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10/6/08

### Loeb backs ChooseESC! safety campaign

Four times World Rally Champion Sebastien Loeb is backing an automotive safety campaign to increase the number of cars fitted with an Electronic Stability Control (ESC) system.

Loeb has joined seven times Formula 1 World Champion Michael Schumacher to support ChooseESC! - a Europe-wide campaign led by the FIA Foundation which aims to raise awareness of ESC and increase the number of cars fitted with it from new.

ESC is a vehicle safety technology that can help avoid crashes by reducing the danger of skidding. The FIA Foundation says that 4,000 road traffic deaths and 100,000 injuries could be avoided each year if all cars in Europe were equipped with ESC systems.

ESC recognises when a skid is starting to happen and in a fraction of a second the electronic control unit applies the brakes at individual wheels, helping to keep the car under control.

On 23 May 2008 the campaign received a boost with the news that all new cars sold in Europe and the United States from 2012 must be fitted with ESC.

Loeb backed up the theory with a demonstration run in a Citroen C2 VTR on a wet test track in Greece. With the ESC system disabled, he simulated a high-speed emergency manoeuvre with a violent spin of the steering wheel; an action which sent the car pirouetting down the track. When the run was repeated with the system engaged, however, the car responded to the steering input, while staying in-line and under control.

"I think road safety is important for everybody and this system is extremely worthwhile," said Loeb. "ESC really does help to keep a car

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under control and going in the right direction. It's very easy to be taken by surprise on the road, maybe you see something and make a sudden action with the steering or brakes - then you are skidding and you've lost control. Controlled slides are a part of rallying but when I am driving on public roads and with my family I want to avoid skidding at all costs. That's why I choose ESC."

David Ward, Director General of the FIA Foundation, said: "Thousands of lives could be saved if motorists choose ESC when buying a new car between now and 2012, when it will become mandatory. Electronic Stability Control is most important car safety technology since the seat belt and so we are delighted that Sebastien is backing the campaign."

For more information about the ChooseESC! campaign, visit:

[www.chooseESC.eu](http://www.chooseESC.eu)

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