

ECF on Revision of General Safety Regulations

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GSR and Cycling Safety¹

In the EU the number of cyclists being killed and seriously injured is decreasing, but it is still at a slower rate than for car occupants. While car occupant fatalities has dropped by 50% over the past ten years, cycling fatalities has stalled at around 25% and even increased slightly between 2014 -17². The great progress that EU vehicle regulation has made in saving lives and preventing injury for motor vehicle occupants should be replicated for those outside the vehicle. The European car industry leads the world in vehicle technologies and the Europe leads the world in vehicle safety thanks to progressively stronger EU vehicle regulations. We have a major opportunity with the technologies currently available to have genuine VRU specific measures mandated for all new vehicles. A TRL report³ gave positive benefit to costs ratio for Intelligent Speed Assistance, Autonomous Emergency Braking for cyclists/pedestrians, improved testing procedure for bonnet design, truck turning assist, and HGV direct vision standards. Happily the European Commission has included all of these in its recent proposal, this is a revolutionary moment in European road safety.

Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA)

Reducing speeds of motor vehicles in urban areas is crucial in getting more people to use bicycles, not only does this decrease the real danger but it also decreases the perceived danger that those interested in taking up cycling, feel⁴⁵. The ISA included in the Commission proposal is a warning but also crucially an intervening one with haptic feedback and pressure on the pedal when approaching speed limit, it can be overridable by applying sustained pressure on the pedal. The vehicle can read speed limit signs, and is fed speed limit information through GPS updates/mapping.

ECF recommendation -

- Defend the commission proposal to include intervening ISA in the Regulation. This should be the flagship of the EU's contribution to road safety - 20% fatalities reduction! - With calmer roads.
- The EU should begin working on the technical specifications as soon as legally possible
- Civil society groups, safety NGOs, academics and other stakeholders should be allowed access to the technical specification working groups

¹ ECF position paper and info <https://ecf.com/what-we-do/road-safety/motor-vehicle-regulation-safer-cycling>

² Commission Care database http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/index_en.htm

³ <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/benefit-and-feasibility-of-a-range-of-new-technologies-and-unregulated-measures-in-the-field-of-vehicle-occupant-safety-and-protection-of-vulnerable-road-users-pbNB0714108/>

⁴ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/1999/10/38560fea-6e19-4098-95cd-37be45958aa8>

⁵ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1763332/pdf/v058p00837.pdf> Morrison D, Thomson H, Petticrew M. Evaluation of the health effects of a neighbourhood traffic calming scheme. Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. 2004;58(10):837-840. doi:10.1136/jech.2003.017509



AEB and design of vehicle front

ECF commissioned a study from AGU Zurich⁶ to look into incorporating cyclist impacts into the Pedestrian Protection Regulations of type approval⁷. The conclusions of the study are that currently cyclist impact is not considered in this regulation, this has serious implications for reducing impact severity. Cyclists tend to impact higher up on the car, on the windscreen and on the A-pillars of the vehicle. There are also better materials available for windscreen design which absorb forces better. These also have been taken up by the Commission proposal. Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) is also included in the proposal for cyclists and pedestrians, the vehicle will apply emergency braking if the vehicle would crash otherwise. Used in conjunction, Intelligent Speed Assistance, Autonomous Emergency Braking and front end design improvements would have a huge impact in the reduction of cycling and pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries. They act as multipliers on the benefits of each other and should be seen as a whole pedestrian/cyclist safety system.

ECF recommendations

- EP and Council to keep the commission proposal to improve front end design and AEB
- Commission to push work on AEB and vehicle design at UNECE to make sure it is ready

HGVs/Truck safety

Trucks are involved in around 4,000 fatal crashes in Europe every year. Many of these fatalities, almost 1,000⁸, are “vulnerable road users” such as cyclists and pedestrians. The relative risk of HGVs in urban areas⁹ is rising. Levels of urbanisation are expected to rise to 82% by 2050¹⁰ this will mean increased demand for goods, services and building works in our cities. We have to make these vehicles fit for purpose to be allowed in urban areas. The Commission proposal has included a right turning assist warning device in lorries to aid the driver detecting cyclists in blind spots of a right turning HGV. However there is no automatic braking, we believe that braking should also be part of the assist system. A direct vision standard for all trucks, a long running recommendation by ECF, has also been proposed allowing the driver to see clearly through the side and front windscreen. However there is a very long lead in time for this measure (up to 2028/2030)

ECF Recommendations -

- EP and Council to keep the warning assist for right turning trucks but add automatic braking
- Reduce the number of years to introduce better cab design

There are also other measures that can be important additions such as vehicles being fitted with a standard interface to allow fitment of alcohol interlocks, distraction detection systems, and event data recorders. ECF in general supports all the current Commissions proposed measures and package, this is an excellent proposal to be defended in general with some improvements possible by Member States and Parliament.

⁶https://ecf.com/sites/ecf.com/files/ECF_AGU%20ZURICH%20final%20report%20on%20passive%20safety.pdf

⁷https://ecf.com/sites/ecf.com/files/ECF_AGU%20ZURICH%20final%20report%20on%20passive%20safety.pdf

⁸ FKA, Design of a Tractor for Optimised Safety and Fuel Consumption 2011.

⁹ ibid

¹⁰ [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/doc/ump/swd\(2013\)524-communication.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/doc/ump/swd(2013)524-communication.pdf)

