TRADING STANDARDS

Fuel Quality Monitoring Programme

Test Results 2017–18

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

New Zealand Government

TRADING STANDARDS

ABOUT THIS REPORT

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ISSN: 2253-170x (Print)

ISSN: 2253-1718 (Online)

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Executive Summary

The Fuel Quality Monitoring Programme (**the Programme**) is administered by the Trading Standards which is an operational unit within the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

Trading Standards (**TS**) maintains a comprehensive programme of sampling and assessing the quality of retail fuel in New Zealand and monitoring its compliance with the specifications set out in the relevant Engine Fuel Specifications Regulations (**the Regulations**). Currently, the Regulations made in 2011 and amended on 2 October 2017, are in force[1].

The main focus of the Programme is to monitor the quality of the fuel sold by retail fuel companies nationwide. It employs a statistically-based sampling scheme to ensure an acceptable probability of detecting non-compliance is maintained. The Regulations specify limits on a number of properties for premium and regular petrol grades, diesel and biofuels such as biodiesel and ethanol.

A key element of the Programme is to sample and test the quality of fuels as they are sold to consumers, *i.e.* sampling is done from dispenser nozzles at the retail point of sale.

The sampling and testing programme is undertaken independent of the Fuel Industry and being focussed on retail sales, it complements the extensive sampling and testing that the Fuel Industry itself carries out at various stages during the manufacture and supply processes. This provides confidence to consumers and all stakeholders around the quality and composition of petrol, diesel and biofuels.

This report is intended to give an overview of the results of the Programme from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018. It is a technical report that provides useful information for fuel industry stakeholders and researchers. During this period retail fuel samples were collected and tested from 88 of the approximately 1,200 fuel service stations in New Zealand (including 66 routine sample sets).

Analysis of sampling and testing conducted during the period of this report has confirmed that on the whole, fuel sold in New Zealand was of good quality and compliant with specifications prescribed in the Regulations.

For further explanation or to comment on the reported results please contact the Ministry:

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1 http::://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2011/0352/latest/DLM4044701.html

Introduction

MBIE has national regulatory responsibility for a number of infrastructure areas that are fundamental to consumer safety, supporting consumer and business confidence and facilitating domestic and international trade.

TS is responsible for administering a number of these areas[2], including Fuel Quality Monitoring (FQM) which is focused on maintaining a programme to monitor and ensure the quality and compliance of New Zealand's retail fuel supply with the Regulations.

In the fuel quality monitoring area, activities include:

- Sampling, testing and analysing fuel quality including routine samples taken in accordance with a statistical sampling plan and samples taken as part of targeted projects or in response to complaints or emerging issues;
- Investigating consumer and trader complaints and responding to enquiries;
- Advising on and facilitating improvement of fuel industry 'best practice';
- Developing and conducting projects in response to emerging issues;
- Contributing to work on regular amendments and updates to the Regulations;
- Maintaining strong and effective relationships (as the lead regulator) with fuel company technical managers, fuel retailers, industry associations and stakeholders within NZ and internationally;
- Representing New Zealand on international standards committees relating to fuel quality.

These activities and the Programme are funded from a proportion of the *Petroleum or engine fuel monitoring levy* of 0.3 cents for each litre of petroleum or engine fuel that is supplied in accordance with the Energy (Petrol, Engine Fuel, and Gas) Levy Regulations 2017[3].

The main focus of the Programme is to sample and test the quality of fuels as they are sold to consumers in the retail market, *i.e.* sampling is done from dispenser nozzles at the point of sale. TS employs a statistically-based sampling scheme to ensure an acceptable probability of detecting non-compliance is upheld. The Regulations specify limits for a number of critical properties of premium and regular petrol grades, diesel and biofuels such as biodiesel and ethanol blends.

This report sets out the results of the Programme from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

The key principles and structure of the Programme remain the same as in previous years. References to legislation related to engine fuel quality may be found on the Ministry website or in previous FQM Programme annual reports for the period from 2008 to 2017.

Collection of fuel samples during this period was carried out under the direction of TS. The samples were then tested by Independent Petroleum Laboratory Ltd and the results subsequently analysed by TS.

Any non-compliance or abnormalities identified through testing were subject to analysis and follow-up investigation by TS. The focus of any investigation is to confirm the validity of the results, identify any potential issues and implement an appropriate and timely response if required. Attention is also given to ensuring the underlying cause of any non-compliance is understood and remedied to prevent recurrence.

The samples were collected from 11 designated regional areas nationwide (see following Table) serviced by specific fuel supply terminals. The samples were taken from various fuel service stations according to a plan based on a statistical model which takes into account each retail fuel company's market share in that area.

In total, 66 routine sample sets were collected according to the statistical model, from retail sites and each set included samples of regular and premium grade petrol and a sample of diesel. The number of samples collected and tested this year was lower compared to the previous year

2 http://www.tradingstandards.govt.nz
3 http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2017/ 0147/latest/whole.html#DLM7296607

however TS strives and complies with the international recommendations in the standard BS EN 14274[4] for minimum number of required samples.

Additional resources were also allocated to projects focused on investigating specific issues. In particular, a previous project that focused on dry vapour pressure in petrol was continued in response to detection of several non-compliant samples during previous years. Vapour pressure is measured as an important indicator of volatility of petrol which is critical to the operation of spark ignition engines with respect to both performance and emissions. The presence of ethanol or other oxygenates may affect these properties and, as a result, performance and emissions as well.

This report also covers the results of sampling and testing of fuel from the emerging market for biofuel. When non-retail sale products are utilised as components for retail market products TS monitors their quality too because they are categorised by the Regulations. Some biodiesel samples intended for non-retail sale were initially found to be suspect non-compliant before supply to customers (see section on Biofuels). None of the potentially non-compliant biofuels identified by sampling and testing entered the retail fuel supply chain and they were subject to remedial action by the producers. The suspect non-compliant properties are discussed in the biofuel section of this report.

A limited number of additional tests were added to the routine list of tests conducted. This included a test on appearance for diesel which is not specified in the Regulations. This testing was added to the routine list of diesel properties tested to assess the level and nature of potential presence of water and other contaminants.

A number of retail sites in New Zealand offer ethanol blended petrol with an ethanol content from 70 to 85% labelled as E85. This fuel is mainly used for motor vehicle racing. While fuel for motor racing is exempt from the Regulations there are flexible-fuel vehicles on roads in New Zealand which are able to use E85. The Regulations as amended in 2017, now include requirements for E85 therefore samples of the retailed E85 fuel were drawn and tested to verify compliance.

Alongside the routine sampling and testing of fuel, TS checks local wet stock management processes at the service stations forecourts looking at established practices otherwise known in the industry as 'housekeeping'. This relates to the maintaining of the underground storage tanks (UST), minimizing fuel contamination (e.g. from water ingress) and maximizing fuel system cleanliness.

Adopting reliable wet stock management systems and practices can reduce potential contamination of the fuel in storage tanks, prolong equipment life, and reduce corrosion and thereby the owner's operating expenses. TS plans to continue keeping this local site management focus in the coming year and work with the fuel supply companies to ensure that they maintain 'best practice' and follow proper procedures as specified in their

4 BS EN 14274:2013 BS 2000-508:2013 *Automotive fuels – Assessment of petrol and diesel quality – Fuel quality monitoring system (FQMS)*

quality management systems to ensure that quality and composition of fuel is maintained right throughout the supply chain.

An analysis of the Programme data from previous years with regard to estimating the proportion of non-compliance detected has allowed Trading Standards to estimate the likely proportion of potentially suspect non-compliant samples that would be found across the whole retail fuel sector.

A key assumption in this analysis was that the true proportion of suspect non-compliances can be taken as constant across terminals and brands. (Otherwise, the system would require to take into account specifically elevated risks, particular sources of possible non-compliance and/or unique circumstances which would distinct some areas as more prone to appear out of specification.) Taking this assumption into account it was concluded that no increase in the total number of routine samples is needed to retain an appropriate ongoing level of confidence. Regarding the lower frequency of testing some properties, it is a justifiable risk based approach to the testing requirements which means that for some fuel properties a smaller number of samples are tested. Based on many years of experience, it is implied that the actual risk to miss a non-compliant sample is very low.

The regional distribution of fuel 'sample sets' is shown in the table below:

The results of subsequent testing of these 'sample sets', have been reported in accordance to their relevant specification limits set out in the Regulations. Further, testing tolerance limits allow test results to fall slightly beyond the specified limits due to the unavoidable imperfection of each test method. The tolerance limits were derived according to the ISO Standard 4259[5] as described in previous annual test result reports.

Terminal/Month	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Whangarei	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	5
Auckland	4	3	2	2	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	19
Mt Maunganui	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
New Plymouth	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Napier	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Wellington	0	2	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	9
Nelson	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Lyttelton	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	11
Timaru	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3
Dunedin	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Bluff	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	9	8	7	7	7	6	6	2	0	4	5	5	66

Conclusion

The Programme has confirmed that throughout the year the retail fuel supplied in New Zealand was of good quality, fit for purpose and compliant with the performance and quality specifications prescribed in the Regulations.

In this report and as with previous reports, the anonymity of the source of the samples is maintained due to the commercial sensitivity of this information.

5 BS EN ISO 4259-2:2017, *Petroleum and related products – Precision of measurement methods and results. Part 2: Interpretation and application of precision data in relation to methods of test*

Petrol

Research Octane Number (RON) and Motor Octane Number (MON)

RON 91

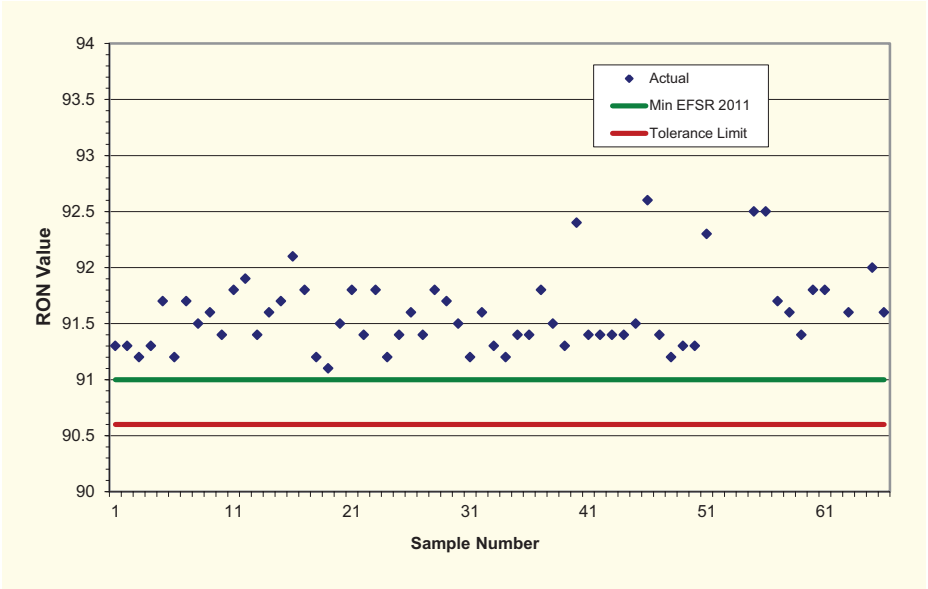
The test method ASTM D2699[6] is prescribed in the Regulations for definition of RON.

In total, 66 samples of regular petrol were collected and 61 of them tested for RON. Fig. 1a below shows the testing results for RON.

All samples were found to be above the minimum specification limit of 91.0 for RON.

Here and below:
The abbreviation 'EFSR' stands for the specification limit prescribed in the Regulations.

Figure 1a: Test Results for Petrol RON 91, Year 2017-18



6 ASTM D2699–18 *Standard Test Method for Research Octane Number of Spark-Ignition Engine Fuel*

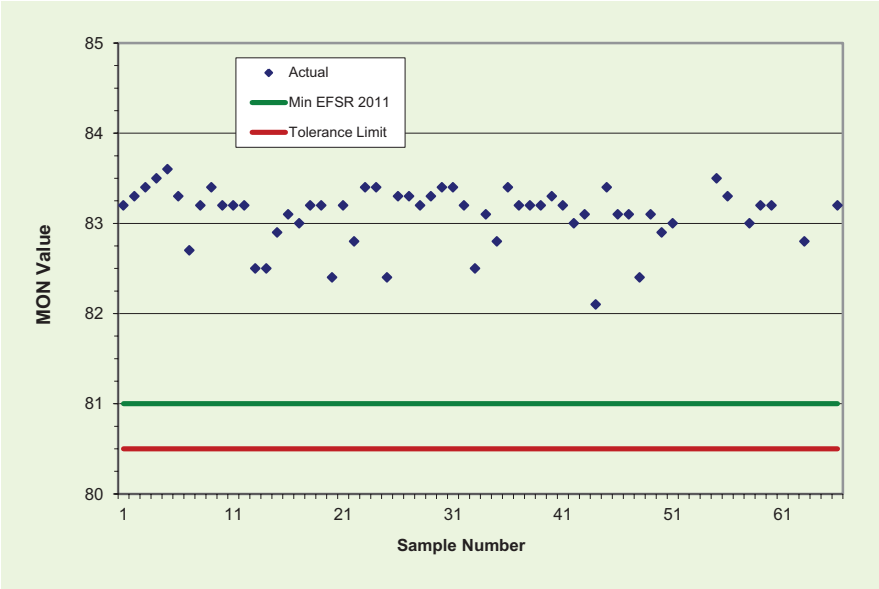
The test method ASTM D2700[7] is prescribed in the Regulations for definition of MON.

58 samples of regular petrol were tested for MON.

Fig. 1b below shows the testing results for MON.

All samples were found to be above the minimum specification limits of 81.0 for MON.

Figure 1b: Test Results for Regular Petrol MON, Year 2017-2018



RON 95

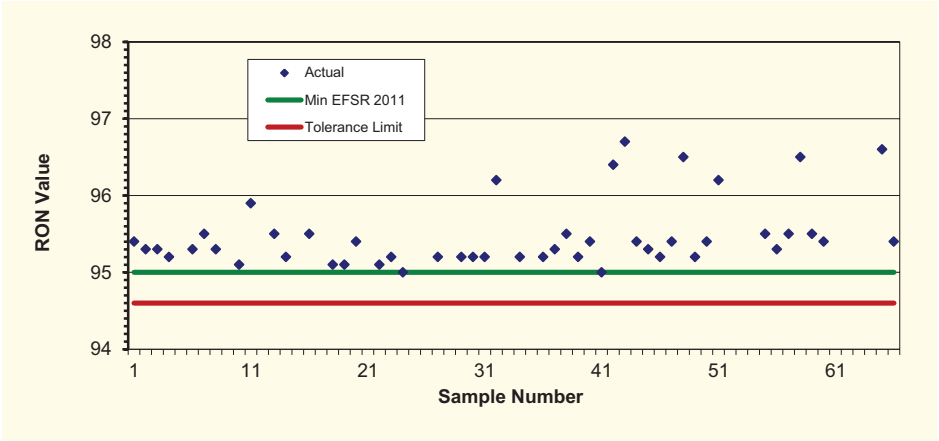
In total, 48 samples of premium grade petrol were tested for RON 95.

All samples were found to be above or on the minimum specification limit of 95.0 for RON. Samples 24 and 41 were found to be on the specification limit.

47 samples of premium grade petrol with RON 95 were tested for MON. All samples were found to have MON above the minimum specification limit of 85.0 for premium petrol.

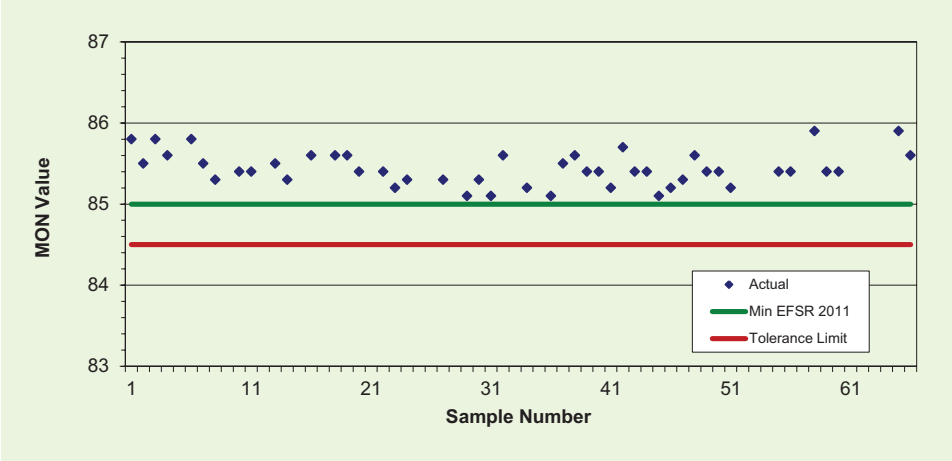
Fig. 2a and Fig. 2b below show the testing results for RON and MON respectively.

Figure 2a: Test Results for Petrol RON 95, Year 2017-2018



7 ASTM D2700-18 *Standard Test Method for Motor Octane Number of Spark-Ignition Engine Fuel*

Figure 2b: Test Results for MON, Premium Petrol RON 95, Year 2017-2018



RON 98

No minimum value is specified in the Regulations for premium petrol with RON 98. This fuel is advertised as having properties that are superior or in addition to the regulated limits. In particular, with an "advertised RON 98 minimum" which is referred to in Fig. 3a, it must conform, according to Section 11 of the Regulations, to those advertised properties when tested using the test methods specified in Schedule 1 in the Regulations.

This advertised limit is also enforceable under the provisions of the Fair Trading Act 1986 in relation to possible mis-description. On that basis it is also deemed that the actual figures of RON must not be lower than 98.

For premium petrol with RON 98, a minimum limit for MON is neither specified in the Regulations nor advertised. In the absence of a specified minimum limit for MON the limit for premium petrol has been used as a benchmark.

In total, 13 samples of petrol with advertised RON 98 were collected and tested. Fig. 3a below shows the testing results for RON.

All samples with the advertised RON of 98 were found to be above the advertised minimum limit.

No minimum MON is specified for premium petrol with RON 98. All samples were found to have MON above the specification limit of 85.0 for premium petrol. Fig. 3b below shows the testing results for MON.

Figure 3a: Test Results for Petrol RON 98, Year 2017-2018

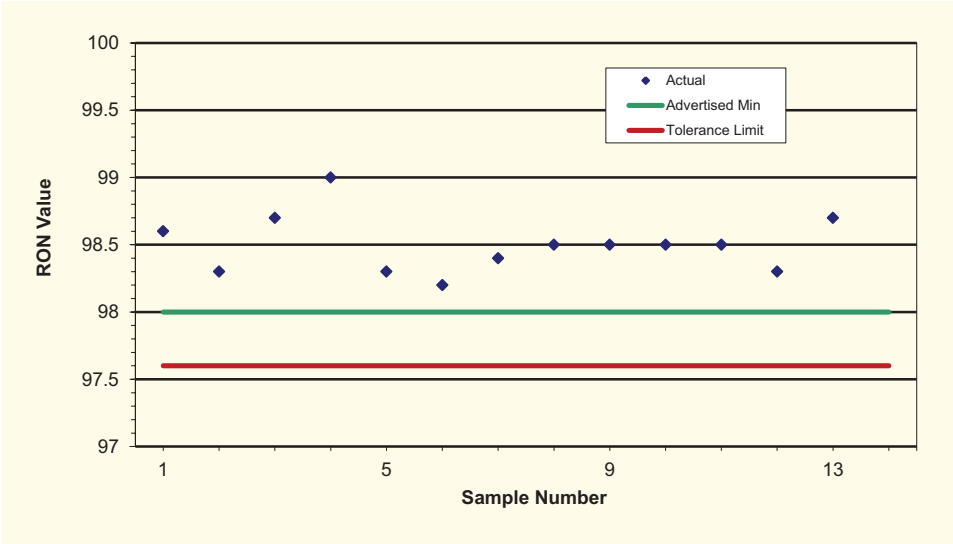
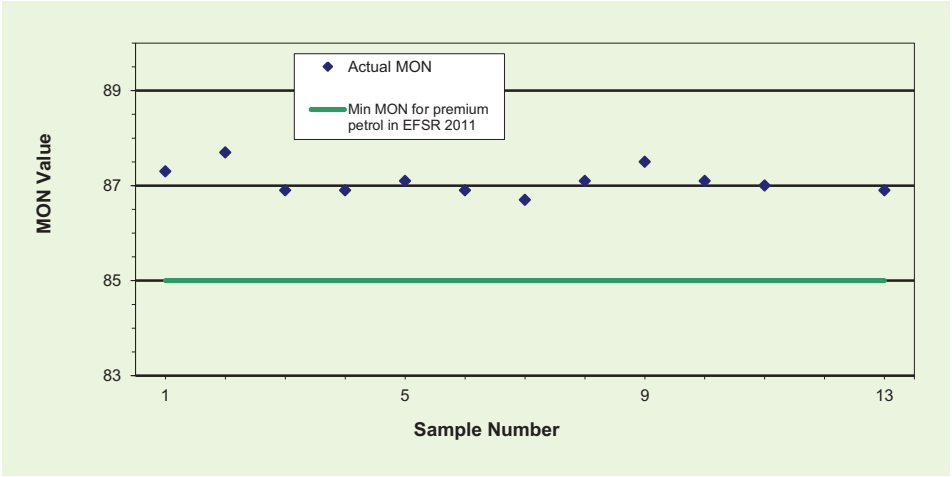


Figure 3b: Test Results for MON, Premium Petrol RON 98, Year 2017-2018



Evaporation Percentage

The test method ASTM D86[8] is prescribed in the Regulations for definition of the volume percentage of evaporated petrol at the three fixed temperatures: at 70°C, 100°C and 150°C. Respectively, there are three categories for evaporation percentage limits in the Regulations: E70, E100 and E150. These categories are analysed below separately for regular petrol (RON 91) and for premium petrol (RON 98 data is included with RON 95 data).

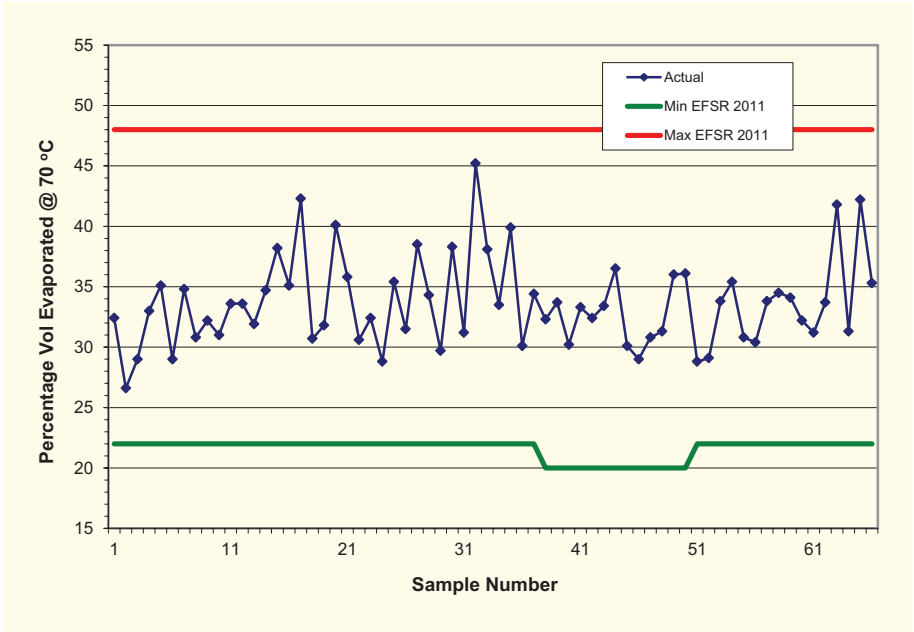
RON 91

Percentage Volume Evaporated at 70°C

For petrol not containing ethanol, the minimum specification limit is 22% (a minimum of 20% E70 permitted for the summer season – see Footnote 1 in Schedule 1, the Regulations) and maximum specification limit is 48% while the relevant minimum tolerance limits are 20.5% (18.5% in summer) and 49.2% respectively.

All 66 samples were found to be within the prescribed specification limits above the minimum limit of 22% at all seasons including the summer period when the specified minimum limit for E70 is permitted to be 20% (see Fig. 4a).

Figure 4a: Test Results for E70, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



Here and below:
Each individual result is independent from others although they are connected in the graphs for the ease of interpretation.

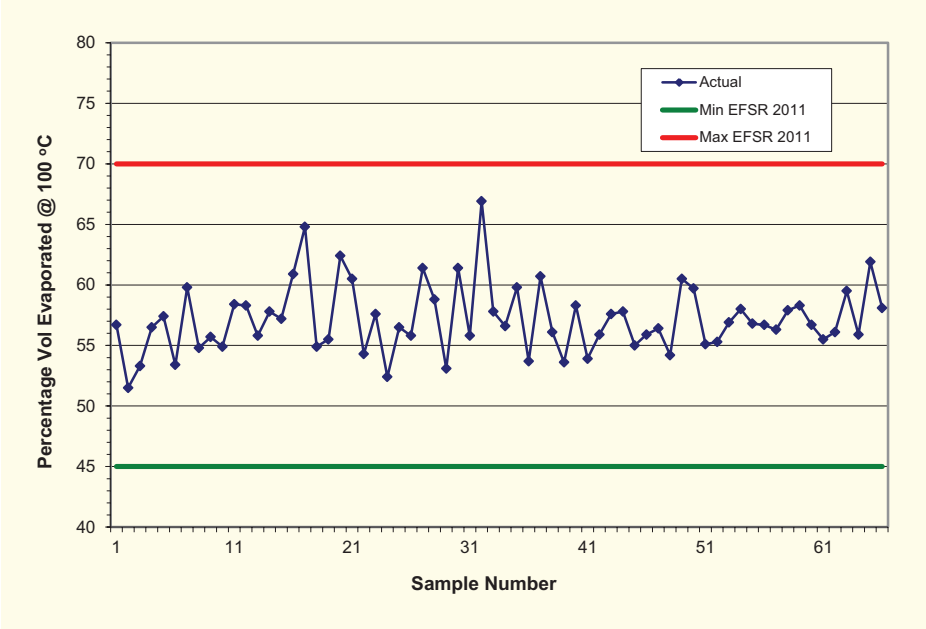
8 ASTM D86-17 *Standard Test Method for Distillation of Petroleum Products at Atmospheric Pressure*

Percentage Volume Evaporated at 100°C

All samples were found to be well within the specification limits from 45% to 70%.

The minimum tolerance limit is 43.8% and maximum tolerance limit is 70.9% (not shown in Fig. 4b).

Figure 4b: Test Results for E100, RON 91, Year 2017-2018

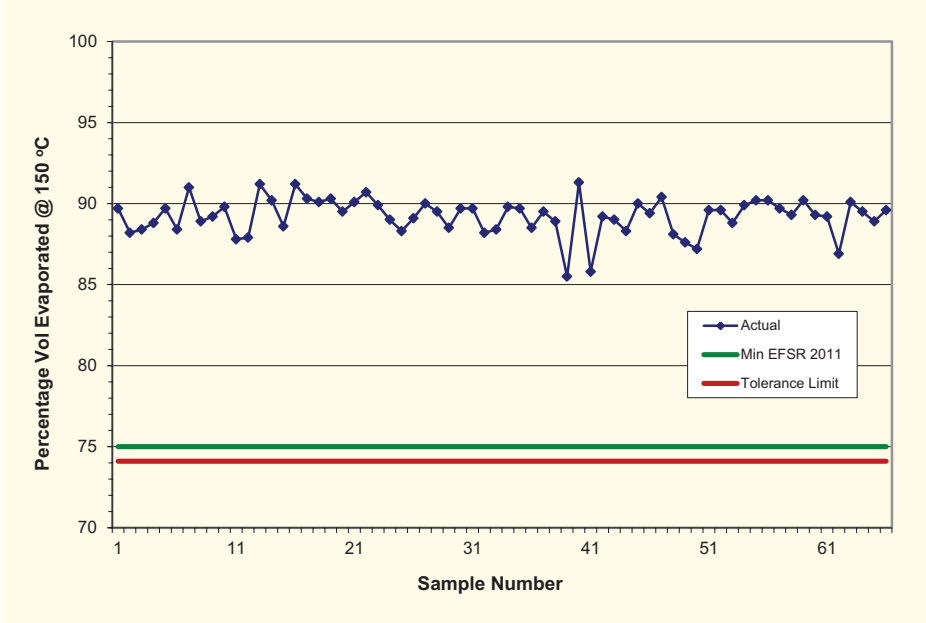


Percentage Volume Evaporated at 150°C

All samples were found to be well above the minimum specification limit of 75%. The minimum tolerance limit is 74.1%.

No maximum is prescribed by the Regulations for this property.

Figure 4c: Test Results for E150, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



RON 95 & 98

Percentage Volume Evaporated at 70°C

For premium petrol not containing ethanol, as in case of regular petrol, the minimum specification limit is 22% (a minimum of 20% E70 permitted for the summer season – see Footnote 1 in Schedule 1, the Regulations) and maximum specification limit is 48% while the minimum tolerance limit is 20.5% (18.5% in summer) and maximum tolerance limit is 49.2%.

The majority of results were found to be within the specification limits of 22% to 48% with the exception of a number of ethanol blended samples. According to the Regulations (Footnote 2 in Schedule 1), the maximum allowed percentage of volume evaporation at 70°C (E70) is increased by 1% per each 1% volume of ethanol in the blend.

All E70 results for premium petrol samples with ethanol, are set out in a Table 1 below.

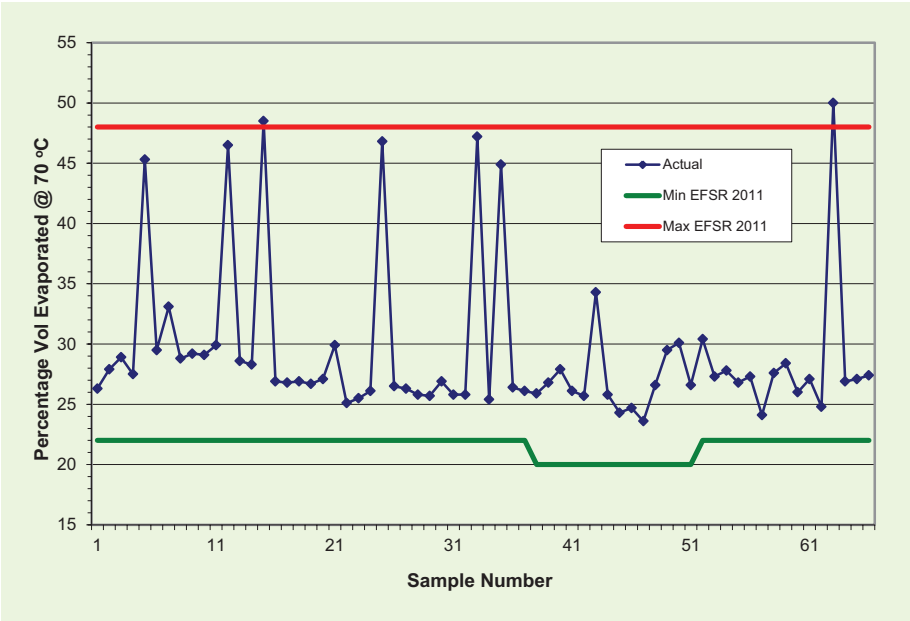
As in the case with regular petrol (see above), all samples were found to be within the prescribed specification limits with the minimum limit of 22% at all seasons including the summer period when the specified minimum limit for E70 is permitted to be 20%.

The maximum specification limit for Samples 15 and 63 is 58% (see Table 1 below) so the results are within the specification.

Table 1:

Sample	Ethanol Content,% Vol	Maximum E70 allowed,% Vol	E70 actual, % Vol
6	9.58	58	45.3
12	*Not tested*	–	46.5
15	9.50	58	48.5
25	9.43	57	46.8
33	9.31	57	47.2
35	9.39	57	44.9
63	9.60	58	50.0

Figure 5a: Test Results for E70, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018

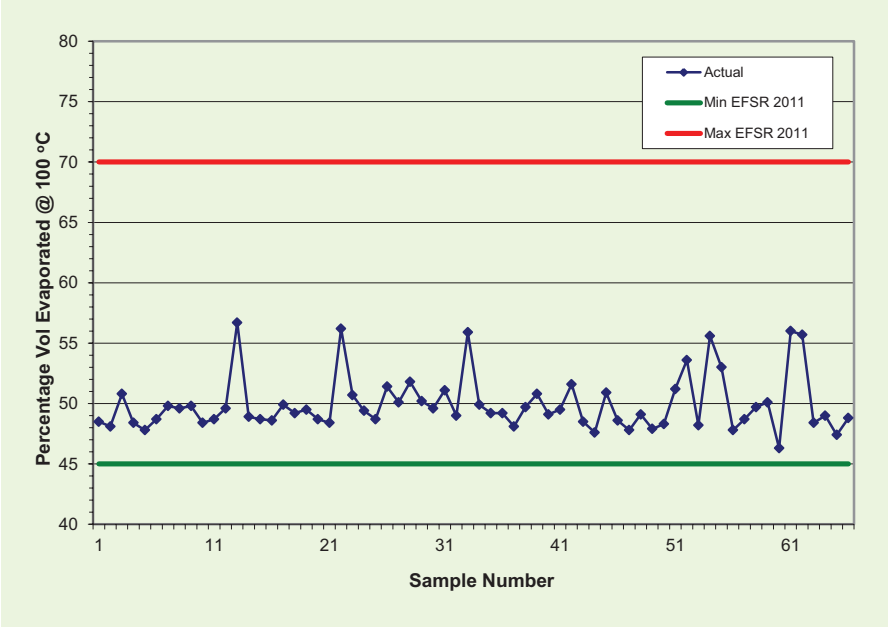


Percentage Volume Evaporated at 100°C

All samples were found to be within the specification limits from the minimum of 45% to the maximum of 70%. Sample 60 was found to be the lowest, 46.3%.

As in case of regular petrol, the tolerance limits are 43.8% and 70.9% respectively.

Figure 5b: Test Results for E100, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018

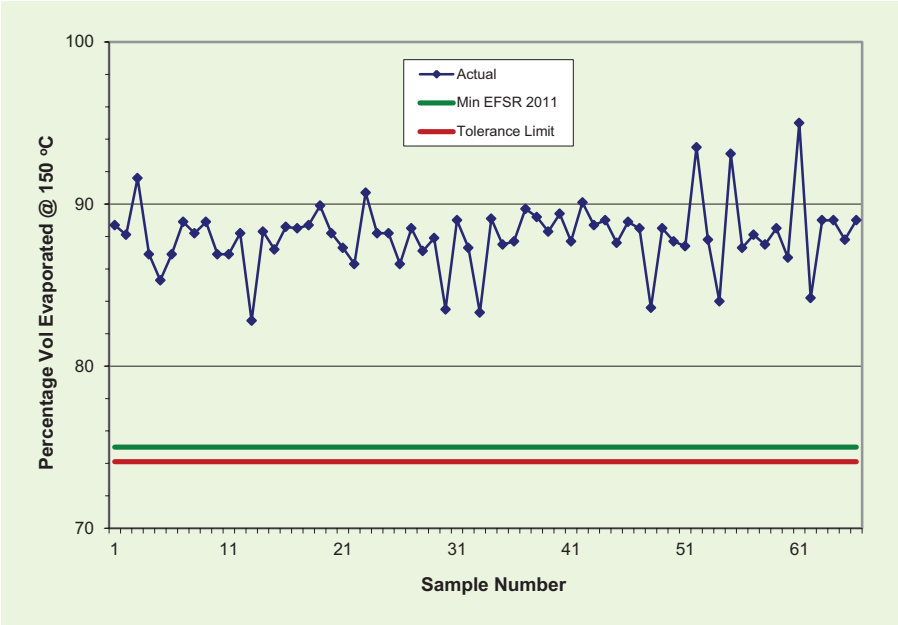


Percentage Volume Evaporated at 150°C

All samples were found to be well above the minimum specification limit of 75%. As in case of regular petrol, the minimum tolerance limit is 74.1%.

No maximum is prescribed by the Regulations for this parameter. All samples were found to be well above 80% (Fig. 5c).

Figure 5c: Test Results for E150, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



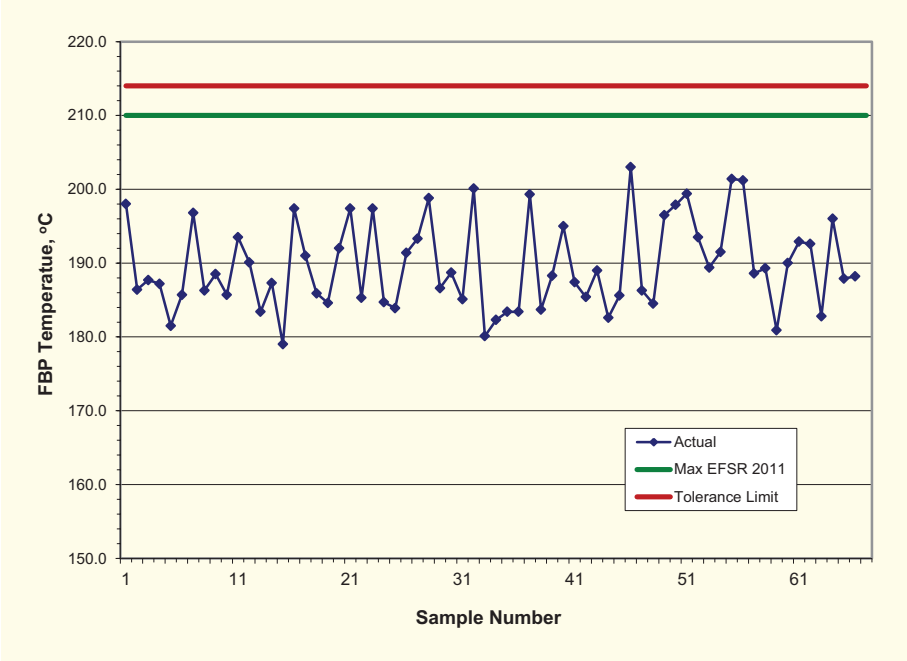
Final Boiling Point (FBP)

The test method ASTM D86[9] is prescribed in the Regulations for distillation end point (or 'final boiling point') in petrol.

All samples were found to be within the specification maximum limit of 210°C for both regular and premium grades (Fig.6). The tolerance limit is 214°C.

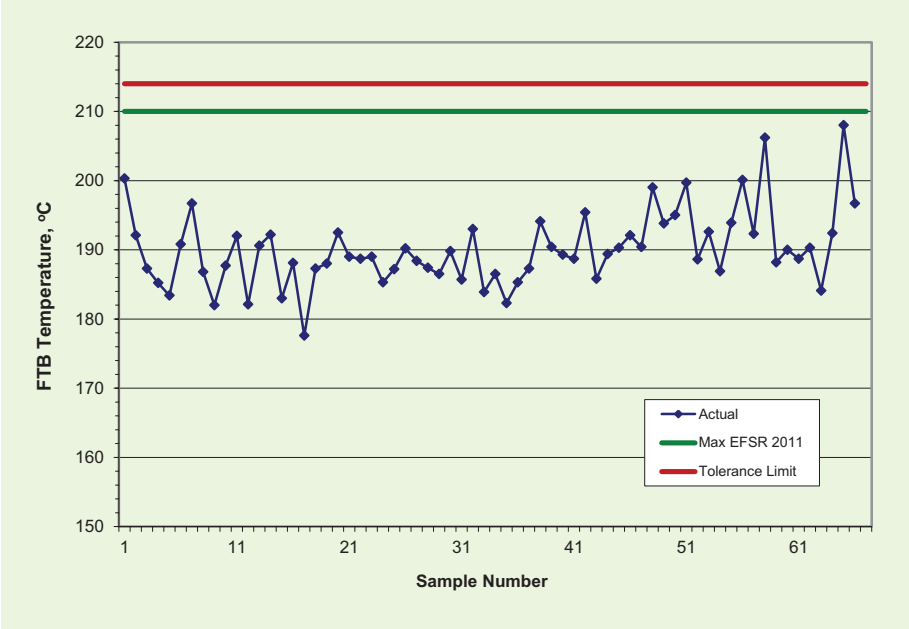
The largest figure for final boiling point was found to not exceed 203°C .

Figure 6a: Test Results for Final Boiling Point, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



The largest figure for final boiling point for premium petrol was found to be 208°C.

Figure 6b: Test Results for Final Boiling Point, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



9 ASTM D86-17 *Standard Test Method for Distillation of Petroleum Products at Atmospheric Pressure*

Residue

All samples were found to be well within the limits for both regular and premium grades (Fig. 7).

Distillation residue, according to the standard ASTM D86[10] is usually expected to be in a certain range and serves primarily for indication of the viability of the distillation process. So this is one of the process control parameters and on these grounds residue, understandably, does not have values of repeatability and reproducibility that would be listed in the Standard. Therefore no tolerance limit for residue could be defined due to the absence of data for the reproducibility of this parameter in ASTM D86. Fortunately, residue content was found to be well below the specified maximum limit of 2% volume. The highest figures for residue of 1.2% were found for Sample 49 and 50 of regular petrol. All other results for both regular and premium petrol were found to be not higher than 1.2%.

Figure 7a: Test Results for Residue, RON 91, Year 2017-2018

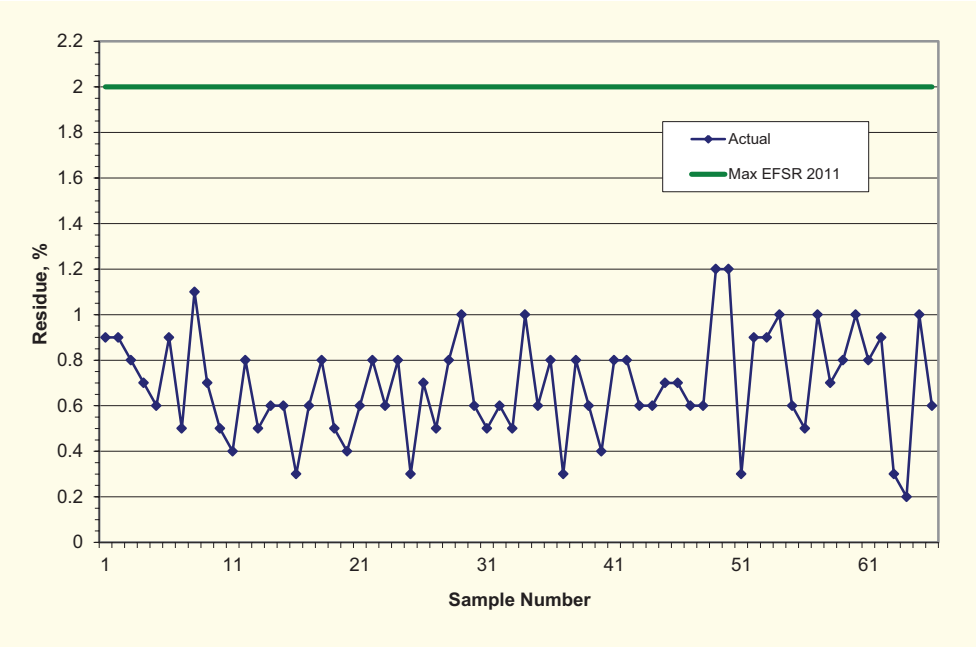
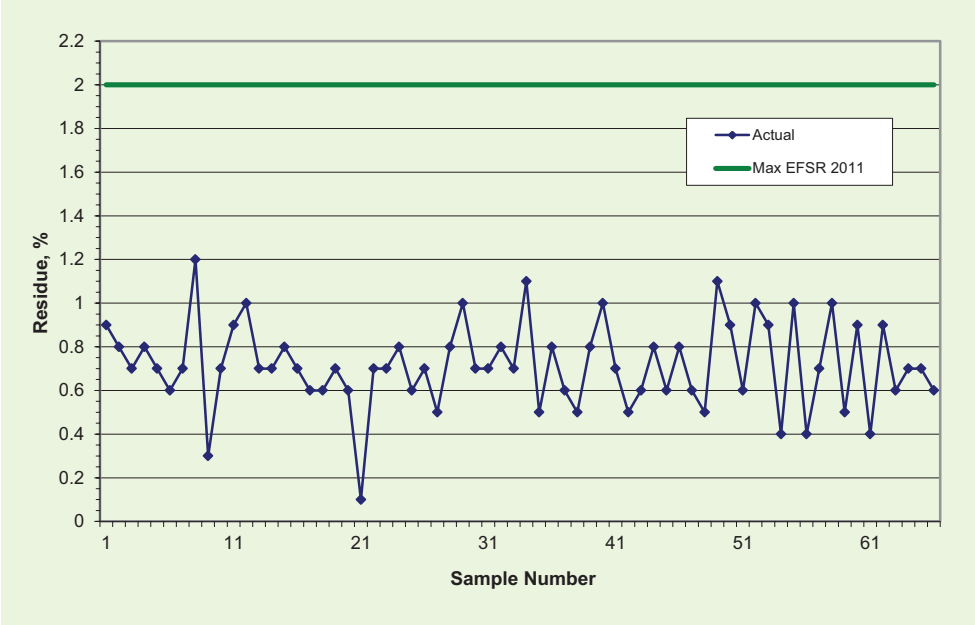


Figure 7b: Test Results for Residue, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



10 ASTM D86-17 *Standard Test Method for Distillation of Petroleum Products at Atmospheric Pressure*

Dry Vapour Pressure Equivalent

The test method ASTM D5191[11] is prescribed in the Regulations for vapour pressure in petrol.

All samples tested for Dry Vapour Pressure Equivalent (DVPE) were found to be above the prescribed minimum limit of 45 kPa.

The vapour pressure must be tightly controlled at high temperatures to reduce the possibility of hot fuel handling problems, such as vapour lock or excessive evaporative emissions. Vapour lock is a problem that may occur when the liquid fuel converts into gas while still in the car fuel system. This could disrupt the operation of the fuel pump, causing loss of feed pressure and may result in loss of power or complete stalling. At lower temperatures, a sufficiently high vapour pressure is needed to allow ease of starting and good warm-up performance. Therefore, both minimum and maximum vapour pressures are specified.

The cumulative results for the maximum limit are presented below in a simplified way by combining the lowest prescribed maximum limits for all seasons in one graph. Generally, if results were below the lowest maximum limit established for an area then they definitely complied with the Regulations in all other areas.

For the period of summer in Schedule 1 (season definitions in Section 5, the Regulations) from 1 December to 31 March inclusive, the lowest maximum limit of pressure 65 kPa is prescribed for Auckland and Northland. This is shown on the Fig. 8 by a minimum dip.

The lines before and after the dip, are the next lowest maximum, 80 kPa, which is prescribed for the North Island, for the autumn and spring seasons, respectively, from 1 April to 31 May inclusive and from 1 September to 30 November inclusive.

The maximum limits prescribed for winter in the North Island from 1 June to 31 August inclusive, are equal to the 90 kPa level which is shown in the graph by two top lines. The maximum limit for winter in the South Island is 95 kPa (not shown).

Each sample within the relevant season which appeared to be above the lowest maximum limit line was individually analysed.

Tolerance limits related to the maximum specification limits are not shown since they are only approx. 2% above each relevant limit.

RON 91

In some periods, a number of samples were initially found to be above the lowest maximum at the time. However, all they were subsequently found to be within the specification limits for their region and season.

Sample 35 was found to be on the limit of 80.0 kPa for spring season in the rest of North Island.

Samples 39 and 42 were found to be 67.4 kPa and 66.0 kPa within the maximum limit of 75 kPa for summer in South Island while sample 41 was found to be 67.7 kPa in the rest of North Island within the maximum limit of 70 kPa for summer.

RON 95 & 98

All samples were found to be within the specification limits for premium petrol (Fig. 8b). However, as in case with regular petrol, in the summer period, some samples were initially found to be above the lowest maximum at the time, *i.e.* they were found to be compliant due to their regional maxima.

There were five samples found to be above the lowest maximum in the summer period.

Samples: 39, 40, and 41, which were found to be in the range from 66.7 kPa to 70.9 kPa, were well within the maximum limit of 75 kPa for summer in South Island.

Finally, two other samples, 42, and 43, which were found to be, respectively, 67.1, and 69.1 kPa, were within the seasonal maximum limit of 70 kPa for summer in the rest of North Island.

11 ASTM D5191-15 *Standard Test Method for Vapor Pressure of Petroleum Products (Mini Method)*

Figure 8a: Test Results for DVPE, RON 91, Year 2017-2018

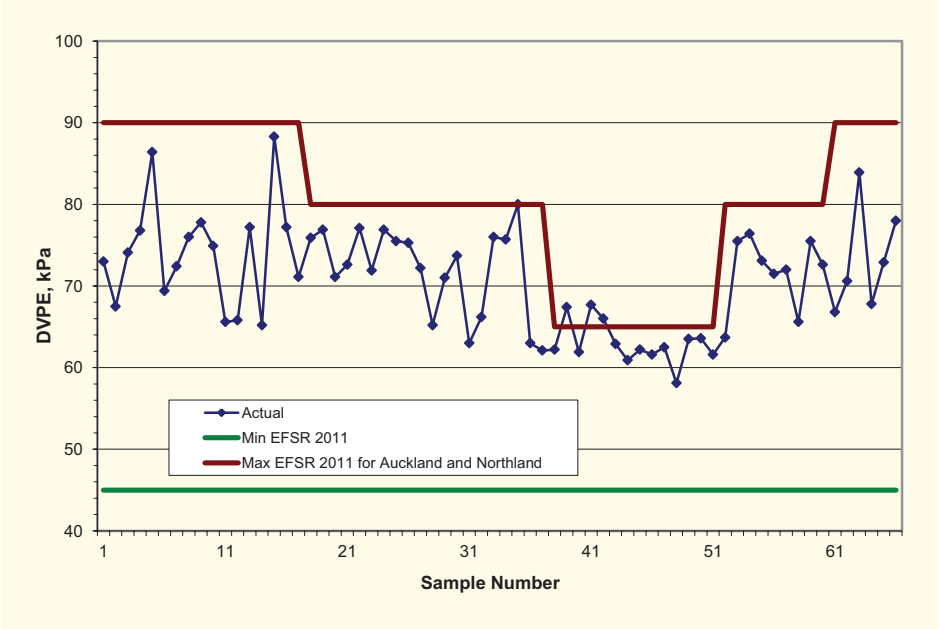
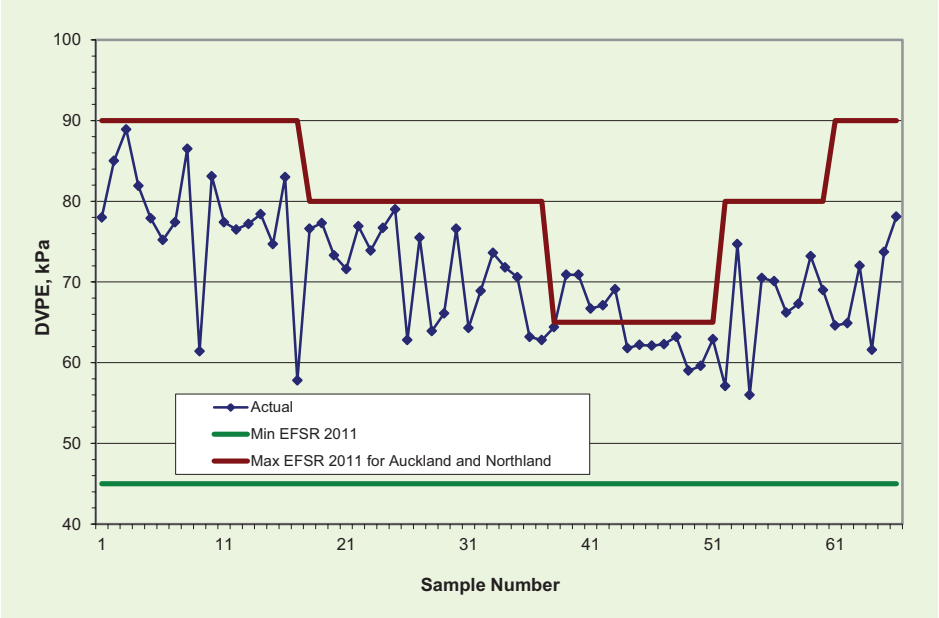


Figure 8b: Test Results for DVPE, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



Flexible Volatility Index

The Flexible Volatility Index (FVI) is a derived parameter which is calculated from the measured value of DVPE and the value of E70 (see above), as

FVI = DVPE + (0.7 x E70)

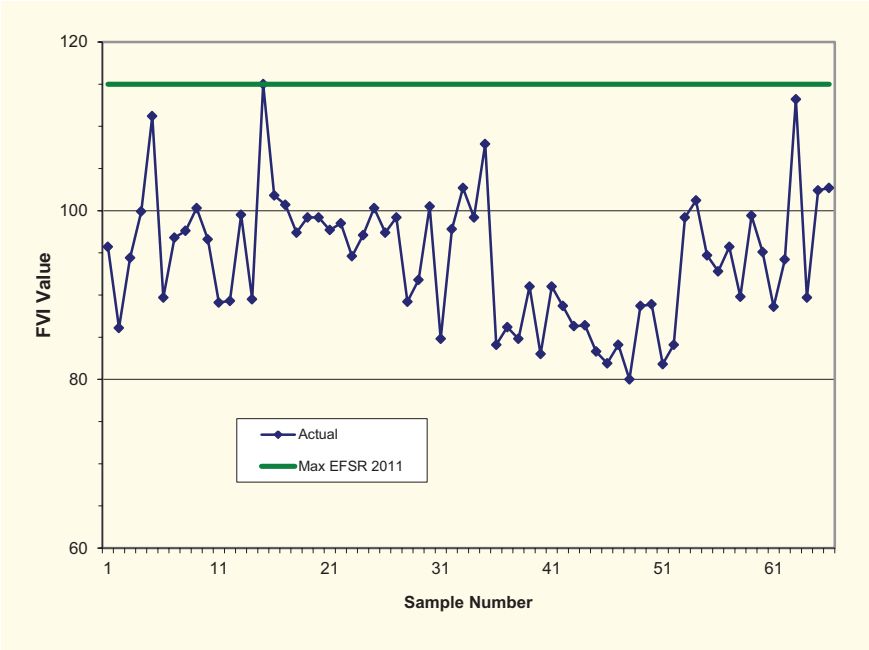
FVI serves as an indicator of the hot running performance (the tendency for vapour lock). No definition of the FVI value is given in the related ASTM Standards prescribed in the Regulations (D86 and D5191[12]) and as a consequence no reproducibility value is identified. As a result of this the FVI serves only as a helpful indicator but cannot be used in a strict compliance analysis.

RON 91

All samples except one were found to be within the specification maximum limit of 115.0.

Sample 15 was found to be on the specification maximum limit.

Figure 8c: Results for Flex. Vol. Index, RON 91, Year 2017-2018

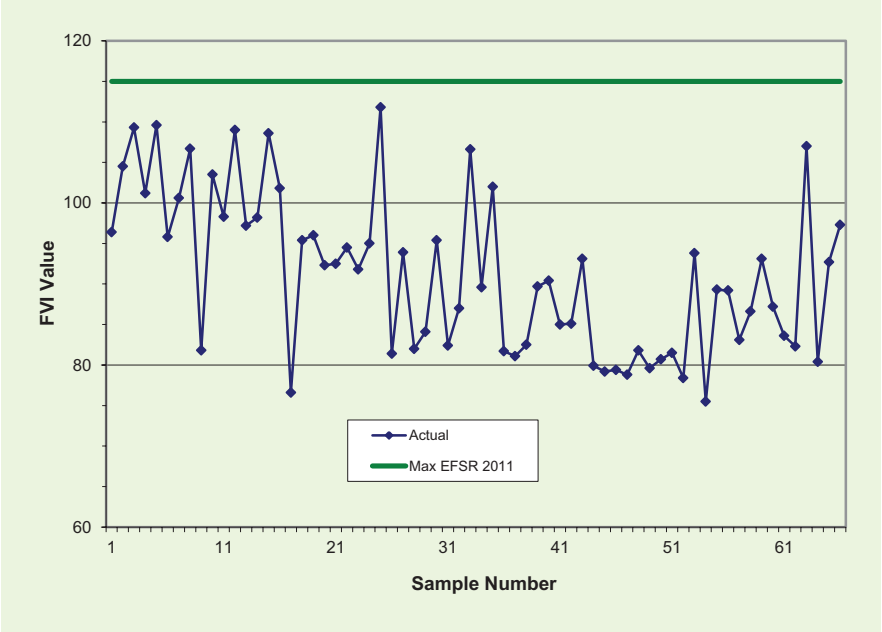


12 ASTM D5191-15 *Standard Test Method for Vapor Pressure of Petroleum Products (Mini Method)*

RON 95 & 98

All samples were found to be within the prescribed maximum limit of 115.0.

Figure 8d: Results for Flex. Vol. Index, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



Sulphur

Sulphur naturally occurs in crude oil. If the sulphur is not removed during the refining process it will remain in the vehicle fuel. Cross-contamination also can occur in the fuel distribution system. Sulphur has a significant impact on vehicle emissions by reducing the efficiency of catalysts. Sulphur also adversely affects heated exhaust gas oxygen sensors. Reductions in sulphur will provide immediate reductions of emissions from all catalyst-equipped vehicles on the road.[13] Usually, it is in the form of a compound (compare to active sulphur below on p.42).

The scope of the test method IP 497[14] prescribed in the Regulations is from 5 to 60 mg/kg. Accordingly, the lowest testing result by this method is 5 mg/kg where the actual figures were found to be on or below this indicative level at the specified maximum limit of 50 mg/kg until 30 June 2018, with the tolerance limit of 11.8 mg/kg.

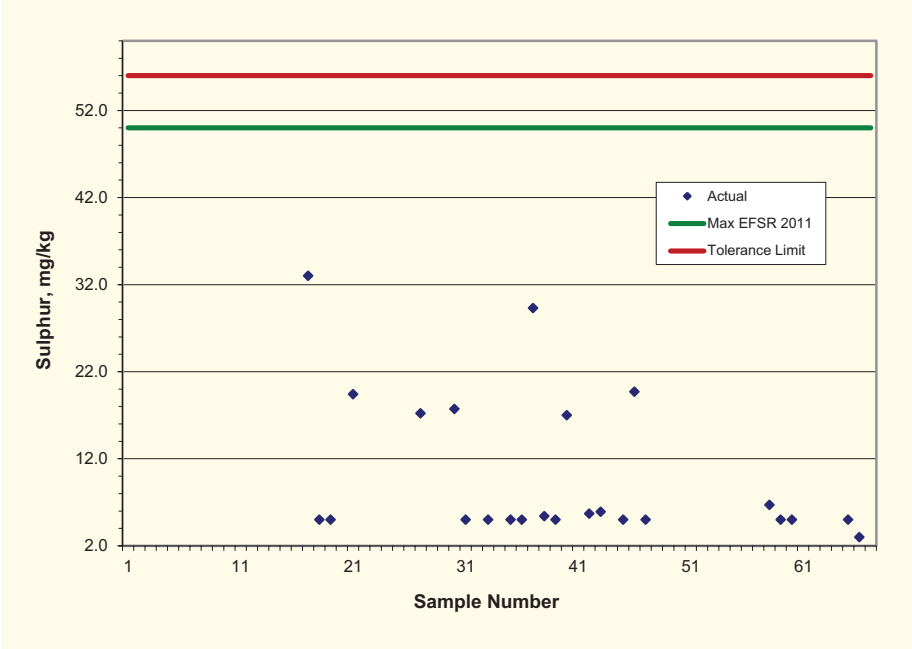
The ASTM standard D5453[15] which is also prescribed in the Regulations along the IP 497, gives results down to 1.0 mg/kg with the tolerance limit of 11.9 mg/kg.

13 *Worldwide Fuel Charter,* 5th Ed., 2013, p.17.
14 IP497 EN ISO 20884:2011 *Petroleum products - Determination of sulfur content of automotive fuels. Wavelength-dispersive X-ray fluorescence spectrometry*
15 ASTM D5453–16e1 *Standard Test Method for Determination of Total Sulfur in Light Hydrocarbons, Spark Ignition Engine Fuel, Diesel Engine Fuel, and Engine Oil by Ultraviolet Fluorescence*

RON 91

All 24 samples tested for sulphur for regular petrol were found to be well within the prescribed maximum limit. Sample 17 was found to be the largest with the figure of 33 mg/kg.

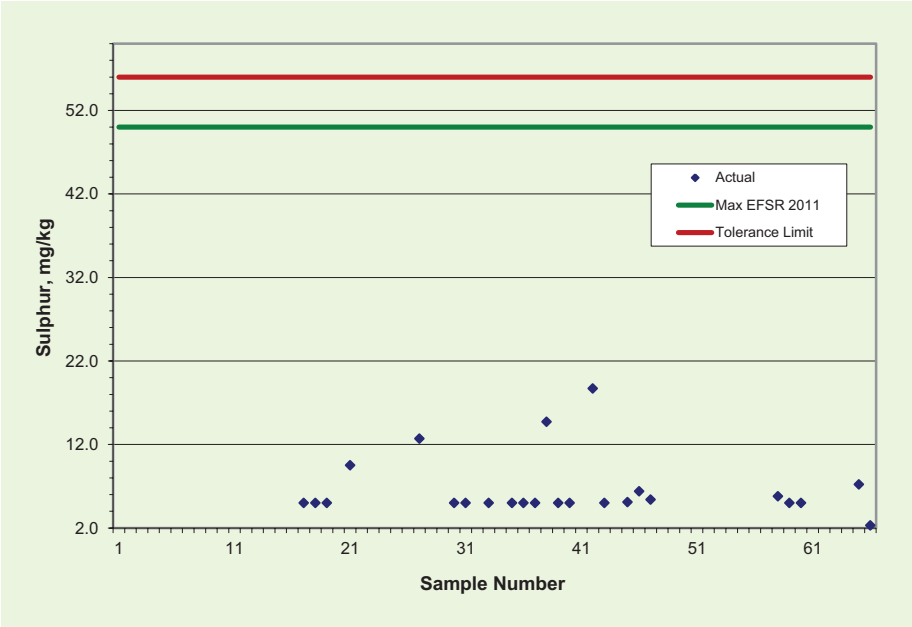
Figure 9a: Test Results for Sulphur, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



RON 95 & 98

All 24 results for premium petrol were found to be well within the prescribed maximum limit of 50 mg/kg, actually not exceeding 30 mg/kg.

Figure 9b: Test Results for Sulphur, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



Benzene and Total Aromatics

The test method ASTM D5580[16] is prescribed in the Regulations for aromatic compounds including benzene.

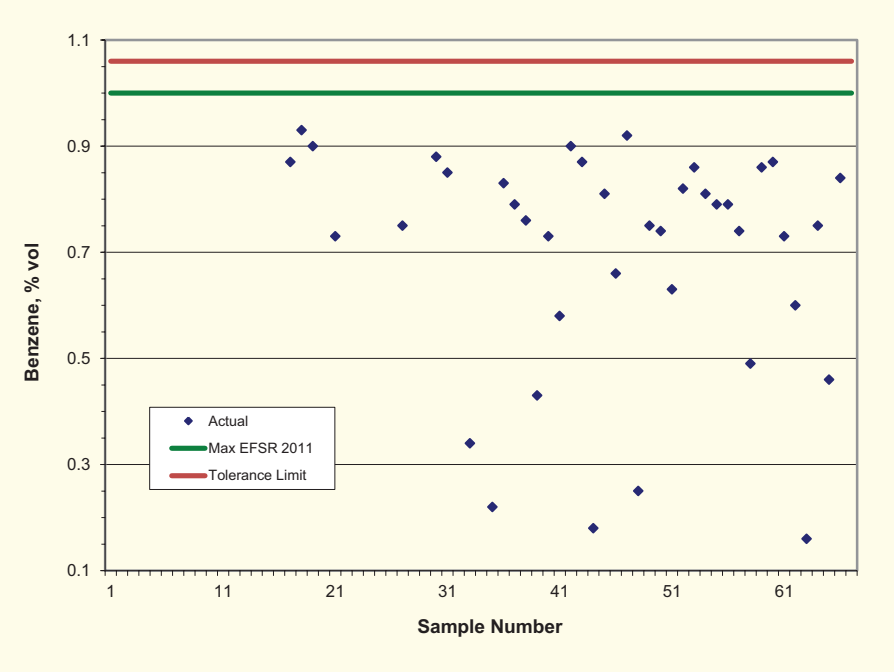
All samples were found to be within the prescribed maximum limits, for both benzene (maximum 1% vol) and total aromatic compounds (45% vol maximum cap) for regular as well as premium grade of petrol with the tolerance limits, respectively, of 1.06% for benzene and of 46.03% for the maximum cap in total aromatics.

RON 91

All 40 results tested for benzene content in regular petrol were found to be below 0.95% with the largest figure of 0.93% for Sample 18 (Fig.10a).

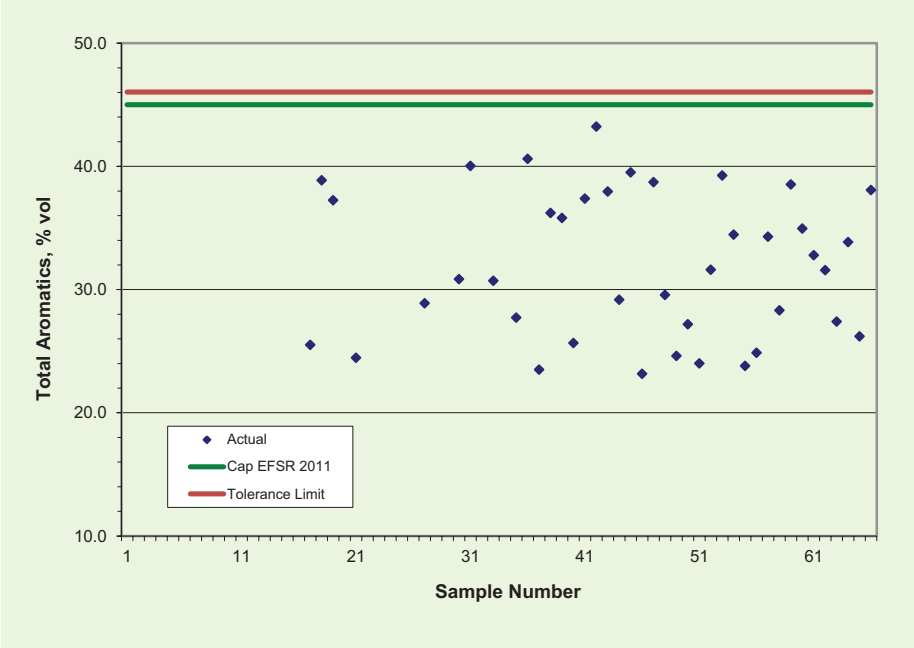
All 40 results except one on total aromatics were found to be below 41%. Sample 42 was found to be the largest with a figure of 43.23% (Fig. 10b).

Figure 10a: Test Results for Benzene, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



16 ASTM D5580-15 *Standard Test Method for Determination of Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, p/m-Xylene, o-Xylene, C9 and Heavier Aromatics, and Total Aromatics in Finished Gasoline by Gas Chromatography*

Figure 10b: Test Results for Total Aromatics, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



RON 95 & 98

All 40 samples of premium petrol tested for benzene were found to be within the prescribed maximum limit for benzene with the largest result for sample 50 which was found to be 0.86%.

For premium petrol, all 40 results on total aromatics were found to be within the maximum limit of 45% with the largest result of 44.63% for Sample 40 (Fig. 10d).

Figure 10c: Test Results for Benzene, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018

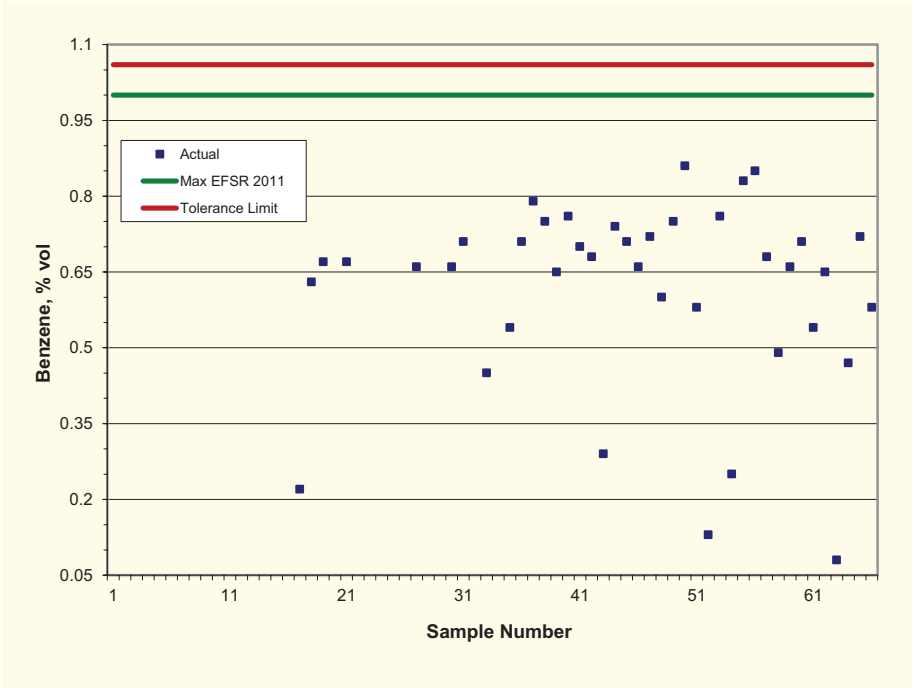
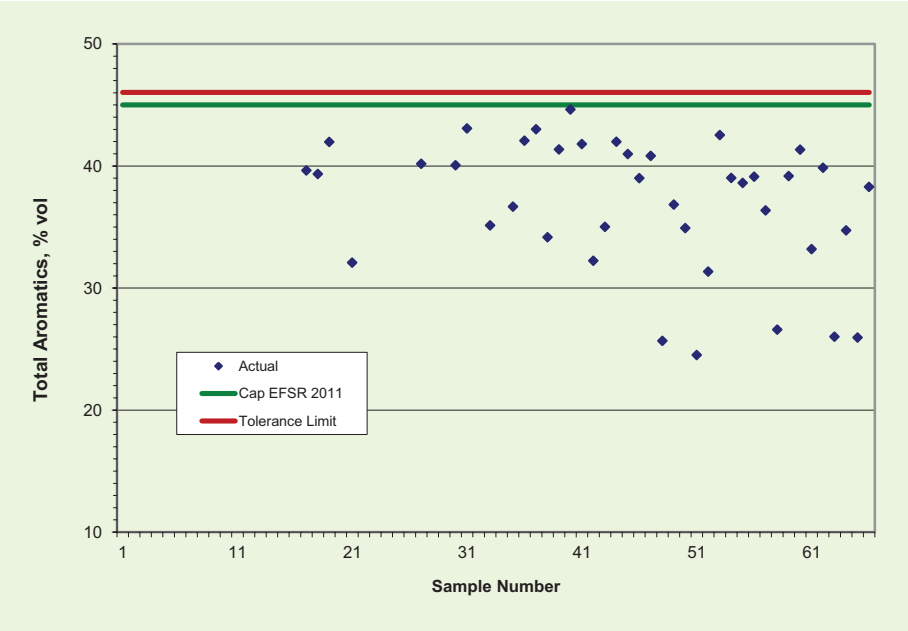


Figure 10d: Test Results for Total Aromatics, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



According to Section 19 of the Regulations, actual amounts of petrol which were produced or imported, must be considered in order to calculate the 'pool average' figures for the total aromatic compounds for each calendar month. The pool average specification for total aromatics is 42% vol maximum.

Data on 'pool average' was collected from four fuel retail companies which import petrol and from The New Zealand Refining Company Ltd for the one year period ending on 30 June 2018. The actual results were found to be within the required limits. Due to the commercial sensitivity of the calculation process, the actual results were not included in this report.

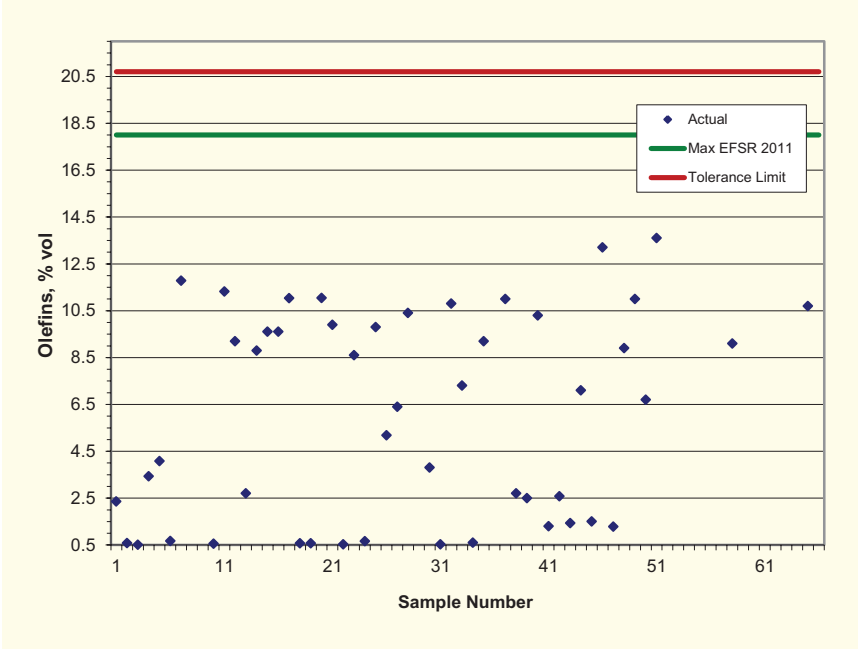
Olefins

The test method ASTM D1319[17] is prescribed in the Regulations for olefins content. All tested samples were found to be within the specification maximum limit of 18% vol with the tolerance limit of 20.7%.

RON 91

For RON 91, all 53 results were found to be below 14% (Fig. 11a) with the largest result of 13.6% for sample 51.

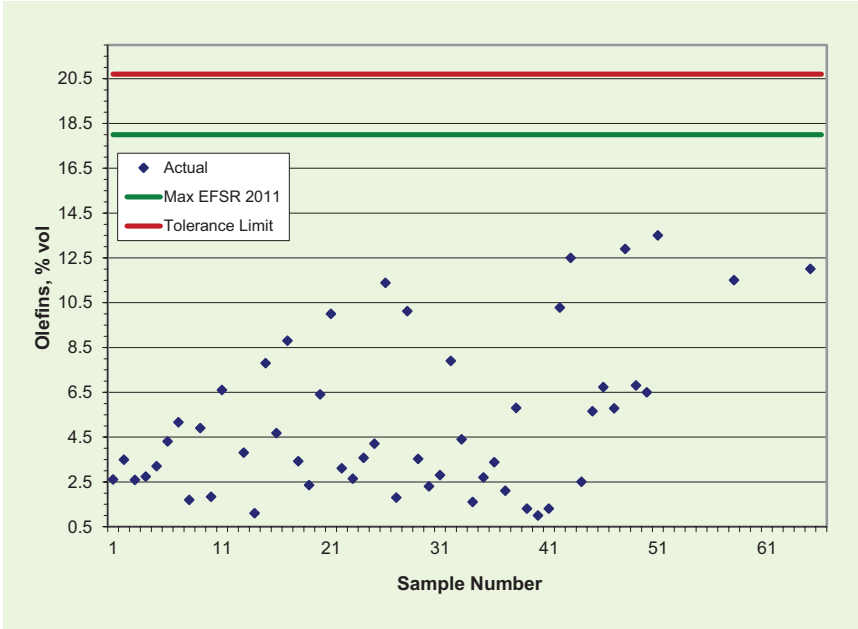
Figure 11a: Test Results for Olefins, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



RON 95 & 98

For premium petrol, all 53 results were also found to be below 14% (Fig. 11b) with the largest result of 13.5% also for sample 51.

Figure 11b: Test Results for Olefins, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



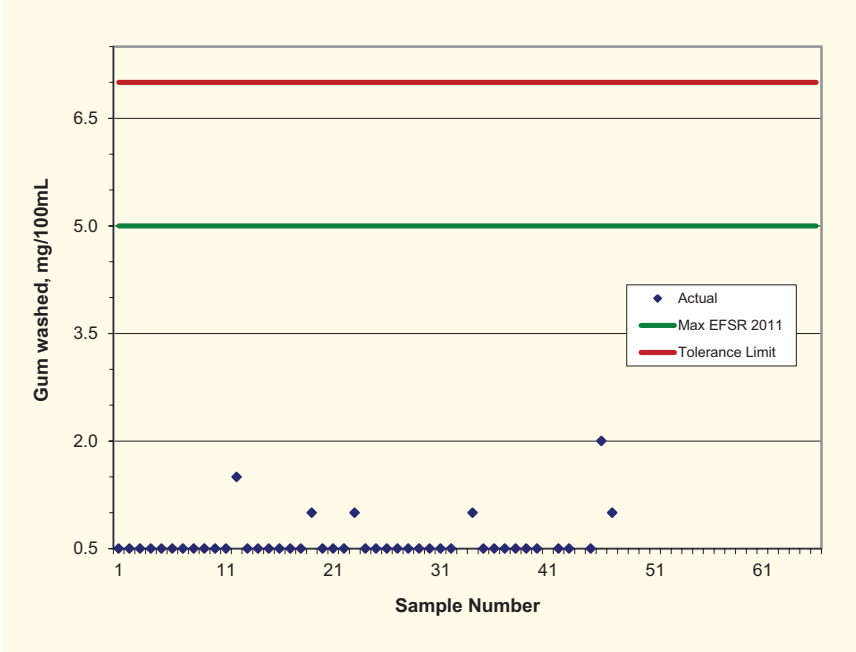
17 ASTM D1319-15 *Standard Test Method for Hydrocarbon Types in Liquid Petroleum Products by Fluorescent Indicator Adsorption*

Existent Gum (solvent washed)

The threshold of the test method ASTM D381[18] stipulated in the Regulations is 0.5 mg/100mL. Accordingly, the lowest line of testing results is 0.5 mg/100mL at the specified maximum limit of 5 mg/100mL. The tolerance limit is 7.0 mg/100mL. For regular petrol, all results except one were found to be not higher than 1.5 mg/100mL with the largest result of 2.0 mg/100mL for Sample 46 (Fig. 12a).

RON 91

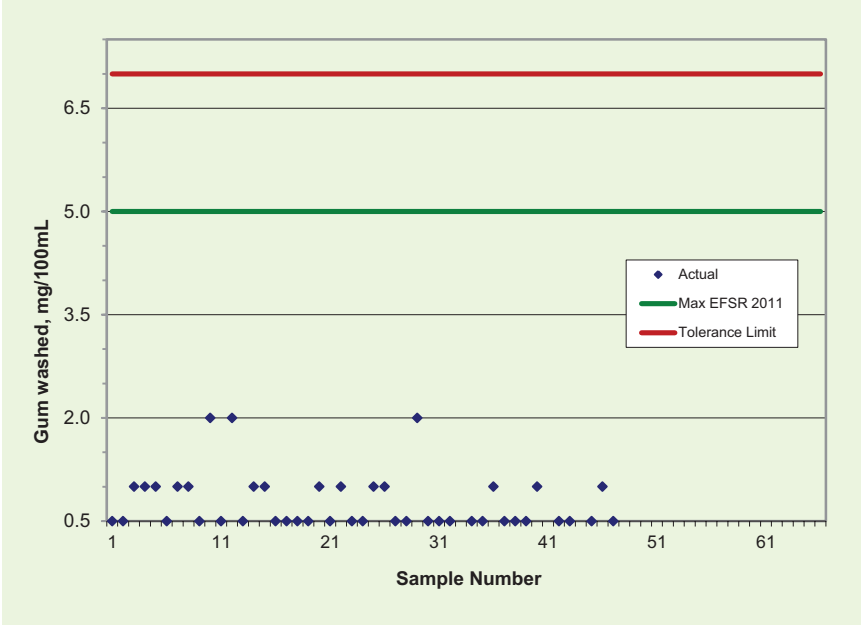
Figure 12a: Test Results for Gum, RON 91, Year 2017-2018



RON 95 & 98

For premium petrol, all results were also found to be not higher than 2 mg/100mL.

Figure 12b: Test Results for Gum, RON 95 & 98, Year 2017-2018



18 ASTM D381-17 *Standard Test Method for Gum Content in Fuels by Jet Evaporation*

Other Specification Parameter Testing

Testing and analysis, at a lower frequency, was also conducted on other parameters and properties prescribed in the Regulations. This included screening for the content of contaminants which are not expected to be present in fuel: lead, manganese and phosphorus. This is done by means of an initial identification of their presence on the threshold of resolution by each relevant method. These tests' results have not been included in this report as they were usually found to be below the threshold and well within the specification limits.

The ethanol content in petrol blends was also tested and found to be within the specified limit. All results for samples with ethanol content up to 10%[19], are set out in a Table 1 (see above in section on Evaporation Percentage for premium petrol).

Summary for Petrol Test Results

There were no suspected non-compliance cases for petrol identified according to the requirements of the Regulations. However, a problem relating to fuel tank sending units in some vehicles involving contamination with active sulphur[20] occurred in December 2017 in regions of the North Island. This was due to an unfortunate alignment of a number of reasons which have been identified and thoroughly analysed by the fuel retail industry.

By the end of December 2017 the industry was aware that there was an issue with the fuel supplied. The public was simultaneously informed by the industry that there were elevated active sulphur levels in batches of 91 and 95 octane petrol supplied from late November to mid-December 2017. It is important to note that the fuel sold met all regulated specifications, however fuel suppliers set a voluntary specification for active sulphur levels which was exceeded in these batches. The fuel companies in question investigated the issue further, and recommended that customers with any concerns around the accuracy of their fuel gauge should get their vehicle checked by their local vehicle dealer.

There were some questions why the presence of hydrogen sulphide went undetected. It is important to note that the New Zealand Refining Company released fuel batches that passed the required testing protocols according to the Regulations plus an additional test of silver strip corrosion (the voluntary specification set by the Fuel User Group).

A follow-up testing for silver strip corrosion of four pairs of petrol samples, *i.e.* premium and regular, collected in the North Island by Trading Standards in the framework of the Programme in December 2017, did not indicate presence of active sulphur.

While there isn't a definitive answer on why fuel batch testing did not identify the presence of hydrogen sulphide, the current operation has revealed no other instances of petrol blends with elevated active sulphur content. Having become aware of the complexity of sulphur reactions as a result of this incident, and the possibility that batches of petrol containing very low levels of reactive sulphur can still result in fuel sending units failures in the marketplace, Refining NZ with the user group have implemented additional barriers in the manufacturing process to further reduce the possibility of any reactive sulphur material ending up in the final product, and increased sampling and testing of the various product streams.

The Ministry is now considering inclusion of a silver strip corrosion test for active sulphur presence into the Regulations.

19 ASTM D4815-15b *Standard Test Method for Determination of MTBE, ETBE, TAME, DIPE, tertiary-Amyl Alcohol and C1 to C4 Alcohols in Gasoline by Gas Chromatography*

20 Certain fuel sulphur compounds, including elemental sulphur, hydrogen sulphide (H_2S), mercaptans and other sulphur-containing molecules, can tarnish silver- and copper-containing metals that are widely used in fuel system parts such as fuel level sender units and fuel pump bearings. Active sulphur compounds may be present in the fuel due to problems during gasoline production, such as improper operation of a refinery's desulphurization process or through accidental events. These compounds are highly reactive, and their presence even at very small levels (a few ppm) can cause harm. The sulphur compounds react with the metal parts to form silver or copper sulphides. In the case of fuel level sender units, which measure the amount of fuel in a fuel tank, the formation of silver sulphide on the electrical contacts interrupts the flow of current to the fuel gauge and causes the gauge to display erratic readings. In the case of fuel pump bearings, which enable the pump to operate smoothly, the formation of copper sulphide on the bearing surface causes the pump shaft to stick, interrupting the pump's smooth operation and potentially causing pump failure and vehicle stalling. To prevent the presence of these compounds in fuel, strict and continuous quality control is required. (*Worldwide Fuel Charter.* 5th Ed., 2013, p.38)

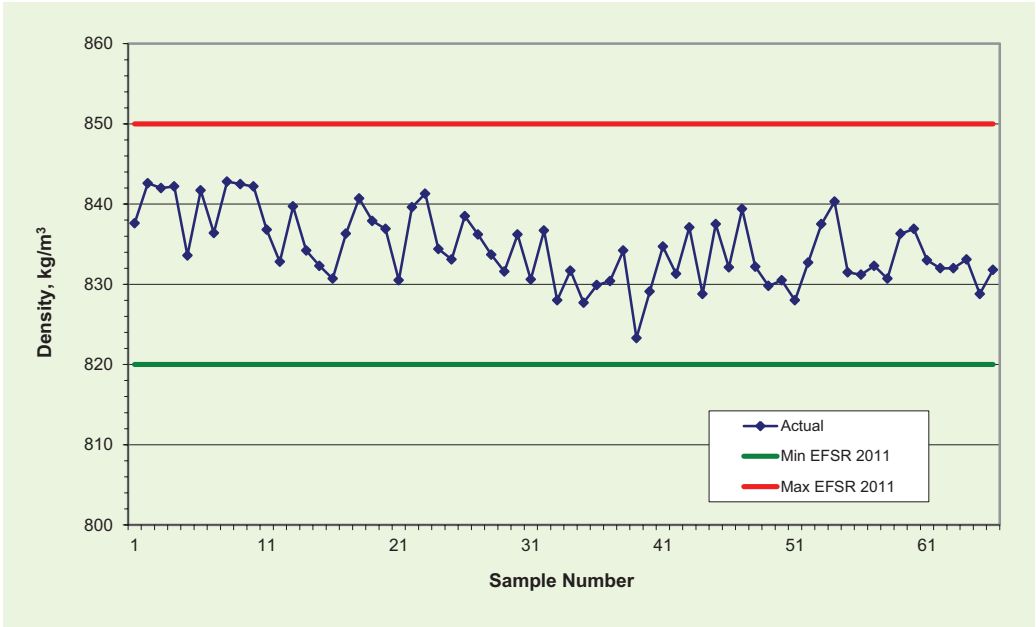
Diesel

Density

Density of diesel at 15°C can be tested according to ASTM D1298[21] or ASTM D4052[22] prescribed in the Regulations. Respectively, there are two pairs of tolerance limits identified using the two methods for the minimum limit of 820 kg/m^3 and for the maximum limit of 850 kg/m^3.

All results were found to be well within the specification limits with the minimum figure of 823.3 kg/m^3 for Sample 39 at the minimum tolerance limit of 819.3 kg/m^3 and the maximum figure of 842.8 kg/m^3 for Sample 8 at the maximum tolerance limit of 850.7 kg/m^3 (defined for ASTM D1298-17).

Figure 13: Test Results for Density, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



21 ASTM D1298-17 *Standard Test Method for Density, Relative Density, or API Gravity of Crude Petroleum and Liquid Petroleum Products by Hydrometer Method*
22 ASTM D4052-18 *Standard Test Method for Density, Relative Density, and API Gravity of Liquids by Digital Density Meter*

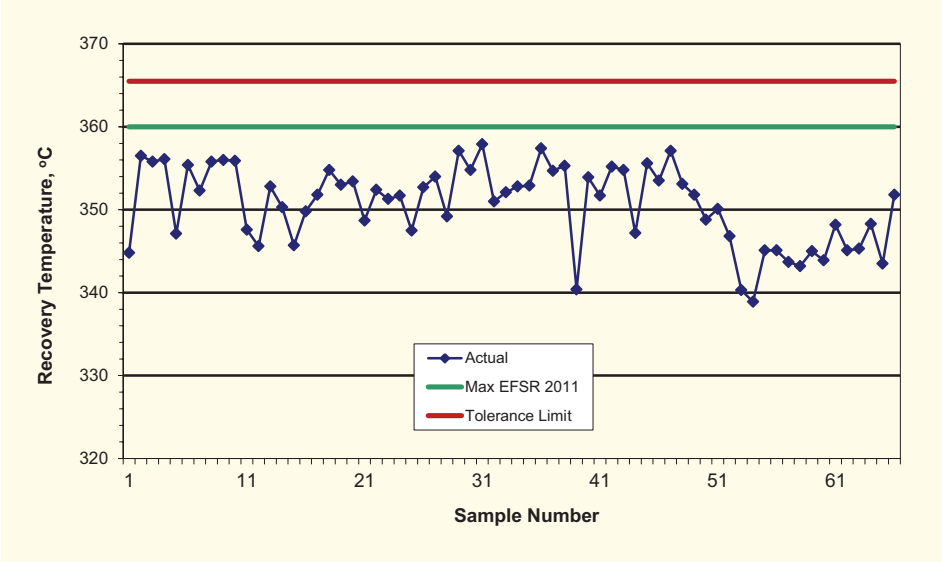
Distillation

The Distillation test means definition of temperature (°C) at which 95% volume recovered. The temperature should be tested by ASTM D86[23] prescribed in the Regulations.

All samples were found to be below the specification maximum limit of 360°C for distillation at 95% volume recovered (T95), actually, they were found to be below 358°C (Fig. 14) at the tolerance limit is 365.5°C .

Sample 54 was found to be the lowest with the actual figure of 338.9°C although there is no prescribed minimum limit for this property.

Figure 14: Test Results for Distillation 95% Vol Recovered, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



23 ASTM D86-17 *Standard Test Method for Distillation of Petroleum Products at Atmospheric Pressure*

Cetane Index

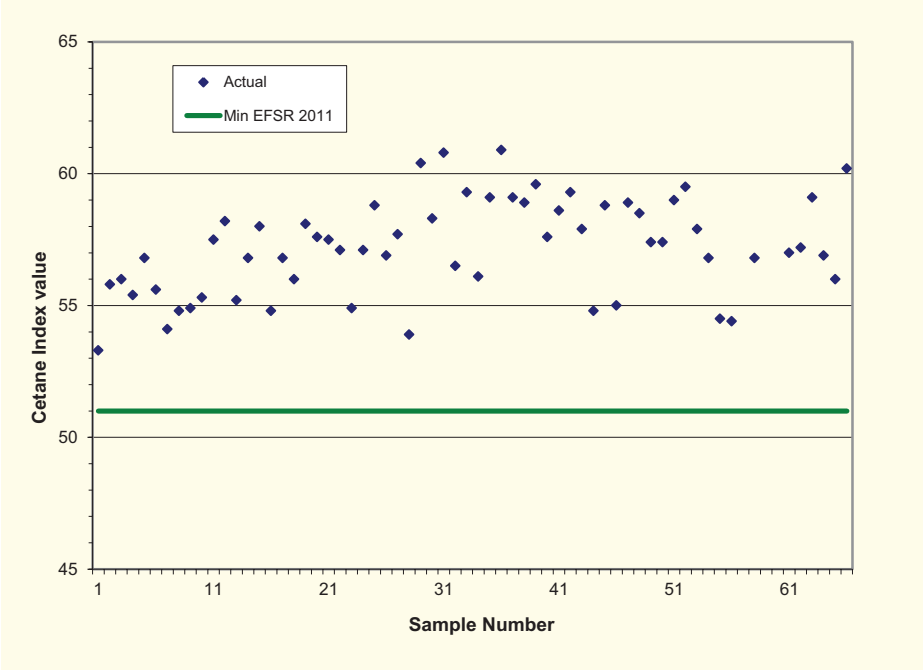
Cetane is a measure of the compression ignition behaviour of a diesel fuel; higher cetane levels enable quicker ignition. Cetane influences cold startability, exhaust emissions and combustion noise. Higher cetane generally enables improved control of ignition delay and combustion stability, especially with modern diesels which use high amounts of exhaust gas recirculation. The cetane index (ASTM D4737) is calculated from certain measured fuel properties; it is designed to approximate the natural cetane.[24]

The cetane index, according to ASTM D4737[25] prescribed in the Regulations, is not tested for but calculated from density and distillation recovery temperature measurements. The calculated cetane index is a tool for estimating cetane number when a test engine for determining cetane number is not available and/or cetane improvers are not used.

All 63 tested samples were found to be above the minimum limit of 51 (Fig.15).

Since the reproducibility for cetane index is not defined in the ASTM D4737, it is impossible to exactly define a tolerance limit. However, the Standard specifies that 'the expected error of prediction of Procedure A will be less than ±2 cetane numbers for 65% of the distillate fuels evaluated'. On these grounds, an estimate for the tolerance limit would be derived as 49.8. Sample 1 was found to be closest to the specified minimum with the actual figure of 53.3.

Figure 15: Test Results for Cetane Index, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



24 *Worldwide Fuel Charter.* 5th Ed., 2013, p.41.
25 ASTM D4737-16 *Standard Method for Calculated Index by Four Variable Equation*

Water

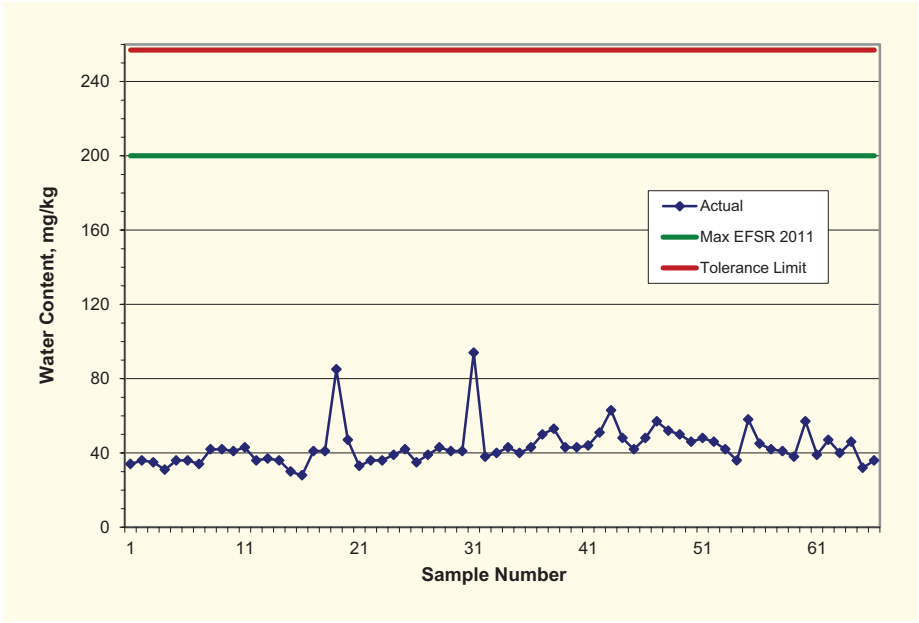
The test for water content is done according to IP438[26] which determines the total water present in diesel sample held either in solution or in solution and free water.

Water is soluble to some extent in hydrocarbons. The amount of water that is held in solution will be dependent on the temperature and the composition of the hydrocarbon. At typical ambient temperatures in New Zealand the expected concentration of water dissolved in diesel, is around 30 to 40 mg/kg.

The water content results in all the tested samples except two, were found to be well within the specification limit of 200 mg/kg with actual testing results not exceeding 80 mg/kg. Sample 19 was found to be 85 mg/kg with a noticeable (more than a trace) amount of free water present at an appearance test, including droplets 0.5 to 1 mm in diameter. The findings were passed over to the retail company and remedial measures were undertaken. There were no complaints from public with respect to the quality of diesel involving the site in question.

Sample 31 was found to be 94 mg/kg without any visible water but appearance was found to be 'hazy 1' rated according to ASTM D4176. This sample was also found to have a level of microbial content which in the view of Trading Standards was significant. The findings were also passed over to the retail company and remedial measures were undertaken.

Figure 16: Test Results for Water in Diesel, Year 2017-2018



26 BS EN ISO 12937:2001, BS 2000-438:2001. *Petroleum products. Determination of content. Coulometric Karl Fischer titration method*

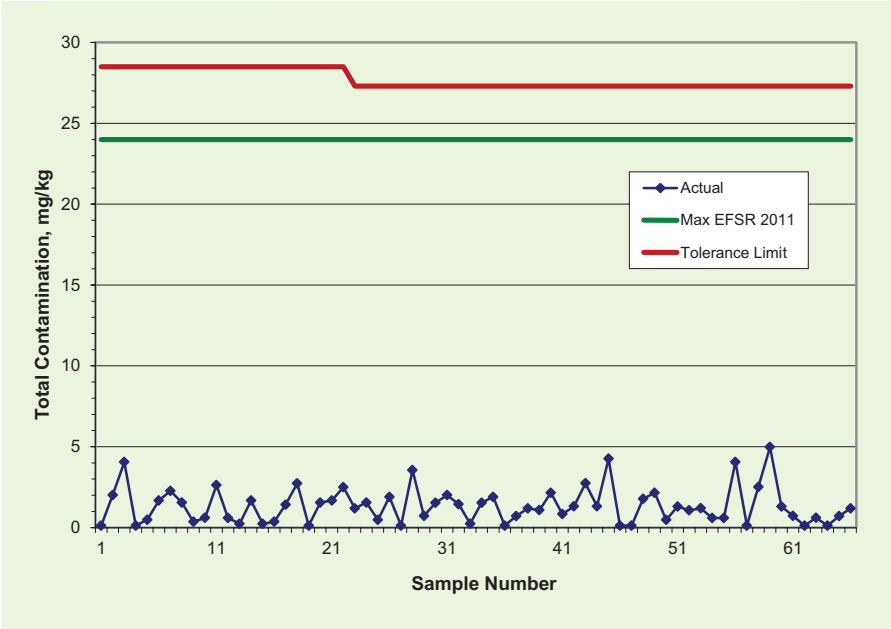
Total Contamination

Up until 2 October 2017 Total Contamination should have been tested by IP 440[27], however since 2 October 2017 onwards the Regulations were updated and the test specified for Total Contamination was changed to ASTM D6217[28].

All 66 samples were found to be well below the maximum limit of 24 mg/kg specified in the Regulations (Fig. 17) with actual figures below 5 mg/kg.

The tolerance limit was 28.5 mg/kg by 2 October 2017 for IP 440 and become, respectively, 27.5 mg/kg (for the density of 0.85 mg/L) since 2 October 2017 for D6217 (shown on Fig. 17).

Figure 17: Test Results for Total Contamination, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



27 BS EN 12662:2014, BS 2000-440:2014. *Liquid petroleum products. Determination of total contamination in middle distillates, diesel fuels and fatty acid methyl esters*

28 ASTM D6217-18 *Standard Test Method for Particulate Contamination in Middle Distillate Fuels by Laboratory Filtration*

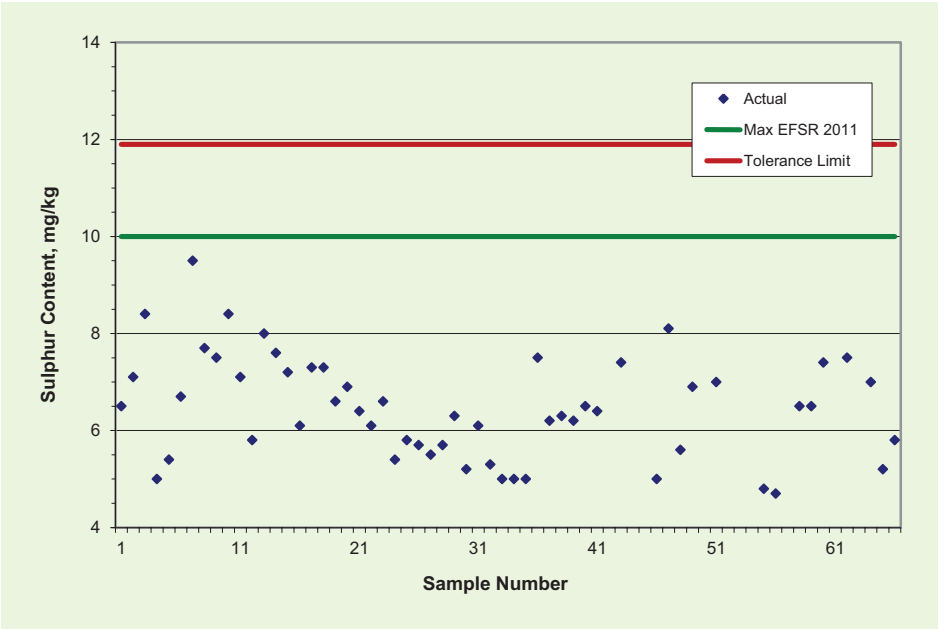
Sulphur

Sulphur content can be tested according to IP 497[29] or ASTM D5453[30] prescribed in the Regulations. Respectively, there are two slightly different tolerance limits identified for the two methods: 11.8 mg/kg for IP497:2011 and 11.9 mg/kg for D5453-16e1 (the latter is shown on Fig.18).

All 56 tested samples were found to be below the maximum limit of 10 mg/kg specified in the Regulations (Fig. 18).

Sample 7 was tested by IP 497 and was found to be closest to the specification limit with actual figure of 9.5 mg/kg at the tolerance limit of 11.8 mg/kg.

Figure 18: Test Results for Sulphur, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



29 IP 497 ISO 20884:2011: *Petroleum products — Determination of sulfur content of automotive fuels — Wavelength-dispersive X-ray fluorescence spectrometry*

30 ASTM D5453-16e1 *Standard Test Method for Determination of Total Sulfur in Light Hydrocarbons, Spark Ignition Engine Fuel, Diesel Engine Fuel, and Engine Oil by Ultraviolet Fluorescence*

Cloud Point

Cloud Point (CP) of diesel (*i.e.* the temperature at which the heaviest paraffins start to precipitate and form wax crystals; the fuel becomes 'cloudy')[31] should be tested according to ASTM D5773[32] prescribed in the Regulations.

The cumulative results for CP are presented below by combining the lowest prescribed maximum limits for each season in one graph (Fig.19). Generally, if results were below the lowest maximum limit established for an area they definitely complied with the Regulations in all other areas.

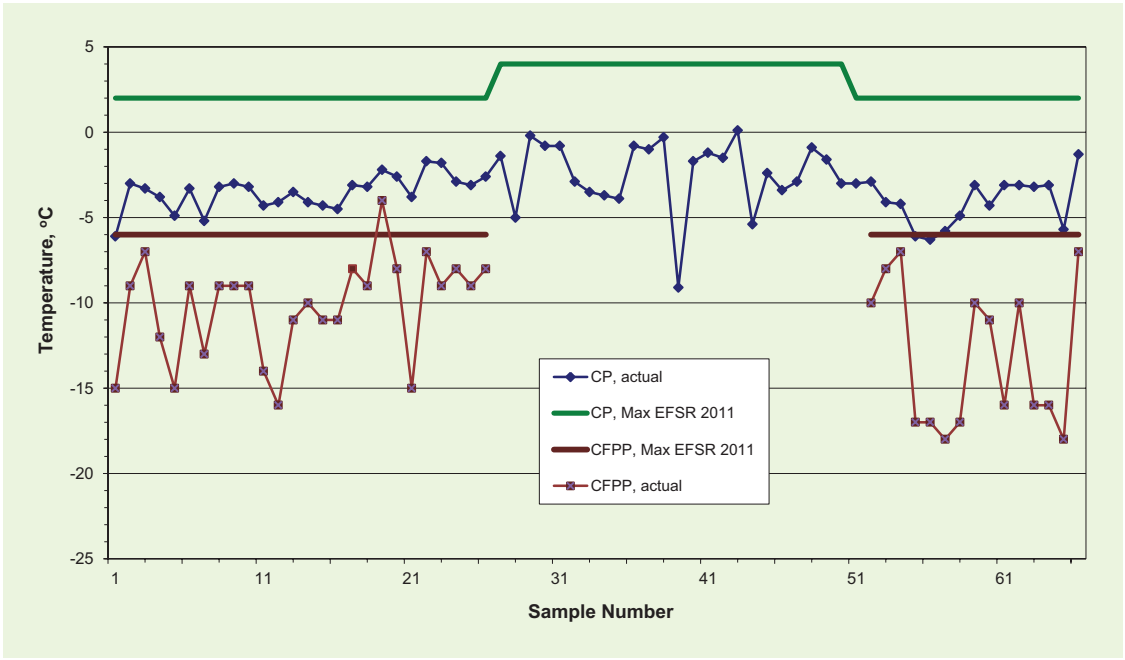
For the period of summer in Schedule 2 (season definitions in Section 5, the Regulations) from 15 October to 14 April inclusive, the lowest maximum limit of CP +4°C is prescribed for all New Zealand excluding Auckland and Northland.

The bottom line before and after the 'pedestal' on the graph in Fig.19, is the next lowest maximum, +2°C, which is prescribed for all New Zealand in winter, from 15 April to 14 October inclusive. The maximum limit prescribed for summer in Auckland and Northland, is +6°C and it is not shown in the graph. The tolerance limits are 3.4°C and 5.4°C, respectively, for the specified limits of +2°C and +4°C .

All 66 samples within the relevant seasons appeared to be below the lowest maximum limit. Sample 48 returned the highest testing result for winter, +0.1°C, at the maximum limit of +2°C .

The lowest figure for CP was found to be –9.1°C for Sample 39 from the South Island.

Figure 19: Test Results for Cloud Point and Cold Filter Plugging Point, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



31 *Worldwide Fuel Charter,* 5th Ed., 2013, p.52.
32 ASTM D5773-17e1 *Standard Test Method for Cloud Point of Petroleum Products (Constant Cooling Rate Method)*

Cold Filter Plugging Point

Cold Filter Plugging Point (CFPP) of diesel (*i.e.* the lowest temperature at which the fuel can pass through the filter in a standardised filtration test. The CFPP test was developed from vehicle operability data and demonstrates an acceptable correlation for fuels and vehicles in the market)[33] should be tested according to IP 309[34] prescribed in the Regulations. CFPP is defined only for the winter season with maximum limit of –6°C .

The test results for CFPP are set out on the same graph as that for CP (Fig.19). This gives an advantage to see the data 'at glance' and compare the two sets where necessary.

All samples except sample 19 were found to be below the maximum limit specified in the Regulations at the tolerance limit of –4°C .

Sample 19 was found to be above the maximum limit with the actual result on the tolerance limit of –4°C which was suspect non-compliant. This sample was found to be non-compliant due to high content of water in bulk so the condition of the sample caused difficulties in conducting some other tests (see section on Filter Blocking Tendency below). The findings were passed over to the retail company and remedial measures were undertaken. There were no complaints from public with respect to the quality of diesel involving the site in question. There was no repeated sampling at the same retail site and following testing of CFPP due to ending of the winter season.

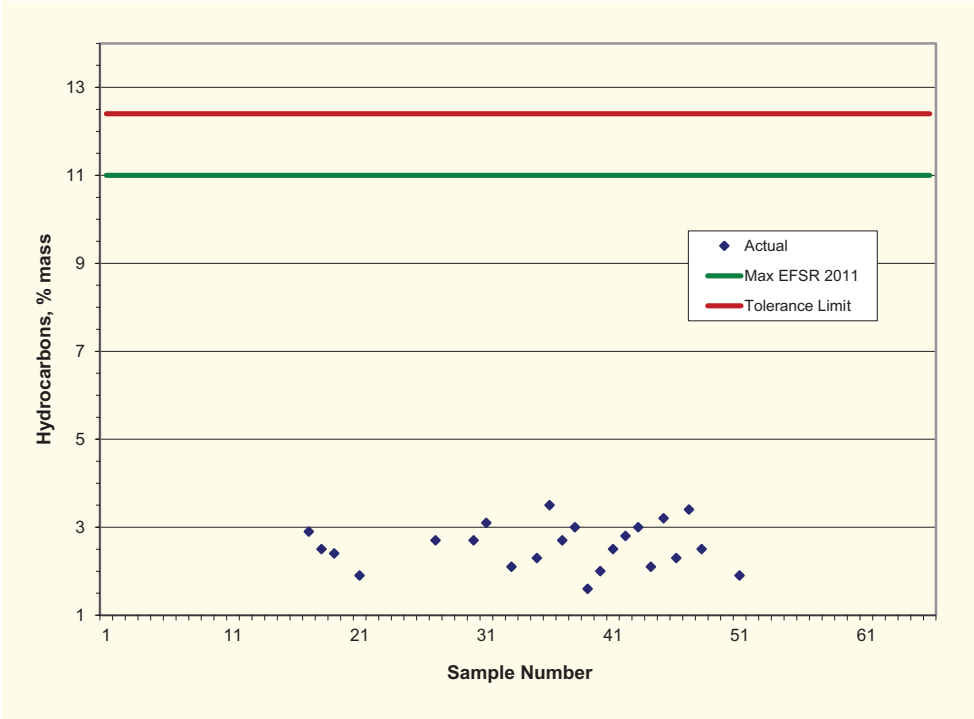
Sample 65 was found to have the lowest CFPP of –18°C with a result for CP of –6.0°C .

33 *Worldwide Fuel Charter,* 5th Ed., 2013, p.52.
34 BS EN 116:2015, BS 2000-309:2015 *Diesel and domestic heating fuels. Determination of cold filter plugging point. Stepwise cooling bath method*

Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons should be tested by IP 391[35] prescribed in the Regulations. All 23 tested samples were found to be well below the maximum limit of 11% specified in the Regulations. All testing results were actually found to be below 4% at the tolerance limit of 12.4%.

Figure 20: Test Results for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



35 BS EN 12916:2016 Petroleum products. *Determination of aromatic hydrocarbon types in middle distillates. High performance liquid chromatography method with refractive index detection*

Filter Blocking Tendency

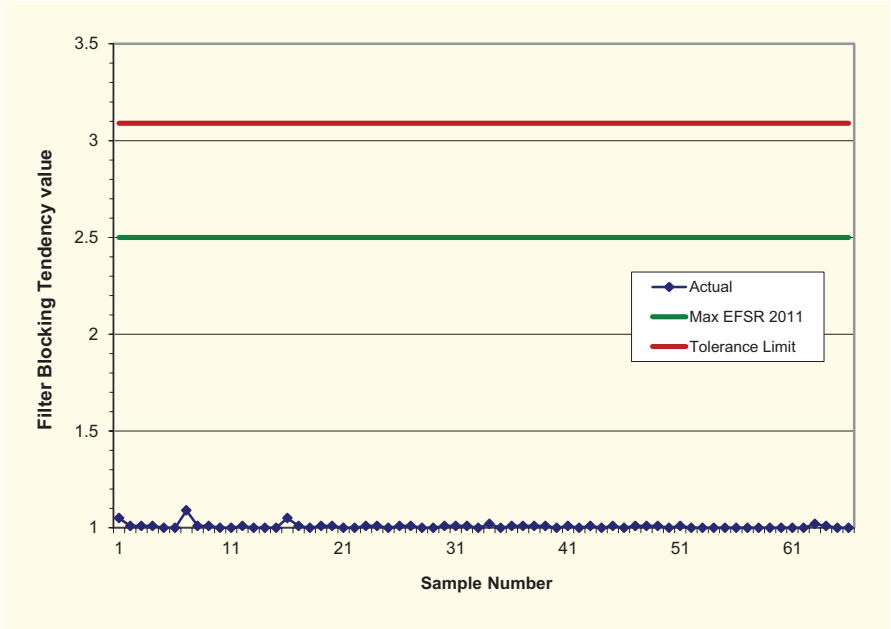
Filter blocking tendency can be tested by IP 387[36] or ASTM D2068[37] prescribed in the Regulations.

All samples, except one, were found to be within the specified maximum limit of 2.5 for filter blocking tendency at the tolerance limit of 3.09. All actual figures were in the range from 1.00 to 1.10 while Samples 7 was found to be the largest with the actual figure just of 1.09.

Due to the presence of free water in Sample 19, the testing laboratory did not conduct filter blocking tendency testing of the sample due to the requirement in section 7.1.4 of the test method. However, a sub-sample of Sample 19 was tested without free water which was removed prior to shaking, with the result of 1.01. This testing along with the total contamination test (see above) indicated that this diesel sample did not have other contaminants except water.

No elevated figures for filter blocking tendency were identified in samples collected from April to June 2018 when some retail sites had diesel with elevated filter blocking tendency according to reports in the industry (see comments at the end of this section).

Figure 21: Filter Blocking Tendency, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



36 IP 387:2017 *Determination of filter blocking tendency*
37 ASTM D2068-17 *Standard Test Method for Determining Filter Blocking Tendency*

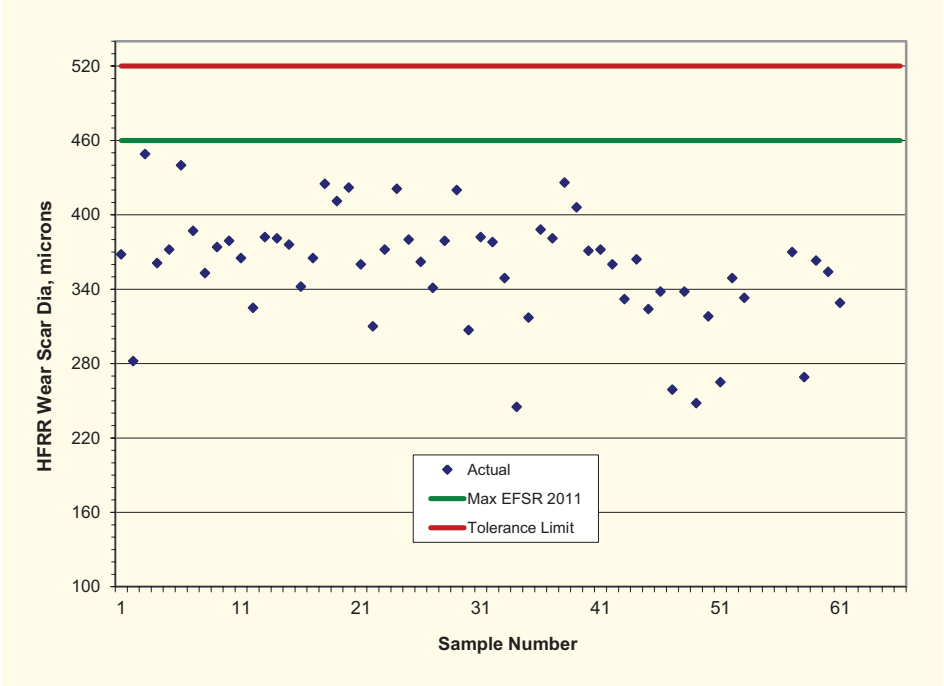
Lubricity

Lubricity should be tested by IP 450[38] prescribed in the Regulations.

All 58 tested samples were found to be below the specification maximum limit for the lubricity identified as a diameter of the wear scar produced on an oscillating ball from contact with a stationary plate immersed in the fluid. The diameter is usually measured in microns: the specification maximum limit is 460 µm. The tolerance limit is 520 µm.

Sample 3 was found to be the closest to the specification limit with the actual figure of 449 µm.

Figure 22: Test Results for Lubricity, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



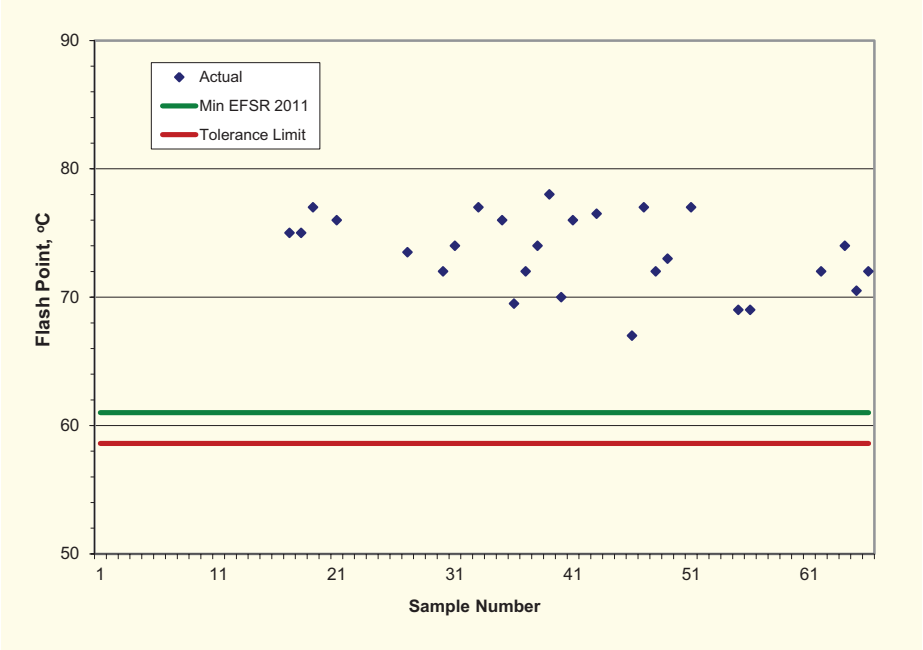
38 BS 2000-450:2000 *Methods of test for petroleum and its products. Diesel fuel. Assessment of lubricity using the high-frequency reciprocating rig (HFRR). Test method*

Flash Point

Flash point should be tested by ASTM D93[39] prescribed in the Regulations.

All 27 tested samples were found to be well above the specified minimum limit of 61°C for flash point of diesel. The tolerance limit is 58.6°C .

Figure 23: Test Results for Flash Point, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



39 ASTM D93-18 *Standard Test Methods for Flash Point by Pensky-Martens Closed Cup Tester*

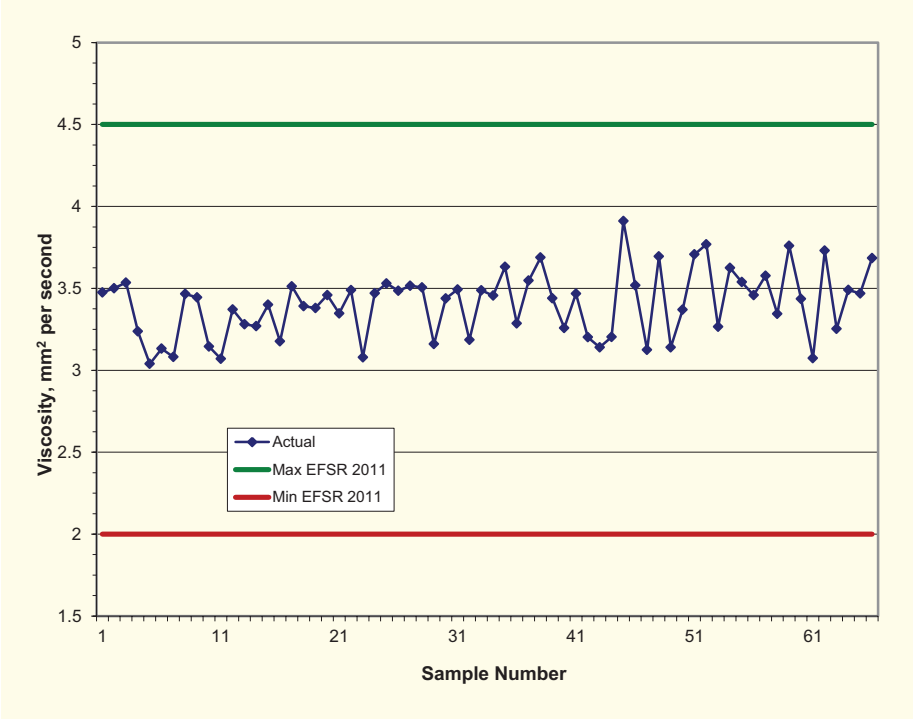
Viscosity

The viscosity should be tested at 40°C by ASTM D445[40] prescribed in the Regulations.

All samples were found to be well above the specified minimum limit of 2.0 mm^2 per second and below the specified maximum limit of 4.5 mm^2 per second for viscosity of diesel.

All test results were in the range between 3.0 and 4.0 mm^2 per second with the minimum result of 3.039 mm^2 per second for Sample 5 and the maximum result of 3.911 mm^2 per second for Samples 45. The minimum tolerance limit is 1.974 mm^2 per second and the maximum tolerance limit is 4.559 mm^2 per second (not shown on Fig.24).

Figure 24: Test Results for Viscosity, Diesel, Year 2017-2018



40 ASTM D445-17a *Standard Test Method for Kinematic Viscosity of Transparent and Opaque Liquids (and Calculation of Dynamic Viscosity)*

Summary for Diesel Test Results

There was one suspected non-compliance case.

A suspect non-compliant sample related to a sample of diesel where the water content was found to be 85 mg/kg with a noticeable amount of free water present at an appearance test, including droplets up to a one mm in diameter. Because of the presence of free water the testing laboratory did not conduct filter blocking tendency testing of the sample due to the requirement in section 7.1.4 of the test method IP 387. This sample was also found to be above the maximum limit on cold filter plugging point with the actual result on the tolerance limit of –4°C which was deemed to be suspect non-compliant. No repeated sampling at the same retail site and following testing of was done, due to ending of the winter season. Remedial actions were undertaken by the fuel retail company involved and there were no complaints from public with respect to the quality of diesel involving the site in question. The sample was additionally tested for filter blocking tendency conditionally with omission of the requirement in section 7.1.4 of the test method prohibiting testing with the water in bulk: filter blocking tendency was tested on a sub-sample where water was removed prior to shaking with the result of 1.01. This indicated that this diesel sample did not have other contaminants except water.

Around a period from April to June 2018, some suppliers in the fuel market have taken precautionary measures to postpone drawing diesel from storage tanks located at Nelson fuel terminals, and from some diesel tanks located at Mount Maunganui terminals. This followed reports of some fuel dispenser filters being blocked which resulted in a relatively slow flow of diesel fuel through some diesel dispensers in the relevant regions. The diesel product released to market met the specification in the Regulations for diesel.

Investigation and analysis of the diesel was inconclusive, however the investigation did identify possible causes of the elevated filter blocking tendency being linked to carbon deposits sourced from the vessel inert gas system during the voyage from the import refinery to the New Zealand terminals, and possibly traces of heavy paraffinic wax from the manufacturing process.

In addition, from fourteen diesel samples collected by Trading Standards during April to June, two were directly from the potentially affected regions and none of the tested samples indicated any increase of filter blocking tendency. Further, four additional samples collected in these regions after the issue was identified also returned low results without indication of any anomalous increase. Trading Standards has received no complaint on filtering problems during the period of interest.

This year the testing of diesel for appearance according to the ASTM standard D4176[41] which is not listed in the Regulations, was continued. This was done in order to maintain confidence that water in bulk and/or other contamination, if present, would be identified. No test results except the one described above were found to be suspect on appearance.

41 ASTM D4176-14 *Standard Test Method for Free Water and Particulate Contamination in Distillate Fuels (Visual Inspection Procedures)*

Biofuels

Summary of Testing

Various fuels such as biodiesel as well as ethanol blended petrol, were tested throughout the period of this report. As in previous annual reports, the actual results are not shown due to the commercial sensitivity of the data.

Retail Fuel Sampling and Testing

BIODIESEL B5

This blend was tested a number of times throughout the year at retail sites according to Schedule 2. The product falls into the category of diesel by definition in the Regulations, with FAME (Fatty Acid Methyl Esters) defined as the main component of biodiesel according to Schedule 3. The maximum limit for FAME content was up to 5% until 2 October 2017 and up to 7% after this date. All samples were found compliant with the relevant specifications in the Regulations.

ETHANOL BLENDED PETROL E10

This year, ten samples of premium petrol blended with ethanol and labelled as E10, were sampled and tested from the retail sites. In all cases the E10 blend met specification requirements and, in particular, the dry vapour pressure was found to be within the prescribed specifications.

ETHANOL BLENDED PETROL E85

A number of retail sites in New Zealand now offer fuel ethanol labelled as E85. This product is mainly intended for motor sport cars and its dispenser is distinctively labelled to differentiate the product from traditional retail fuels. Fuel for motor vehicle racing is exempt from the Regulations although there are flexible-fuel vehicles on roads in New Zealand which are able to use E85 and the E85 dispensers are accessible to the public.

The Regulations as amended in October 2017, now include requirements for E85 therefore samples of the retailed E85 fuel were drawn and tested to verify compliance. Currently, parameters for E85 blends are specified in Schedule 1A, with the maximum ethanol content of 85.0%. This blend was tested a number of times throughout the year at retail sites. All samples were found compliant with the relevant specifications in the Regulations.

37 ASTM D5798-15 *Standard Specification for Ethanol Fuel Blends for Flexible-Fuel Automotive Spark-Ignition Engines*

Non-Retail Fuel Sampling and Testing

When non-retail biofuel sale products are utilised as components for retail market products TS monitors their quality too because they are categorised by the Regulations. The Ministry continues working with the industry to help in understanding and development of acceptable biodiesel that meets the country's needs.

This year, the Ministry continued sampling and testing biodiesel, in particular, B100 (pure biodiesel) and B10 (10% blend with mineral diesel). Biodiesel B100 was tested according to the requirements of Schedules 3 in the Regulations while B10 blend was tested according to the Regulation 17.

BIODIESEL B100

Problems with accurate measurement of FAME content remained in the focus of the testing programme. The Ministry in collaboration with IPL continues to contribute to the on-going review of the standard by international standard committees such as CEN and ISO. One sample test result was found to be below the specified minimum limit but within the tolerance limit. Another sample was found to be slightly below the tolerance limit and after repeated testing its average was found to be 95.6% at the tolerance limit of 94.1%.

Finally, water content and acid value were found to be above the specified maximum limits in one of the samples. After repeated testing of both parameters it was found that the average figures in both instances appear to be above the testing tolerance limit. Respectively, water was found to be 650 mg/kg at the tolerance limit of 590 mg/kg and acid value was found to be 1.01 mg KOH/g at the tolerance limit of 0.58 mg KOH/g.

Corrective actions were implemented by the producer in the instance when the parameters were found beyond the prescribed specifications.

BIODIESEL B10

These blends were considered to be a final product supplied to customers and therefore the properties listed in Regulation 17 were tested along with a few additional properties such as the filter blocking tendency. Filter blocking tendency is deemed to be an essential parameter for the product to be 'fit for purpose'.

Two samples of B10 were collected either at the plant dispenser or at the non-retail point of sale. In all instances the FAME content was found to be within the stated maximum. All samples were found compliant with the relevant specifications.

ETHANOL COMPONENT E100

Denatured ethanol E100 for blending with petrol, was tested once this year from a storage terminal. Two samples taken from top and bottom of the storage tank were found to be fully within the specified limits.

Note: The specifications for properties of biofuels are still under review and development by the international ISO and ASTM Standards Organisations. The Ministry continues to monitor and contribute to this work to ensure New Zealand has sufficient technical knowledge in this area and our perspectives and issues are represented and considered internationally.

Appendix

A Brief Glossary and Abbreviations

ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
BS EN	British Standard European Norm
CEN	Comité Européen de Normalisation (French for: European Committee for Standardization)
ISO	International Organization for Standardization (a common short name not an acronym)
IP	Institute of Petroleum, UK
IPL	Independent Petroleum Laboratory
FAME	fatty acid methyl esters, *i.e.* the main component of biodiesel according to Schedule 3 of the Regulations
CP	cloud point of diesel *i.e.* the temperature at which the heaviest paraffins start to precipitate and form wax crystals; the fuel becomes 'cloudy'
CFPP	cold filter plugging point of diesel *i.e.* the lowest temperature at which the fuel can pass through the filter in a standardised filtration test
B100	biodiesel according to Schedule 3 of the Regulations
E85	fuel ethanol *i.e.* a blend of petrol and ethanol, containing not less than 70% and not more than 85% ethanol by volume
Cetane	a measure of the compression ignition behaviour of a diesel fuel; higher cetane levels enable quicker ignition
Octane	usually in RON (Research Octane Number) or MON (Motor Octane Number), a petrol's ability to resist auto-ignition; auto-ignition can cause engine knock, which can severely damage engines: the higher the octane number the greater the fuels resistance to knock. RON is an indicator of the fuel's anti-knock performance at lower engine speed and typical acceleration conditions. MON is an indicator of the anti-knock performance under higher engine speed and higher load conditions.