

Mosley Lobbies For e-Safety



FIA President Max Mosley has recommended a series of steps for the introduction of e-Safety technologies.

The CARS 21 High Level Group has recommended the compulsory introduction of new vehicle technologies to improve road safety in its 10-year roadmap for the car industry. The recommendation follows FIA president Max Mosley's campaign for the fast track introduction for new e-Safety technologies such as the Electronic Stability Control system.

Mosley voiced concerns about the slow uptake of ESC at a recent CARS 21 meeting at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels on November 21. He also raised the issue at the Euro NCAP 10th Anniversary Conference.

Mosley argued that if all cars were fitted with ESC as standard it would hugely reduce the number of fatalities on the road each year.

The effectiveness of ESC devices to reduce the number of accidents on the roads is certainly well documented. These systems can compensate driver error by automatically moderating a vehicle's lateral stability through use of ABS and traction control technologies. In this way, ESC reduces the likelihood of side impact crashes into oncoming vehicles.

Speaking about the latest CARS 21 roadmap Mosley commented: "I am especially pleased that CARS 21 encourages a fast track for the use of life saving crash avoidance technologies such as Electronic Stability Control."

ESC has enormous potential to avoid crashes and not merely mitigate their consequences. But only a minority of cars have these systems fitted as standard. Studies from Europe, Japan and the US indicate a reduction in single car crashes that range between 30 per cent and 40 per cent with ESC. Market

Market penetration by vehicle class is another major concern. In the luxury end of the market, where the cars are already the safest, ESC is standard equipment. However, at the other end of the scale, in the highly competitive small family car segment, ESC is standard on just four per cent of models.

Mosley said that some form of stimulus, such as a fiscal incentive, is needed to accelerate the market development of ESC. Otherwise it will follow the progress of ABS braking systems which have taken over 20 years to penetrate the entire vehicle fleet.

Without establishing a timetable for the universal use of ESC, warned Mosley, CARS 21 would be implicitly endorsing a slow track model of technology introduction and thus tolerating a higher level of death on Europe's roads than could be avoided with a fast track deployment of ESC.

The CARS 21 roadmap also proposes the compulsory introduction of other new safety features such as seatbelt reminders, brake-assist systems, improvement of heavy duty vehicles' blind spots and conspicuity, and daytime running lights.

The aim of CARS 21, which stands for Competitive Automotive Regulatory System for the 21st Century, is to generate recommendations to improve

penetration of the system is, however, extremely low in many countries.

Last year only 24 per cent of new cars in Italy were ESC equipped. The figure in the UK was 29 per cent, and in France 39 per cent. Only in Germany and Sweden were ESC rates above 60 per cent.

the European automotive industry. It is chaired by Günter Verheugen, Vice President of the European Commission, and includes representatives from member state governments, the European Parliament and leading members of the automotive industry.