

Ford talking to gov't about hybrids' fuel economy

December 14 2012, by Dee-Ann Durbin

Ford said Friday that it is talking to the government about the fuel economy of its hybrid cars after a report suggested they are falling short of targets.

Consumer Reports said last week that Ford's new C-Max hybrid didn't meet the published fuel economy of 47 miles per gallon (5 liters per 100 kilometers), averaging 38 mpg (6.2 liters per 100 kms) in the magazine's testing. Other hybrids—including the [Ford Fusion](#) and [Toyota Prius](#) V—have also fallen short in the magazine's tests.

Ford said it followed the [Environmental Protection Agency](#)'s guidelines when it set its [fuel economy standards](#). But the EPA's tests don't exactly mimic real-world driving, Ford's global vehicle development chief Raj Nair said.

For instance, Nair said driving a hybrid car 75 miles per hour (120 kms/hour), instead of 65 miles per hour (104 kms/hour), can cost the driver seven miles per gallon. Hot or [cold temperatures](#) can also affect the numbers.

Nair said Ford is talking to the EPA to see if the agency needs to change the way it tests hybrids.

Fuel economy dominated the conversation Friday as Ford introduced two new commercial vehicles that will go on sale late next year.

The Transit, which will eventually replace Ford's E-Series vans, will haul 300 pounds (136 kilograms) more than the current E-Series and has twice the volume. Ford will offer three engine choices and three roof heights.

The company also unveiled a smaller Transit Connect commercial vehicle, which is getting its first big makeover since it went on sale in Europe a decade ago.

The new Transit Connect can tow up to 2,000 pounds (907 kilograms) for the first time. It comes in short and long versions. Ford will also offer an optional EcoBoost engine in the Transit Connect that is expected to get more than 30 miles per gallon (7.8 liters per 100 kms).

Ford didn't release prices or final fuel economy numbers for the vans.

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