepare for Megawatt Charging Systems integration

While depot charging will cover a large share of HDV charging needs, road hauliers will also rely on Megawatt Charging Systems (MCS) (chargers which are designed to deliver up to 3.75 MW of DC power), especially for some long-haul routes. In this context:

- ▶ ECTA suggests prioritising MCS development in the most traffic-heavy routes. Member States should be required to build MCS along traffic-dense routes with more than 6,000 HDVs circulating on every day on average for a year.
- ▶ At the same time, ECTA urges the EU and Member States to tackle any grid capacity connection issue, including making sure that permitting requests are handled swiftly by relevant national authorities.

4. Expand AFIR coverage to include key logistics nodes

The original scope of AFIR framework to cover both the core and comprehensive TEN-T network provided welcome first steps in the development of a dense network of public charging infrastructure. ECTA advocates that the ambition to create such a network should be maintained and that the AFIR framework should further encourage Member States to achieve the goals set for key logistics nodes such as ports and airports. Their prioritisation would facilitate charging opportunities for vehicles whilst loading and unloading operations are taking place. ECTA therefore calls upon the Commission to:

- ▶ Further incentivise Member States to achieve the goals set for ports and airports.

ABOUT ECTA

The European Clean Trucking Alliance is a coalition of over 35 companies and organisations active in logistics, consumer goods, manufacturing, retail and supply chain management from across Europe calling for zero-emission road freight. ECTA members employ over 2.3 million people and use a total road fleet size of over 380,000 vehicles

