



EU Commission, FIA, and Euro NCAP recommend: “No car without ESP®!” Launch event for the “Choose ESC!” initiative

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- ▶ eSafety Aware! communication platform starts European “Choose ESC!” campaign
- ▶ ESP® could help avoid 4,000 road deaths and 100,000 injuries every year in Europe
- ▶ Analysis of social costs by the University of Cologne confirms outstanding benefits of ESP®
- ▶ Euro NCAP calls for ESP® to be standard equipment for all vehicles

Every car should be routinely equipped with the Electronic Stability Program (ESP®), or Electronic Stability Control as it is usually called by traffic experts. This was the clear message at the launch event for the “Choose ESC!” campaign, held at the Bridgestone testing center in Aprilia, near Rome, on May 8th, 2007.

EU Commissioner Viviane Reding and FIA (international automobile federation) President Max Mosley were the patrons of the event, which was visited by some 120 representatives from the industry, associations, and the media. The objective of “Choose ESC!” is to increase the proportion of new vehicles equipped with ESP®. The campaigners warn of the negative effects of slow proliferation of ESP®. Slow proliferation would, they said, jeopardize attainment of the EU’s target of halving the number of road deaths from its 2001 level to 25,000 by the year 2010.

Michael Schumacher is one of the campaigners’ prominent supporters. In a video message, the former Grand Prix world champion extolled the benefits of ESP®. “You never know when a crash might happen so don’t take chances with the lives of you or your family. Choose ESP®!” was the clear message from one of the world’s best drivers.

Developed and launched by Bosch in 1995, this active driving safety system is described by experts as the most significant addition to driving safety since the

introduction of the seat belt. To quote Herbert Hemming, president of the Bosch Chassis Systems Control division: "We are proud that ESP® can deliver such a valuable contribution to road safety, both in Europe and worldwide. However, this can only happen if the system is installed in as many vehicles as possible. This is why ESP® communication has been one of our marketing tasks for many years now."

Many international studies demonstrate that skidding is the root cause of at least 40 percent of all fatal traffic accidents. According to these studies, ESP® can reduce the risk of skidding by as much as 80 percent. A new study of the social costs of traffic accidents from the University of Cologne, presented at the event, concludes that if ESP® were introduced across the board, 4,000 lives could be saved and 100,000 injuries prevented in Europe alone. Moreover, the study confirms that the costs of such a universal introduction of ESP® would be significantly lower than the current level of costs arising as a consequence of accidents that could be prevented by ESP®. At present, only 42 percent of all newly registered cars in the EU are equipped with ESP®. Especially compact cars, and midsize models in some countries, are still not equipped with ESP®.

A detailed study by the vehicle safety experts of the European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP) provides information about the automakers that offer the Electronic Stability Program as an option, and in which models. Convinced of the benefits of ESP®, they urge automakers to install ESP® as standard equipment in all their vehicles. As one representative pointed out, it would be inconceivable if seat belts were only available for an extra charge, or exclusively in expensive cars.

Apart from the availability of the safety system, awareness of its benefits is the second key condition for its widest possible dissemination. However, the Eurobarometer study conducted by the European Commission shows that drivers' awareness of ESP® is non-existent or poor, and that drivers do not even consider choosing ESP® as an option. Once the benefits of the system have been explained to them, however, 80 percent would opt for the system in their next car, said EU Commissioner Viviane Reding, speaking at the event.

Max Mosley, President of the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile), pleaded for more political backing. Although ESP® was invented in Europe, and European automakers were the first to install the system, he pointed out that the proportion of cars fitted with the system was set to grow faster in the U.S. over the next few years thanks to legislation adopted there.

More information is now available in the internet at www.chooseESC.eu.

The Bosch Group is a leading global supplier of technology and services. In the areas of automotive and industrial technology, consumer goods, and building technology, some 260,000 associates generated sales of 43.7 billion euros in fiscal 2006. The Bosch Group comprises Robert Bosch GmbH and its roughly 300 subsidiary and regional companies in over 50 countries. This worldwide development, manufacturing, and sales network is the foundation for further growth. Bosch spends more than three billion euros each year for research and development, and in 2006 applied for over 3,000 patents worldwide. The company was set up in Stuttgart in 1886 by Robert Bosch (1861-1942) as "Workshop for Precision Mechanics and Electrical Engineering."

The special ownership structure of Robert Bosch GmbH guarantees the entrepreneurial freedom of the Bosch Group, making it possible for the company to plan over the long term and to undertake significant up-front investments in the safeguarding of its future. Ninety-two percent of the share capital of Robert Bosch GmbH is held by Robert Bosch Stiftung GmbH, a charitable foundation. The majority of voting rights are held by Robert Bosch Industrietreuhand KG, an industrial trust. The entrepreneurial ownership functions are carried out by the trust. The remaining shares and voting rights are held by the Bosch family and by Robert Bosch GmbH.

Additional information can be accessed at www.bosch.com.