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Home

China

World

Business

Technology

Opinion

Culture/Edu

Sports

Entertainment

Life/Health

Travel

Weather

About China

Map

History

Constitution

CPC & Other Parties

State Organs

Local Leadership

White Papers

Statistics

Major Projects

English Websites

BizChina

- Conferences & Exhibitions

- Investment

- Bidding

- Enterprises

- Policy update

- Technological & Economic

Development Zones

News Photos Voice People BizChina Feature About us

Europe cars to be quipped with emergency call technology

www.chinaview.cn 2005-02-04 07:37:19

BRUSSELS, Feb. 3 (Xinhuanet) -- All new cars in Europe could be equipped with automatic emergency call (eCall) technology as soon as 2009 under an action plan agreed on Thursday.

The plan, named eCall action plan, was co-launched by the European Commission, the executive arm of the European Union (EU) and the European car industry.

The eCall action plan will be implemented across Europe, as part of the EU's eSafety initiative, said a press release of the European Commission on Thursday.

"With this technology, your car could save your life" noted EU Information Society and Media Commissioner Viviane Reding.

"Like anti-crash radar, 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," he added.

In the event of a crash, e-call technology will call the emergency services at a "Public Service Answering Point", 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 upto 2000 lives in Europe per year.

The action plan targets the end of 2005 for agreeing on eCall standardization and specifications, 2006 for full scale field tests and 2009 as the year for introducing eCall technology in allnew vehicles. Enditem

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