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NEW TAXIS POWERED BY LPG IN MADRID



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Municipality: Madrid

Starting date: June 2007

Participants:

- Comunidad de Madrid (Madrid Regional Government, Spain)
- City Council of Madrid, Spain
- SEAT
- Repsol Butano, S.A.
- Federación Madrileña del Taxi (Madrid Taxi Drivers Federation)
- Asociación Gremial de AutoTaxi de Madrid (Madrid Taxi Drivers Association)

Description

LPG: liquefied petroleum gas, also called GPL, LP Gas, or autogas.

LPG (butane gas) used as fuel for motor industry, in particular in the taxi sector, is well known since many decades. In the beginnings it was used in bottles, but since more than twenty years are tanks that can be filled up in the petrol stations.

At the present time, the total number of cars in the World powered by LPG is higher than eleven million units, six of them are in Europe. Are broadly well known the economic and ecologic advantages of this product, that is also natural, even though not many people knows that the

65% of the butane gas that is commercialised in the World is not a sub-product of the cracking of petrol but a natural product extracted from the gas fields, mixed with methane and other hydrocarbons.

It is a product with a well known past and a very promising future. It is due to the fact that the use of LPG as fuel has been included as one of the European Union proposals, which establish as target for 2020, that LPG represents a 5% of the total energy consumed in the transport sector.

In the last ten years, and in contrast with the progress happened in the rest of the European countries, the use of LPG for motor sector in Spain has experimented a decreased progress, due to some negative circumstances (tax limitations, law restrictions, diesel use in cars supremacy, etc.).

Fortunately, these circumstances have changed and now the LPG is a fuel used in all type of vehicles, for every use, is controlled by a modern, clear and none discriminatory rule, it has a reduced tax, is provided with an efficient and modern use of technology, and is supported by the Governments.

It is so, that last June, Comunidad de Madrid, Madrid City Council, SEAT, Repsol Butano, S.A. and the two main associations of taxi drivers of Madrid, signed an agreement for developing ten taxis SEAT TOLEDO powered by LPG for working in Madrid city.

These vehicles were awarded to ten taxi drivers that started to work in the streets of Madrid, filling up with LPG in any of the seven petrol stations existing at the moment in the region of Madrid (2 in Madrid city, 2 in Alcalá de Henares, 1 in the Terminal 3 of Madrid Barajas Airport, 1 in Móstoles and another one in Alcorcón). In the future will be open other 4 in Pinto, Leganés, and in the Terminals 2 and 4 of Madrid Barajas Airport).

Investment

SEAT has invested more than 500,000.00 € in R&D for making a vehicle powered by LPG with the highest guaranties in safety and energy efficiency and saving. This project has been financially supported by Repsol Butano, S.A., which has invested more than 30,000.00 €. Taxi drivers have invested 135,000.00 € in buying these ten LPG vehicles.



Benefits – Positive impacts

Opposite to the use of diesel in taxis, by using LPG the quality of the air in Madrid city improves in three main aspects:

- There are no particle emissions.
- Nitrogen Oxide emissions are reduced in a 95%.
- Noises are reduced in a 50%.

Moreover, LPG has a price in €/litre equivalent to the 50% of the diesel price, that means in €/km, 10% to 25% savings.

Results

The ten vehicles SEAT TOLEDO GLP have been driving thousands of kilometres in the streets of Madrid in optimum conditions, with all its guaranties of comfort and safety for the citizens, reducing drastically the harmful particle emissions and the nitrogen oxide, with less noise and allowing the taxi drivers to save money.

We reproduce some commentaries from the taxi drivers:

- "I'm very glad with this system".
- "It works like petrol and I save a lot of money".
- "At the moment it works perfectly, with no problems. I never had a car powered by gas but I decided to try with the LPG project and I'm very happy".
- "Everything works perfect. I didn't have any problem in 15.000 km that I've been driving the car".
- "I'm happy with the project, it's benefits, and the economic saving".

- "LPG is the best option".

In September the Government of the Region of Madrid (Comunidad de Madrid) set up some economical aids for buying cars powered by gas (2.000 € per car). At least, 15 taxi drivers have chosen this alternative, also with SEAT cars, contributing with it to a better air quality in Madrid.



The results of the project were presented in October in the conferences about "LPG use as alternative fuel", celebrated by Comunidad de Madrid, assisting the Vice-president of the Regional Ministry of Economy and Consume (Consejería de Economía y Consumo) and the General Manager of Industry and Energy, and Transport and Environment of Comunidad de Madrid.

The successful results of this project, let us think that LPG use will increase, making possible that most of the taxis of Madrid will be powered by LPG, being positive for all the citizens.