



News & Topical Articles

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Cars that can dial 112: A European Commission and industry target 2009

3 February, 2005

All new cars in Europe could be equipped with automatic emergency call (eCall) technology as soon as 2009 under a Commission/industry action plan agreed in Brussels on 3 February. This high-level meeting of industry leaders and representatives of EU Member States and the European Parliament received a progress report from the eSafety Forum, a pan-European public/private partnership that promotes road safety. The eCall action plan will be implemented across Europe, as part of the EU's eSafety initiative.

"With this technology, your car could save your life" noted Information Society and Media Commissioner Viviane Reding. "Advanced information and communication technologies have great potential to improve road safety in Europe. Like anti-crash radar (see IP [IP/05/54](#)), eCall is an area where EU-wide consensus can help remove technological and commercial barriers to the take-up of life-saving road safety systems in Europe."

In the event of a crash, e-call technology will call the emergency services at a "Public Service Answering Point" (PSAP), and report your exact location. An eCall may be triggered automatically, or manually, by someone in the vehicle. Accurate location information will drastically cut emergency response time, thus saving lives and reducing the severity of the injuries. Recent studies suggest that fully deployed, eCall could save up to 2000 lives in Europe per year.

The action plan targets end of 2005 for agreeing on eCall standardisation and specifications, 2006 for full scale field tests and 2009 as the year for introducing eCall technology in all new vehicles. This technology will use the location-enhanced single European Emergency Number (E-112). To enable eCall technology to work, emergency services in the EU Member States will need to equip or upgrade their PSAPs to process eCall location reports at the latest in 2007. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on arrangements for implementing the plan, which sets out measures to be taken by the Commission, Member States and the automotive, telecoms and insurance industries, now has over 20 signatures from industry, European Commission and the Member States. The key aim of the MoU is to ensure that eCall technology will work in any EU Member State.

In this meeting, the Commission also tabled a plan for the eSafety initiative's third year. A progress report and specific measures to accelerate the take-up of eSafety technology will be set out in a Commission Communication in March 2005.

EU road safety measures are promoted by the Commission's directorates-general for Information Society and Media, Enterprise and Industry and Energy and Transport .

More information:

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/programmes/esafety/index_en.htm

<http://www.eScope.info>

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