



Press Release
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Fleets fail to adopt life saving technologies

Major concerns over eSafety fittings in fleet cars are highlighted in a new report published today (13) at the eSafety Challenge 2010.

The new report, from eSafetyAware shows that fleet managers cite safety as a top concern. Yet this concern for safety often fails to translate into fittings, with many fleet cars still unequipped and users being denied the opportunity to choose safety.

The problem is compounded by the fact that duty of care only features on 28% of company car purchase policies, below other factors such as comfort, cost, and fuel economy. Safety benchmarks such as NCAP ratings only feature on 17% of policies. The survey also highlights that fleet car users consistently point to the lack of availability of eSafety as the principle reason why their car is not equipped.

Jean Todt, eSafety Aware President said:

"Huge work has gone into developing electronic safety systems that can have a major impact on road safety. We now must get these technologies into the market.

"Fleet managers can help ensure large sections of the vehicle population are equipped with eSafety, they should be on the front line in the battle to get eSafety fitted on all cars."

Mike Penning MP, UK under Secretary of State for Transport said:

"Britain has some of the safest roads in the world but we are committed to further improving road safety.

"Making the best use of new eSafety technologies is crucial if we are to continue to reduce the number of people killed and injured on the roads. The eSafety Challenge plays an important role in increasing awareness of these technologies around the world and it is an initiative we strongly support".

Implementation rates for key eSafety technologies are still alarmingly low across fleets. 28% of all respondents had Electronic Stability Control (ESC) fitted on less than half of their fleet, and a further 21% did not have ESC fitted on any of their vehicles.

Results for the other technologies are even more worrying. While availability of eSafety systems can be limited, over half (55%) said they did not have advanced emergency braking on any of their fleet vehicles, 59% did not have blind spot monitoring and 66% did not have lane support.

New cars today are much safer than they were 10-15 years ago thanks to improved crash test standards, crumple zones, seatbelts, and air bags which help protect occupants in a crash. Under the latest technological developments, so-called active safety systems can help prevent accidents from happening in the first place.

Devices such as Electronic Stability Control have the potential to save 4,000 lives and prevent 100,000 injuries annually in Europe alone. Recent studies have shown that millions could be saved through accident prevention. In Germany, research shows that as much as €330 million could be saved by preventing small rear impact accidents and that almost three out of four rear impact accidents with injuries and fatalities could be avoided with the 100% introduction of Automatic Emergency Braking Systems.

Lewis Hamilton, Formula One 2008 World Champion and Tom Kristensen, eight-time winner of the 24 Hours of Le Mans took part in the eSafety Challenge in Millbrook on 13 July to promote eSafety technologies. Both Lewis Hamilton and Tom Kristensen demonstrated the effectiveness of a range of innovative safety technologies including Electronic Stability Control (ESC) which stabilises the car in a skid, and Warning and Emergency Braking Systems which act to slow the car automatically in the case of an impending impact.

Notes to editors

eSafety refers to vehicle technologies that can assist the driver in an emergency situation by providing vital information and warnings. The systems improve car occupants' safety, helping the driver make the right decisions and remain in control of the car by informing, advising and alerting the driver about dangerous situations. eSafety takes an integrated approach: interaction between the driver, the vehicle and the road environment must be addressed together in the effort to increase road safety; all three of these factors are equally important in tackling the high number of deaths and injuries on roads worldwide.

The eSafety Challenge is an event co-funded by the European Commission, the FIA Foundation and eSafetyAware (39 organisations representing a wide range of automotive stakeholders). The Challenge focuses on innovative vehicle safety technologies and the potential lives to be saved on the roads through increased deployment of these technologies.

The key eSafety applications promoted by the eSafety Challenge are: Electronic Stability Control, Blind Spot Monitoring, Lane Support Systems, Speed Alert, Warning and Emergency Braking Systems, Adaptive Headlights.

The data released is a combination of research by IMK, Continental, and Bosch on behalf of eSafetyAware.

For further information and to download the research please consult our internet site www.eSafetyChallenge.eu/en/2010