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## **Commission proposes fitting of Brake Assist Systems in new cars to reduce pedestrian fatalities**

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To reduce the number of fatal accidents on European roads, the European Commission has proposed that passenger cars need to be fitted with Brake Assist Systems (BAS) as early as 2009. If the complete European car fleet is fitted with BAS, as many as 1100 pedestrian lives may be saved every year. As many as 8,000 vulnerable road users, pedestrians and cyclists, are killed every year in the EU. The use of BAS can considerably reduce the stopping distance of a vehicle in an emergency situation, with the effect that a collision with a pedestrian could be avoided altogether or would occur at least at a far lower speed. The proposal is part of a larger package of measures for Pedestrian Protection.

Commission Vice-President G  nter Verheugen, responsible for enterprise and industry, said: "This proposal is good and important for the safety of all road users, especially vulnerable groups like pedestrians and cyclists. At the same time we propose to substantially reduce the amount of legislation, as the proposed regulation will repeal two directives and 27 related national legislations. We will have less legislation, but improve safety."

The Commission White Paper of 2001 sets a target to reduce the overall number of fatal road accidents by 50% by the year 2010. A Commission study shows that the requirements for pedestrian protection can be significantly improved by use of a combination of active and passive safety measures.

Passive measures help to reduce injury levels on impact by provision of softer surfaces. Active measures alleviate the conditions under which impact may take place, e.g., by reduction of impact speed.

Such a combination of measures will afford an 80 % higher level of protection than the previously existing provisions, in particular, as a result of the use of active safety systems:

New vehicles are required to pass a number of performance tests in two phases: phase I (which is based on recommendations from the Joint Research Centre) started in October 2005 as required by Directive 2003/102/EC and a revised phase II (which is based on European Enhanced Vehicle-safety Committee recommendations) which is the main subject of the present proposal. Within five years from the start of phase II, all new vehicle types will have to comply with amended test requirements and, even as early as nine months after entry into force of the Regulation, be fitted with Brake Assist.

As experience has shown that legislation concerning motor vehicles has often been of a highly detailed technical content, it is proposed to adopt a regulation instead of a directive in order to avoid discrepancies between transposing measures and an unnecessary level of legislation in the Member States as there will be no need for transposition into national legislation.

Thus the proposal provides for simplification of administrative procedures for national authorities and for the Commission.

### **Background**

Directive 2003/102/EC introduced the first legislation designed to provide a level of protection for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users when in collision with a passenger car. This legislation introduced test requirements for vehicles in two phases, in 2005 and 2010 respectively, but recognised the need to re-examine the requirements of the second phase. In parallel to this Directive, the Commission also proposed measures for the control of frontal protection systems (bull bars) which was published as Directive 2005/66/EC.

The Commission now proposes to up-date the requirements of the pedestrian protection Directive (2003/102/EC) combining it with the requirements for frontal protection systems and, at the same time, introduce the requirement for Brake Assist.

### **More information**

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/automotive/pagesbackground/pedestrianprotection/index.htm>