
PRESS RELEASE

Interview with Stefano Carloni, president of Airp

1) The difficult economic situation is having a serious impact on the freight and public transportation industries. How can retreaded tyres help in cutting costs for trucks and buses?

The economic crisis is indeed having a significant impact on Italian transportation companies, which also have to deal with higher costs than those incurred by many competitors, in particular companies from Eastern Europe. If you consider the number of tyres per truck and their cost, it's obvious that saving on tyres – without compromising safety and performance – is becoming more and more important, especially today. For example, if a 44-tonne semi-trailer truck that travels 120,000 kilometres every year uses retreaded tyres, the cost is around 2,200 euro, while new tyres would cost 3,900.

Using retreaded tyres can save a considerable amount of money, and now even more thanks to the new end-of-life tyre (ELT) management system. Under this system, manufacturers and importers are responsible for ELT management, covering costs by applying a price increase on new tyres sold. In this context, retreaded tyres can help transportation companies balance their finances. However, the use of retreaded tyres must be planned carefully. First, the vehicle must feature high-quality original equipment tyres that can be retreaded. Second, these tyres must be used correctly: it is important to carry out regular maintenance interventions, check inflation pressure periodically and avoid stressing the tyre with excessive loads. Finally, it's important to choose only professional tyre retreaders.

2) The economic crisis is affecting car owners too. Do you think that the use of retreaded tyres could be a solution in their case?

Definitely. Car owners too can save considerable amounts of money by using retreaded tyres with the same safety and performance specifications of new ones. In fact, it used to be quite common for car owners to have their tyres retreaded. Then the situation changed, mainly because of “image” issues, based on a misunderstanding. But now the use of retreaded tyres has taken on a new environmental connotation, which many see as positive. Environmental concerns are driving many consumers to make responsible choices, and people who are more sensitive to environmental issues might even take pride in using retreaded tyres. In fact, the use of retreaded tyres on cars is now slightly on the rise throughout Europe.

3) More and more public on-road transportation companies are now trying to reduce running costs. Legal provisions, dictated mainly by environmental concerns, require that at least 20% of tyre purchases by public fleets consist of retreaded tyres. In your experience, do you think that all local public transport fleets are complying with this regulation? And if not, what could be done to ensure compliance?

A number of public fleets use way more retreaded tyres than the minimum quota required by law. In fact, the quote for many urban public transport companies is over 50%. On the other hand, I believe that there are some cases where companies do not comply with these regulations. One possibility is to take legal action against them and enforce application of these laws. However, I believe that in this particular economic situation where public transportation fleet managers need to cut on costs and should realise that such behaviours are not only a serious infringement of the law, but also have a negative impact on the environment and on their finances.

- 4) **Purchase of retreaded tyres currently represents 30% of the total tyre purchases for private freight companies, while in other countries such as the United States, this quota is over 50%. What do you think needs to be done to encourage both private and public transportation companies to increase their purchases of retreaded tyres and reach the quotas of more virtuous foreign countries?**

That's true, the percentage of retreaded tyres bought in the United States as replacement for trucks is above 50% of total tyre purchases. And other countries are doing just as well. It may seem strange that the use of retreaded tyres is more widespread in countries with an advanced economy, but there are precise reasons for this. The main reason is that retreading is good for the environment as it postpones the need to dispose of the carcass and allows the recycling of a number of materials. These are very important issues for advanced economies, where environmental protection is one of the key concerns.

Our association has been developing communication campaigns and relationships with key institutions in order to promote a greater use of retreaded tyres throughout Italy, and our efforts have already paid off. I believe that the current economic crisis will lead to a greater interest for retreaded tyres in Italy. On the other hand, an important contribution towards this goal could be given by public incentives for transportation companies. Over the last few years, our association has been asking the government to support eco-friendly behaviours such as the use of retreaded tyres.

- 5) **Tyre retreading is also good for the environment and for the economy of our country. Based on the latest figures, how significant is its impact?**

Airp, the Italian Tyre Retreaders Association, writes a report every year to sum up the environmental and economic advantages of using retreaded tyres. The latest report indicates that in 2011 in Italy 114.1 million litres of oil and 32,597 tonnes of raw materials were saved thanks to tyre retreading. 33,062 tonnes of used tyres were recycled and the savings allowed by the use of retreaded tyres amounted to 297.2 million euro. Finally, once again thanks to tyre retreading, 40,200 tonnes of CO₂ were not released into the environment: in fact, retreading a tyre produces 30% less carbon monoxide than producing a brand new one.

- 6) **Italy has made an important contribution to the development of the tyre retreading industry: many retreading equipment manufacturers are in fact based in our country. What are the possible future developments for the exportation of machines and equipment for the retreading industry?**

Exports of retreading machines and equipment are likely to increase. First, because the worldwide demand for retreading equipment is driven in particular by the policies of advanced motorisation countries, which aim to reduce the environmental impact of motor vehicles and appreciate the savings ensured by retreading. Second, because countries experiencing a recent motorisation increase are developing their own networks of vehicle service providers, which include tyre retreaders. Finally, because Italian retreading equipment are known and appreciated worldwide for their top quality.



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Stefano Carloni, president of Airp (Italian Tyre Retreaders Association). If you would like to request high-resolution photos please call +39 51 271710 or email info@econometrica.it