

Brussels, 4 May 2010

Emergency calls: Commission welcomes growing Member State endorsement for eCall in-car system

The European Commission has welcomed five more Member States endorsing the eCall in-car emergency system. This life-saving system automatically dials Europe's single emergency number 112 in the event of a serious accident and could save up to 2500 lives per year in Europe when fully deployed. At a ceremony in Brussels on 4th May Belgium, Denmark, Luxemburg, Malta and Romania are signing the EU's Memorandum of Understanding to implement eCall across Europe, joining 15 other European countries that had already signed.

European Commission Vice-President for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes said: "I am very pleased that 20 Member States are now signing up to deploy eCall. This system is an excellent example of how information and communications technologies can improve and even save the lives of citizens

European Commission Vice-President for Transport Siim Kallas said "The eCall system can save many road users' lives every year and I am therefore delighted that an increasing number of Member States are now committed to putting the system in place".

eCall automatically dials Europe's single emergency number 112 in case of a severe crash and transfers the exact location of the accident and other essential information to the nearest emergency service. It is estimated that eCall could save up to 2500 lives per year when fully deployed and mitigate the consequences of severe accidents in over 15% of cases due to reduced response time of emergency services.

Five Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Luxemburg, Malta and Romania) are signing the eCall Memorandum of Understanding at a ceremony in Brussels on 4th May. In doing so, they are joining the 15 EU countries and 3 other European countries which have committed to deploying eCall (Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, The Netherlands, Sweden Iceland, Norway and Switzerland).

The Memorandum is also being signed on 4th May by additional organisations, namely Agoria, ATX, Belgian Automobile Club Touring, DEKRA, Electronics Solutions, European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), EUROSMART, GMV, ITS Belgium, National Company of Motorways and National Roads from Romania, OctoTelematics, Romanian-American University, Special Telecommunications Service (STS), UTI Systems. The system has received formal backing of 90 signatories, including mobile phone operators ([IP/09/1290](#)) as well as Europe's car manufacturers.

In 2008, more than 1.2 million accidents on Europe's roads caused around 39,000 deaths and more than 1.7 million injuries. The eCall system is estimated to cost less than €100 per new car to install.

To fully deploy eCall, national administrations must ensure that their emergency services call centres are equipped to handle the calls and all new vehicles must be equipped with eCall technology.

The Commission had called for eCall to be rolled out voluntarily across Europe by 2009 ([IP/09/1245](#)) but the system has been delayed due to a lack of support from some EU countries.

Background

The Commission has supported eCall related research projects that make sure the technology would work across borders (e.g. E-MERGE and GST-Rescue and gained public-private cooperation with its eSafety Initiative and the European eCall Implementation Platform. eCall is one of the priorities of the Intelligent Car Initiative and the Intelligent Transport Systems Action Plan promoting the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to achieve smarter, safer and cleaner road transport ([IP/06/191](#), [IP/10/353](#)).

The EU has provided around €160 million for research on ICT for transport, covering safety systems, intelligent vehicle systems and mobility services in the last three years.

The EU's Memorandum of Understanding and list of signatories are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/esafety/doc/esafety_library/mou/list_of_signatures.pdf

More information on eCall is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/esafety/ecall/index_en.htm