

Brussels, 23 April 2003

Road Safety: industry and Commission work hand in hand for European leadership

On April 22, 2003, the first plenary meeting of the eSafety Forum was held in Brussels, resulting in consensus on implementing a range of new road safety technologies. Chaired by the European Commission, the meeting brought together 150 representatives of the European automotive and telecommunication industries, providers of intelligent transport systems, infrastructure operators, public authorities, and the Commission. Participants included Erkki Liikanen, European Commissioner for Enterprise and Information Society, Max Mosley, president of FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile); Louis Schweitzer, president of ACEA (Association des Constructeurs Européens des Automobiles) and Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Renault.

"We now need to focus on the deployment of the eSafety technologies, systems and solutions - in other words, get eSafety into cars and on the road for the benefit of 375 million European road users," said Erkki Liikanen. "I am confident that the Forum's recommendations will lead to concrete actions."

Following the lines set out by its four preparatory working groups, the eSafety Forum adopted recommendations on how to implement eCall (in-vehicle emergency calls), Accident Causation Data, a better Human-Machine Interaction and a stimulating Business rationale.

The European Commission has a multifaceted role to play in this field, including facilitating a Europe-wide consensus on priorities and activities, supporting the relevant research and development, vehicle-type approval procedures, ensuring that telecommunications regulations support road traffic safety and helping to remove obstacles to Intelligent Integrated Road Safety Systems, for example by means of standardisation.

In this context Commissioner Liikanen referred to two Communications on Road Safety that are expected to be presented to the Council by June 2003:

- **The Communication on the third Road Safety Action Plan** prepared by the Directorate General for Transport and Energy will lay down the general framework and strategy for Road Safety;
- **The Communication "Information and Communication Technologies for Intelligent Vehicles"** by the Directorates General for Information Society and Enterprise will bring forward the detailed actions the Commission will undertake to implement eSafety and to promote the development, deployment and use of new technologies for improved road safety.

"Monitoring progress in the implementation of all eSafety recommendations must not be forgotten," Commissioner Liikanen stressed. " Clear objectives for deliverables, products, public investments and legal measures are essential, as without these there will not be a commitment".

"The European Automobile Industry welcomes and fully supports this important initiative. We appreciate the leadership of the European Commission", said Mr Louis Schweitzer, adding that "our industry will continue its commitment to the work of the Forum and to improvements of road safety in general".

The next eSafety Forum will take place in Madrid on November 17, 2003 on the occasion of the ITS (Intelligent Transport Systems and Services) World Congress. The work on the four topics mentioned will continue. Four new Working Groups will be established covering International Cooperation, Real-time Traffic and Travel Information, Research and Development priorities and Road Maps.