European Transport Safety Council

Press release

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In-car automated emergency calls move a step closer

Brussels – EU plans for all new cars to be fitted with automated emergency call devices (eCall) moved a step closer today following a vote in the European Parliament's Transport committee. The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), representing safety campaigners and experts across the EU, welcomed the move.

Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director of ETSC said:
"After a serious car crash, every second counts. This system has the potential to save many lives because it will enable the emergency services to respond quicker.

"The European Parliament has been a strong supporter of eCall, it's important that Parliament negotiators continue to support the strongest possible implementation of the technology during negotiations with member states on the final deal."

"This technology should not be limited to cars, it also needs to be extended to other vehicles, including lorries, buses and ultimately motorcycles."

The Transport committee also called on member states to run awareness campaigns in advance of the system's introduction.

The eCall package of legislation also includes requirements for eCall devices to be approved under the European type approval system – this will be a subject to a vote in the parliament's Internal Market committee on 23 January. Before becoming law, a deal will need to be struck with member state transport ministers and approved by the full Parliament.

Notes to editors:

- Research shows that, with eCall, emergency service response time would be cut by 50% in rural areas and 40% in urban areas. See: www.esafetysupport.info/en/ecall_toolbox/related_studies/. The German study "STORM" (Stuttgart Transport Operation by Regional Management), showed almost 50% rescue time improvement in rural areas, with a net gain of around 10 minutes. Rescue time in urban areas would be improved by 40%. See: STORM, Stuttgart Transport Operation by Regional Management (2011).

- See ETSC's position paper on eCall:
http://etsc.eu/documents/eCall_ETSC_Position_30%20September%202013.pdf

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