GOODYEAR DUNLOP

The Role of the Tire Industry for Road Safety

Speech of Arthur de Bok, President Goodyear Dunlop, at the European Transport Safety Council Lunch "Getting to grips with tire safety", Brussels 8 December 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be here today and share with you the efforts that the tire industry, and in particular Goodyear Dunlop, have been making to contribute to improved road safety. And I would like to address special thanks to the European Transport Safety Council for having dedicated this lunch debate to the role of tires for safety.

At Goodyear Dunlop, we have a very strong commitment to road safety, which has remained constant throughout our long history of innovation. Taking as a reference the **three vital components** of an integrated approach to road safety - vehicle performance, driver behavior, and infrastructure, we believe that as a tire manufacturer our strength and obligation is to contribute to the first two areas – the vehicles performance and the education of the driver. Therefore our commitment is to continue developing innovative tire technologies that improve the vehicles safety performance. We are also committed to run various campaigns to raise the level of awareness amongst Europe's drivers on the significant role of tires for safety and the importance of proper tire maintenance and use.

Let me underline that tires are astonishing creations. Being the only link between the vehicle and the road, they have multiple functions. To name just a few: to support and carry the load, to adhere to the road and ensure vehicle's handling at high and low speeds and at various temperatures. Tires also influence the vehicle's noise and fuel consumption, which are important environmental considerations.

In addition, tires have to be able to go thousands of kilometers, be resistant to damage, and show excellent performance despite huge forces. Premium tires are indeed highly sophisticated products.

Technology: Tires/ Vehicles

Technology therefore is key in the development of great performing tires. In 2012, the tire industry will face a significant change: From November 2012, EU legislation requires that consumers see tires in their dealerships carrying a standardized label which provides information on three key tire performance attributes: rolling resistance, wet grip and exterior rolling noise. We are confident this label will allow consumers to make better informed choices. It will also empower consumers and fleet owners to

focus more on performance when purchasing a tire. In general I believe it will draw attention to the important role tires play in road safety and to the quality benefits that premium brands deliver.

The effect on a vehicle's safety can be indeed tremendous: Again, looking at the tire label, the difference between a future G rating and an A rating for a set of four identical tires for a passenger car could be 18 meters in stopping distance on a wet road, for a typical passenger car driving at 80 km/h. This is around four car lengths or the full length of a bus or major truck. However, as little as one meter could be the difference between life and death in an emergency braking situation on the road.

We welcome the adoption of the tire label, as it integrates safety and environmental aspects, and it will increase the number of tires with better performance on European roads. However, the upcoming label of course does not tell you everything about a tire. There are many more safety and environmental related parameters that need to be considered when judging a tire's performance. Goodyear Dunlop analyzes over 50 criteria during the tire development and testing process, such as the tire's wet and dry handling performance, its stopping distance on dry roads and its aquaplaning resistance, or – looking at the upcoming winter season – its performance on snow, ice and slush at low temperatures.

At the time when the EU legislator adopted the new tire label, it also strengthened the **minimum performance requirements for the type approval of tires**, including the wet grip criterion for passenger car tires. This adoption will also raise the overall quality level of tires on the EU market.
Therefore we regard both regulations – the tire labeling and the type approval law – as examples of a regulatory frame on technology that will improve road safety on European roads.

Looking at the vision of Goodyear Dunlop when it comes to technological improvements in the area of road safety, let me refer to some of the technologies in which we invest significant R&D resources. These are technologies offering consumers more safety in winter, on wet roads and extended mobility in case of a flat tire.

Why are winter tires important? The right tire in combination with appropriate driving behavior can improve driving safety significantly. Therefore, especially in winter, when driving conditions worsen and the risk of road accidents increases, winter tires are an extremely important contributor to a safer journey. This is thanks to their special design and tread compounds differentiating them significantly from summer tires.

Thanks to its high grip on wet, snow and ice at low temperatures, a **winter tire** can significantly reduce the braking distance of a vehicle in winter conditions. A winter tire makes a difference not only in snowy conditions, but also gives improved performance

on dry roads at low temperatures, typically under 7℃. At a temperature of 6℃ winter tires can save some 4 meters of braking distance in comparison to summer tires. The lower the temperature, the more significant this difference becomes. At -5 ℃ the braking distance with the winter tires would be about 13 meters shorter[1]. This is enormous when you think that each meter might count for saving a life or avoiding a serious injury.

Furthermore, by driving on the right tires in the right season consumers can increase the overall mileage, which has certain environmental benefits.

Another excellent example of safety and extended mobility is our **RunOnFlat tire** technology. This technology allows drivers to continue their journey despite a tire puncture, even with a fully deflated tire. Most important: It helps drivers to retain control over their car at the moment of a sudden loss of air. RunOnFlat enables safe driving for at least 80 km with a maximum speed of 80 km/h at very low or even no inflation pressure. This minimum guaranteed distance is normally enough to reach a safe parking place or a garage. We are convinced that RunOnFlat is the best available solution in case of a tire puncture and increases a person's safety on the road significantly.

We are also highly supportive of another technology related to tires: the **tire pressure monitoring systems (TPMS)**. By promptly signaling the drivers a potential tire puncture or under-inflated tires, TPMS has great benefits for both safety and the environment. It can prevent accidents, and – very important from an environment point of view – ensure an optimal tire pressure which will reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

User Behavior

It is important to recognize that even the best safety technology cannot fully deliver its potential benefits if it is not properly applied. It is paramount to stress the important role of the driver. Drivers should regularly check their tires, e.g. for optimal tire pressure and for compliance with the legal minimum tread depth. They should also choose the right tires for the respective season and weather conditions. Hence our mission is not only to continuously improve the performance of our tires, we also constantly raise consumers' awareness on behavioral aspects. We have been investing great efforts in various safety campaigns across Europe.

[1] It should be noted that there are various factors influencing the braking distance, such as type and quality of the road, temperature, vehicle type, etc, and therefore there are no absolute values of braking distance.
The examples given herein are however based on concrete Goodyear tests: in all the examples the tests were performed with an VW Golf V, on a low friction surface, with tire size 205/55R16: a) wet braking at +6 ℃ from 90 km/h to 0 km/h; b) wet braking at +2 ℃ from 90 km/ h to 0 km/h; c) snow braking at -5 ℃ from 50 km/h to 0 km/h; d) ice braking at -5 ℃ from 50 km/h to 0 km/h.

Yet, we see the need and opportunity for **regulatory action to encourage consumers to follow the right practices for safety.**

Through a road safety survey that Goodyear Dunlop carried out in 2010, we discovered some striking results. Nearly half of the respondents across several EU countries said they rarely or never change to winter tires when it is appropriate to do so. And while almost 90% indicated that they are likely to check their tire tread depth regularly to improve safety when driving, one third of them were not able to remember the last time they checked this. Similarly with tire pressure: drivers are aware of the safety benefits from the proper pressure, yet many of them would ignore checks before setting on a long trip. As a reminder, experts recommend tire inflation checks every two weeks.

This is why we plead to the European and national legislators for the following steps related to tires to increase the safety on European roads:

- We plead for a more consistent regulatory picture of **winter tires** across Europe, with an EU-harmonized set of standards. Today only a handful of EU countries are applying strict rules for use of winter tires in winter conditions, and quite a few Member States with relevant weather conditions do not even have a recommendation. We welcome the recent Resolution of the European Parliament on the Road Safety Action Plan over the next decade. The Resolution calls on the European Commission "to draw up, within two years, a legislative proposal for a harmonized approach on winter tires for passenger cars, buses and lorries in EU regions, taking into account the weather conditions in each Member State"[2]. Apart from its undisputable value for safety, an EU law on mandatory winter tires will be advantageous also for the free movement of passengers and goods within the Single Market.

- Starting from next year, TPMS will already be obligatory for new cars in Europe[3]. Based on the recognition of the TPMS' benefits to safety and the environment, the EU legislator should consider extension of this rule to the other mentioned types of vehicles and **make the TPMS technology mandatory for light and heavy duty vehicles**.

- In terms of type approval rules for tires and for a consistent approach to safety, we would like to see a **minimum required level of wet grip performance** of tires for light and heavy commercial vehicles. At present these rules exist only for passenger car tires, although the upcoming tire label will indicate the wet grip also of tires for the other categories, namely vans, trucks and buses.

[2] European Parliament Resolution of 27 September 2011 on European Road Safety 2011-2020 (2010/2235(INI)).
[3] Regulation 661/2009/EC concerning type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles, their trailers and systems, components and separate technical units intended therefore.

And because making good legislation is just as important as properly enforcing existing laws, we also would like to draw attention to:

- The need for **mandatory introduction of key tire knowledge as part of the driver's license requirements**, with a practical driving test as part of the exam;
- We also see the need for enforcement of tire checks as a **mandatory part of all national periodical vehicle inspections, as well as of roadside inspections**. This too will help increase awareness on key safety requirements, such as EU tire type approval marking, minimum allowed tread depth and regular visual checks for potential damages on the tire.

To conclude, I would like to refer again to the interaction between technology, driver behavior and legislation. It is important that we do not waste the safety benefits we achieve by developing new tire technologies through a lack of driver education. We should ensure that road safety education continues through each motorist's driving career since it is a genuine lifelong learning. Alongside that, we all as key players in the area of road safety should work closely together to ensure that the legislator creates the regulatory framework necessary to make this happen. Only by acting together will we achieve the greatest success.

Thank you very much for your attention.

About Goodyear Dunlop

Goodyear Dunlop Tires Europe B.V. ("GDTE") is a Dutch holding company whose objective is to manufacture, distribute and sell tires for various distribution markets and to engage in certain other automotive and vehicle parts and rubber and polymer related businesses. It is a joint venture company between the US-based The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company ("Goodyear"), one of the world's largest tire companies, and Japan-based Sumitomo Rubber Industries, another major tire manufacturer. GDTE is active throughout the EU, employs more than 20,000 persons and operates over a dozen manufacturing plants in the EU. Globally, Goodyear employs more than 70,000 people and operates more than 60 facilities in 26 countries around the world. Sumitomo Rubber Industries, owner of the Dunlop premium tire brand, employs more than 5,000 persons in 16 countries worldwide.
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