

SBD team to advise DfT on eCall in the UK

Milton Keynes: 28th April 2006 ~ The Department for Transport (DfT) has awarded a contract to SBD Ltd to carry out a study looking at the case for the UK development of eCall.

eCall is an in-vehicle service that combines GPS location with airbag sensors and mobile phone technology to automatically alert the emergency services to the location of an accident. This could have benefits in reducing the effects of accidents that have occurred through more rapid response. The feature is already available on some vehicles in the UK.

A Europe-wide feasibility study shows large potential benefits for eCall but it is not yet clear how these can be translated to the UK, with its particular vehicle safety, road and traffic characteristics and its different approach to organising the emergency services.

SBD's study will look at the specific UK business case for eCall and then establish whether there are any barriers to its deployment. It will also identify the opportunities eCall offers, especially if combined with other initiatives such as usage-based insurance.

The SBD team will be consulting widely with industry players about the technology, service provision and business models, and with the emergency services about how eCall might deliver benefits in practice.

The three-month study is being undertaken with consultants Faber Maunsell, Michael Sena, Dr Neil Hoose and Andy Graham. This team recently completed a study for DfT on a "multi function vehicle telematics unit" which has clear relevance to this study.

David McClure, SBD's Technical Director, commented "Our team combines extensive vehicle manufacturer, road safety and transport business case experience. We are delighted to have been appointed by DfT to undertake this important study, as it affects all key areas of influence in the future telematics market."

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Notes to editors:

SBD Ltd is an independent company providing specialist consultancy in the design and development of automotive components and systems. The company, founded in 1995, has extensive knowledge of the strategic development and design of vehicle components and systems.

Working closely with manufacturers and suppliers, SBD provides consultancy at various levels including **Technical Research**, **Strategic Planning**, **Program Management** and **Product Development**.

SBD also provides the industry with detailed market and technical reports on various technologies, market trends and competitor analysis. The company has helped to develop many successful systems seen in the market today and is continuing to help manufacturers implement the next generation of systems with an emphasis on **Vehicle Security** and **Vehicle Telematics**.