



Press Release
29 May 2008

4,000 road traffic deaths and 100,000 injuries could be avoided each year if all cars in Europe were equipped with Electronic Stability Control (ESC) says ChooseESC! campaign

European Commission backs FIA on eSafety

FIA World Rally Champion Sébastien Loeb demonstrates safety gains

"ESC – three letters to save your life!" - that's the strong message the Europe-wide campaign ChooseESC! brings to motorists. During a demonstration today, prior to the start of the 55th Acropolis Rally of Greece, four times FIA World Rally Champion Sébastien Loeb displayed its effectiveness in a live demonstration, correcting a skid caused by a rapid lane change.

The ChooseESC! campaign, led by the FIA Foundation under the patronage of European Commissioner Viviane Reding and FIA President Max Mosley, aims to raise awareness of Electronic Stability Control and increase the take-up of this life-saving technology.

Indeed, on 23 May 2008, the European Commission confirmed new proposals for the mandatory introduction of Electronic Stability Control on all new cars sold in the EU from 2012, following the successful ChooseESC! campaign. In the United States ESC will also become mandatory from 2012, while Canada and Australia are working towards the same goal.

Hearing the news from the European Commission last week, Max Mosley, FIA President said: "I'm delighted that the European Commission has backed the FIA's campaign for the mandatory fitting of ESC. This life-saving technology will make a significant contribution to preventing deaths and injuries on our roads."

Electronic Stability Control is a vehicle safety technology that can help avoid crashes by reducing the danger of skidding. At least 40% of fatal road accidents are the result of skidding and studies show that ESC could reduce these accidents by up to 80%. ESC recognises when a skid is starting to happen. In a fraction of a second the electronic control unit applies the brakes at individual wheels, helping to keep the car under control. Whether the skid is the result of an emergency avoidance manoeuvre or a simple error of judgement, ESC can help the driver maintain control of the vehicle.

David Ward, Director General of the FIA Foundation and Chairman of the ChooseESC! campaign, 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 the most important car safety technology since the seat belt and so we are delighted that FIA World Rally Champion Sébastien Loeb is backing the ChooseESC! campaign. His support here at the Acropolis Rally will spread the ChooseESC! Message, not just in Greece but also worldwide."



Citroën driver Sébastien Loeb commented: "ESC is one of the most important safety devices since the seat belt. Controlled slides are part of rallying, but when I am driving on public roads with my family, I want to avoid skidding at all costs. That's why I choose ESC."

ELPA President Vassilis Despotopoulos said: "It is unacceptable that so many people get killed on the roads when we have a proven technology available on the market that can save many of these lives each year. We need to inform consumers that they should always choose a car which is ESC equipped. Hopefully one day all cars will be equipped with this technology as standard, for this we need full cooperation from car manufacturers and authorities."

Notes:

1. For more information about the ChooseESC! campaign, visit www.chooseESC.eu. The campaign video <http://www.chooseesc.eu/en/media/movies/> and the leaflet http://www.chooseesc.eu/en/news/choose_esc_leaflet.htm are available in many European languages.

The ChooseESC! campaign is officially supported by the European Commission and Euro NCAP (European New Car Assessment Programme) and has received a strong endorsement by both Michael Schumacher, seven times FIA Formula 1 World Champion, and Sébastien Loeb, four times FIA World Rally Champion.

2. ChooseESC! is a European-wide campaign organised by eSafetyAware!, a non-profit association with members from user organisations, public authorities, transport ministries, automotive industry and related suppliers, research institutes and others. For more information, please visit: www.eSafetyAware.eu

For further information about the ChooseESC! campaign, please contact:

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