



OEM BULLETIN

SKODA

The Union of the European Lubricant Industry (UEIL) is the umbrella association of the European Lubricants Industry, representing their members and, in particular, the interests of SMEs and independent lubricant companies. To date, the UEIL represents more than 450 lubricant companies, who manufacture and distribute lubricant products under their own various trademarks throughout the European Union. With members in more than 22 European countries and a unique collective experience of lubricants and the lubricants market, UEIL is the sole representative body for independent manufacturers of lubricants in Europe and has been recognised as such by the European Commission. It is UEIL's policy to favour free and fair competition within the scope of prevailing EU and national laws.

In April 2020, several UEIL members drew its attention to the wording of the latest version of Skoda owners' manuals which do not mention anymore engine oil specifications for their vehicles. They only state:

- « **Specification**
*Ask a specialist garage for the correct engine oil specification for your vehicle.
If no oil of the correct specification is available, **max. 0,5 l** of oil with the following specifications may be used until the next oil change.*
 - **Petrol engines** : VW 504 00, VW 508 00, ACEA C3, ACEA C5.
 - **Diesel engines** : VW 507 00, VW 509 00, ACEA C3, or API CJ-4. For vehicles without a particulate filter, VW 505 01 can be optionally used.
- **Changing**
Have the oil changed by a specialist garage. »

UEIL sent a letter to Skoda:

- Stating that through this practice, they:
 - Deprive of choice end-users who finally will be obliged to buy the lubricant designated by the « specialist garage » and to have the oil changed by the « specialist garage »
 - Act against a free and fair competition in the motor vehicle aftermarket notably by:
 - Excluding independent garages of the maintenance of their vehicles
 - Blocking the access of competing products to the market
- Requesting they amend their owners' manuals and clearly specify oil specifications.

As Skoda did not react properly after receiving this letter, UEIL informed its members about the situation.

Following this information, one of UEIL members, UNITI, explained our concerns to the Centre for Protection against Unfair Competition in Germany (Wettbewerbszentrale).



After studying the case, « Wettbewerbszentrale » asked Skoda to go back to the usual procedure and to mention the engine oil specifications requested in their owners' manuals.

As Skoda did not agree, the Centre for Protection against Unfair Competition decided to take legal proceedings against the OEM.

Before the Tribunal releases its decision, Skoda has committed itself in a « statement of omission » to mention again oil specifications in its owners' manuals and to remove the reference to « *a specialist garage* » by 2 August 2021.

Without a court decision but the commitment of Skoda, the Centre for Protection against Unfair Competition considers this case as closed.

Brussels, May 2021