

INFINEUM PERSPECTIVE – Update #4

At the December 17, 2008 ILSAC/Oil meeting, there was significant discussion regarding the ILSAC GF-5 timeline. Ultimately, ILSAC/Oil agreed to move the timeline back by approximately three months, indicating that first allowable use for ILSAC GF-5 oils can occur no sooner than September 2010. The discussion, initiated by Oil side, focused on the Sequence VID matrix testing schedule to more accurately reflect the current status. Oil side explained that its main objective in a detailed review of the timeline was to ensure that all activities are listed and decision points understood (i.e. where an ASTM ballot is necessary) in order to avoid any further delays. ILSAC was emphatic in making certain that there was no unnecessary delay and challenged doing some steps concurrently versus sequentially. Oil side maintained its need for a six month demonstration period as well as the mandatory nine month API waiting period.

We feel strongly that

- Industry needs the full time allotted to do technology prove-out work
- Industry does not shorten the nine months allowed to complete program work
- All marketers are capable of launching products when ILSAC GF-5 becomes a live category

It is our view that the Sequence VID matrix testing and analysis are key activities. Considering that the last VID consortium meeting ran for 11 hours last August 2008 without a clear recommendation for PCEOCP, it is inevitable that the debate about stages to be included and weightings will resurface. Industry needs to make sure that it gets the VID test right so it is a reliable predictor of fuel economy performance.

Another matter that must be addressed is the restatement of Sequence VID proposed limits by ILSAC. The current proposed specification states the limits in terms of the Sequence VIB and was offered as a 'placeholder' while the VID was under development. In order for the Additive Companies to tackle the technology demonstration, they will need to understand the approximate limits to be met so that they can formulate an additive package balancing the robustness and fuel efficiency of the oil. The September 2010 first allowable use should be viewed as the most optimistic timing to launch ILSAC GF-5 oils. Infineum does not feel that any steps should be taken that will compromise the quality of the specification.

We are devoting significant resources to the development of ILSAC GF-5 quality oils and helping Industry complete this specification. Still, there are many tasks that must be finished, not counting the critical final development of the Sequence VID engine test. The final specification must be negotiated: There are still several new bench tests that need final development work and Industry surveillance panels are operating to ensure that all of the legacy engine tests do not have issues going into final ILSAC GF-5 deployment work. At the current time at least three of the four key engine tests have some issue that Industry is striving to resolve.

It is our conclusion that a September 2010 launch is possible, but 2009 will be a very busy year for all those involved in the activities for ILSAC GF-5 spec development.