



**Branding eSafety:
The Communication Platform for eSafety**



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The idea

The User Outreach Working Group (UOWG) recommends installing a Communication Platform for eSafety. The main task of the platform is to improve, coordinate and harmonise the end-user communication of the different stakeholders and raise user awareness of eSafety systems to support its deployment. The platform needs to be recognised as independent and reliable.

At the moment the deployment of eSafety systems is low, especially in some European countries and the consumer is not aware of their existence either.



Max Mosley says that time has come to move from crash mitigation to accident avoidance. He further remarked: "It is so very important now to encourage eSafety systems that can help to reduce the number of crashes on Europe's roads. (...) Without some form of stimulus the normal market development of ESC (Electronic Stability Control) will probably follow the progress of ABS braking systems which have taken over 20 years to penetrate the entire vehicle fleet. It is now clearly established that ESC is the leading vehicle technology that can contribute to the achievement of the EU road safety target of a 50% reduction in fatalities by 2010. Action is, therefore, required now to accelerate market penetration of ESC."

Studies show that now safety matters, when the consumer chooses a new vehicle. There is a need to combine the effort of all stakeholders and work together to support the demand for safety through eSafety.

Background

The eSafety Forum was established in early 2003 by the Commission as a joint effort with the industry, industrial associations and public sector stakeholders. Its general objective is to promote and monitor the implementation of the recommendations identified by the eSafety Working Groups and to support the development, deployment and use of intelligent integrated road safety systems.



From this joint platform, a number of Working Groups have been organised which address the key issues or technologies targeted by the recommendations.

The eSafety Forum on 25 March 2004 highlighted the importance of the end user in the eSafety strategy and underlined that user demand is essential for a positive business case. It therefore suggested that a User Outreach Working Group (UOWG) be formed to address this issue.

During the work of the UOWG best practices of successful models of media work regarding road safety were examined. Examples are EuroNCAP, EuroTest and EuroRAP. The political and media success of these projects lies mainly in the fact that the interested stakeholders found a common platform. One of the main objectives of these projects is to position their content in the opinion of the public and the decision makers. Based on their investigations the User Outreach Working Group have recommended the creation of a Communication Platform for eSafety.



A “non-competitive” character

Car manufacturers put a lot of emphasis in differentiating their products from the ones of their competitors. This is not only the case for the car as a whole but also for particular applications, which, although having similar basic functions, show different distinctions and are sold under different names. A platform must take this into consideration. Therefore its goal should not be the marketing of particular products but making the public aware of eSafety systems in general, extend their knowledge about them and create a solid demand for eSafety products.

A non-competitive cooperation of stakeholders will

- Gain forces for common aims
- Increase efficiency of the communication
- Formulate common messages to the public

The definition of available eSafety systems have to be clearly described based on the work of the Implementation Road Map Working Group. This is essential for non-competitive communication.

Key objectives and strategy

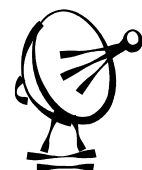
The UOWG proposes a list of objectives for the potential Communication Platform for eSafety. Among the main objectives are the definition of communication tools, the development of test and media protocols and the financing of media work. Additionally, the Working Group suggests a communication structure for the platform.

Definition of communication tools

The UOWG found out that in order to successfully transpose communication strategies with regard to the user, the internal communication, especially within the sales departments of eSafety systems producers and car dealers, has to be improved. The Working Group has listed tools for external and internal communication that could help support their work:

External communication to the general public:

- Continuous media work with contributions to written press, radio and broad casting stations
- Consumer protection tests
- Introduction of a series of broadcast contributions (e.g. ‘7th sense’ in Germany)

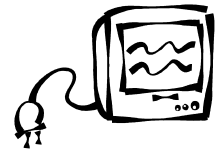


- Maintenance of an interactive website
- Creation of interactive games
- Presence on fairs
- Development of a label/brand
- ...



Internal communication to dealers, driving schools etc.:

- Organisation of trainings
- Updated website
- Fairs
- Conferences
- Information material
- ...



Development of test protocols

Test protocols serve as a base for consumer protection tests on eSafety systems. They have to duplicate a real world situation (accidents) in a laboratory. Both during the development of the protocols and during the realisation of the tests it is crucial to respect the principle of neutrality in respect to the tested products.

Publications of tests are found to have the following effects:

- Set benchmarks for quality
- Attract media attention
- Results are easy to understand

Through an independent test protocol, consumer confidence in eSafety systems will increase and awareness of the existence of these systems will spread.

Development of media protocols

Successful media work that will be realised by different organisations in an international context, asks for a sound foundation. The UOWG suggests including the following points in a media protocol:

- Definition of the content of the campaigns (input from the Implementation Road Map Working Group)
- Selection of objects (e.g. for tests)
- Common results
- Scheduling of campaigns (press embargos)
- Regulation of Intellectual Property Rights (gained throughout the working process)
- Use of logos
- Central design of output (e.g. Press releases or brochures)
- Creation of a media kit



Financing the media work

In order to implement large media campaigns a solid financial basis has to be created.

The Communication Platform could be financed by:

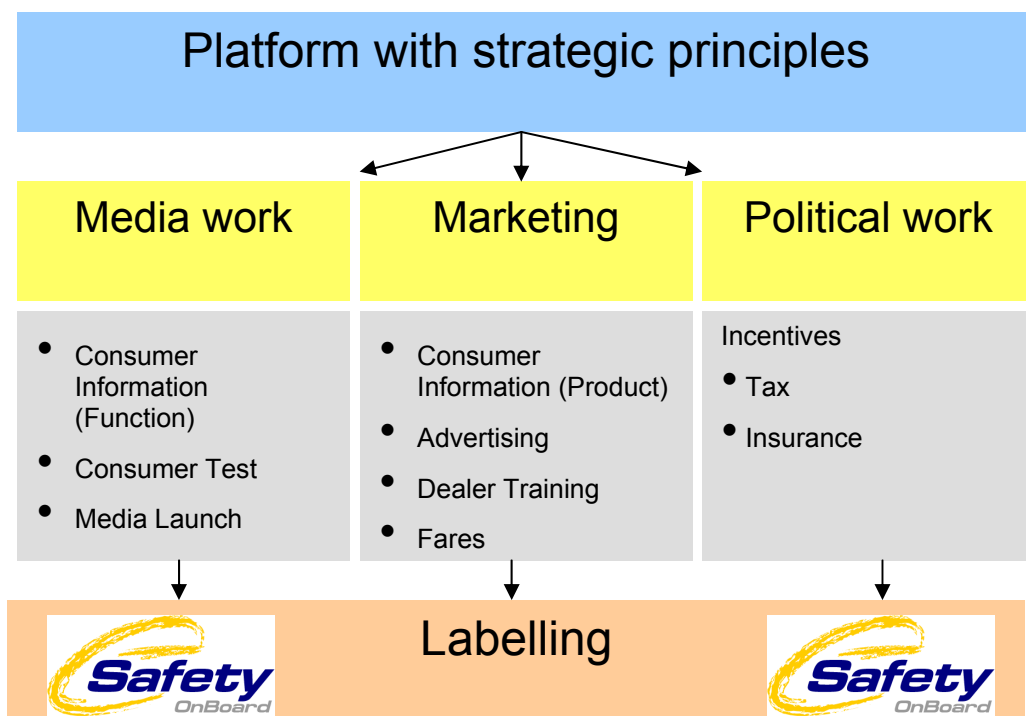
- Membership fees
- Sponsoring of EU Member States and EU institutions
- Private sponsoring (not endangering the “non-competitive” character of the platform)

The membership fee would be set by the board of the platform.

Communication structure

To communicate the value of eSafety systems, simple and emotional messages are essential. Technical communication would achieve the opposite effect – people would find it boring or simply not useful for them.

The marketing and communication departments of the platform members need to be closely involved in creating the communication strategy of the platform from the beginning. Communication for the platform includes the following:



The graphic shows that there will be three main work areas for the Communication Platform: Media work, Marketing and Political work. All three groups can be supported by a label.

For an effective communication of eSafety systems, the creation of a label would be very helpful. A label allows the connection of a logo to the general concept of eSafety systems. Instead of having to explain or - for the user - to understand every single eSafety application, one creates a positive recognition effect with a constantly reappearing label. That is branding! Another positive aspect is the fact that a dynamic

label can include new eSafety devices whenever they appear on the market. One suggestion for a name of a label could be: eSafety OnBoard

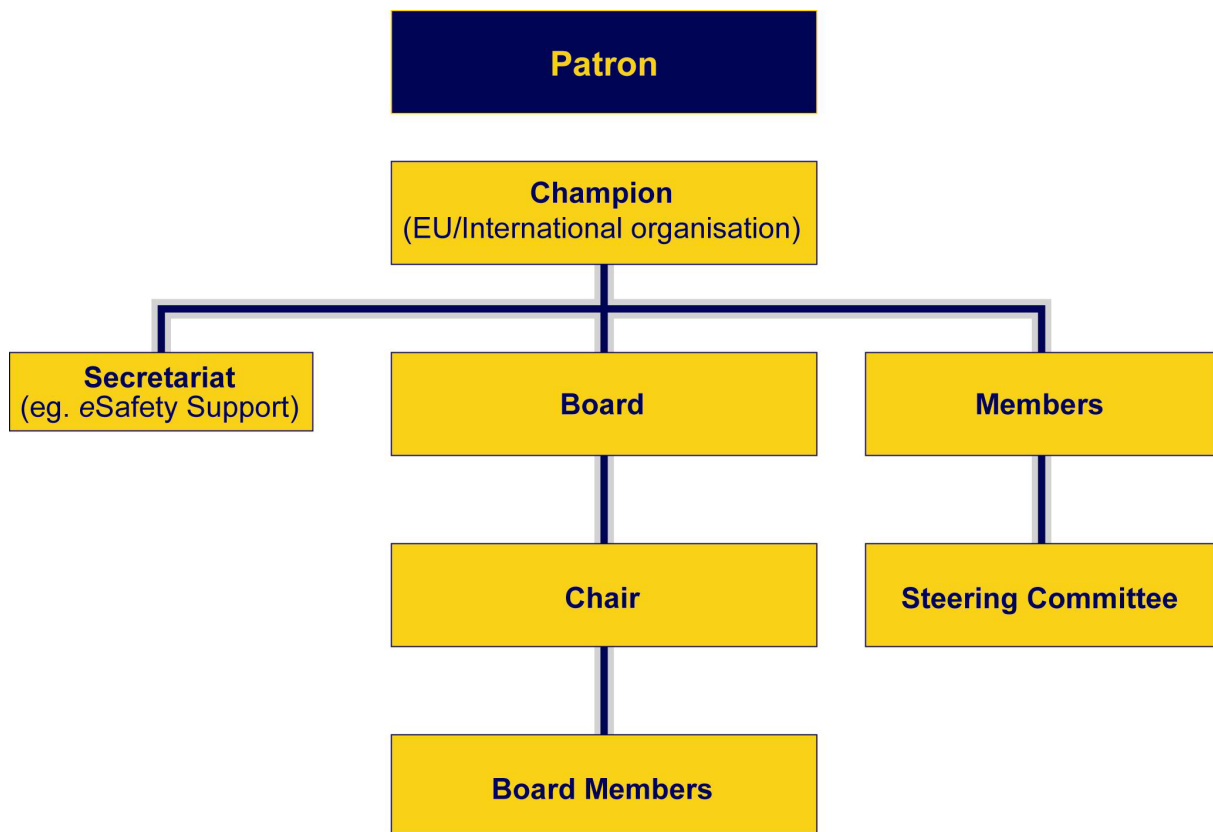


eSafety OnBoard is a label that could also be used in commercial activities by car manufacturers. When a vehicle comprises any of the existing eSafety applications (see recommendations of the Implementation Road Map Working Group), the label can be attached to it. Here, the Communication Platform can create simple user guidelines.

The Communication Platform will concentrate on aspects of communication and consumer behaviour in the context of eSafety. Therefore communication and campaign managers, media and marketing experts and representatives of user groups from any member of the platform will be invited to contribute.

The platform structure

The eSafety Forum User Outreach Working Group can support the platform with recommendations and proposals for activities to be launched. The official organigram is suggested to look somewhat like this:



First, there is the members' base from which all will have a seat in the steering committee. The steering committee is only needed, if the platform has a large number of members. Each sector will be represented in the board by a deputy. Every 3 years the chairperson and the board members are elected at the General Assembly. The board decides on the general direction of the activities of the Communication Platform, the secretariat helps with administrative support and the steering committee plans the details of the activities. The Champion is an independent and credible organisation, known to a broad audience that can give credible support to the cause of the platform and that is a trustworthy authority.

On top of the organigram is the Patron; this is an esteemed European personality that declares his/her support for the cause of safety. He/she considers it being of value for the society we live in. He/she is a well known person among Europeans and attracts media attention. The Patron brings a face to the message and personalises it.

Long term projects employ own full time secretariats in order to ensure continuity and coordination. ERTICO's eSafety Support project has foreseen a secretariat with one manager, one specialist for communication and one manager for administration. This could be a starting point for the platform. Also the cooperation with an international agency (communication, Public Relations, marketing) is recommended.

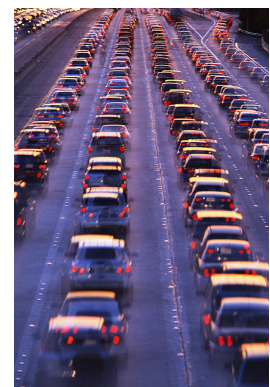
Members

A wide participation of stakeholders is needed, that is why the UOWG proposes to invite the following organisations to join the platform: Car manufacturers, system suppliers, automobile clubs, institutions of the European Union, Member State authorities, insurances, car dealers, road safety institutes, NGOs, etc.

It might be useful to introduce different membership categories:

- Full member (full financial contribution, full voting right)
- Supporting member (reduced financial contribution, reduced voting right)

Once a year the Communication Platform for eSafety will organise a General Assembly. Here issues that need to be voted upon will be presented and every three years the chairman will be elected.



Timetable

The platform should be set up as and start its work from the beginning of 2006.

Next steps

- Commitment by the stakeholders, if the platform is to succeed.
- A national member committee could be created to support the platform.

Contact details

Chair and Contact

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