



NEWS RELEASE

Boost for Intelligent Speed Assistance in EU Commercial Vehicles

8th of November 2013, Brussels – “ETSC welcomes today’s publication as a next significant step in rolling out Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) technologies in the EU. Speed is the biggest risk factor leading to deaths and injuries on EU roads. As such, action to observe better compliance with speed limits across the EU is fundamental if we are serious about reducing the unacceptably high toll – in terms of loss of life and limb as well as material costs – of traffic collisions,” said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC¹ Executive Director upon the publication of a European Commission study² exploring the use of in-vehicle speed management technologies for commercial vehicles. “The large-scale introduction of in-vehicle speed management technologies, starting with commercial vehicles in the EU, would implement a long standing recommendation of ETSC,” added Mr. Avenoso.

The European Commission study evaluates the effects of the implementation of Directive 92/6/EEC on speed limitation devices. The study recommends, as ways of improving the Directive’s effectiveness, exploring the options of introducing ISA to the vehicles currently covered by the legislation, as well as extending its requirements to some light commercial vehicles.

Given the high risk of speeding, ETSC believes that efforts should be made, at all the appropriate policy-making levels, to improve speed management and compliance with speed limits. With 80% non-compliance with speed limits on urban roads where the most vulnerable try to get around, something must be done.³ “Intelligent Speed Assistance, or ISA, is simply an in-vehicle technology aimed to improve road safety by increasing compliance with the posted speed limits,” said Mr. Avenoso. Moreover, compared with other options to manage speed and ensure compliance with speed limits – such as traffic calming or traditional police enforcement – ISA would prove less costly to implement and garners higher levels of public support.

In order to provide more information about ISA technologies and their life-saving potential on EU roads, ETSC prepared a document answering Frequently Asked Questions about ISA: http://etsc.eu/documents/Intelligent_Speed_Assistance_FAQs_2013.pdf

In 2011, the European Parliament already *‘called on the Commission to draw up a proposal to fit vehicles with ‘intelligent speed assistance systems’*”.⁴ Furthermore, 82% of the stakeholders surveyed as part of the recent EC Study believe that the ISA system should be introduced to all commercial vehicles. Introducing ISA should be a priority action to reach both the EU 2020 road safety target of halving road deaths and the long term 2050 vision of zero road deaths.

“It is very important to make it clear that ISA technologies in no way take away the driver’s control over the vehicle, while there is also a strong acceptance and recognition by the public of the fact that speeding is a major road safety problem,”⁵ said Mr. Avenoso. “Trying to turn the debate away from preventing death and injury to an argument about personal freedom is short-sighted and quite frankly irresponsible. Constantly knowing the speed limit, as well as having a warning from the vehicle if one is going too fast, is not some Orwellian dystopia, but a scientifically proven way of saving lives. We should put to bed the idea that freedom means one should be allowed to needlessly put others at risk,” said Mr. Avenoso.

Despite the fact that the top speed of heavy commercial vehicles and buses and coaches in the EU is restricted to 90km/h and 100 km/h respectively, the latest ETSC analysis shows that speeding remains a common phenomenon among these vehicles.⁶ “The majority of the nearly 4,000 killed annually in collisions involving heavy vehicles (heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches) are not their occupants, highlighting these vehicles as a priority target group for the introduction of speed management technologies such as ISA,” concluded Mr. Avenoso.

Background

Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) is the term given to a range of devices that assist drivers in choosing appropriate speeds and complying with speed limits. Intelligent Speed Assistance technologies bring speed limit information into the vehicle. Drivers receive the same information that they see (or sometimes miss seeing) on traffic signs through an on-board communication system, helping them to keep track of the legal speed limit all along their journey. Information regarding the speed limit for a given location is usually identified from an on-board digital map in the vehicle. Other systems use speed sign reading and recognition. The information is then communicated to the driver in any of the following three ways: informing the driver of the limit (advisory ISA), warning them when they are driving faster than the limit (warning ISA) or actively aiding the driver to abide by the limit (assisting ISA).

For more information please contact ETSC Communications Manager Mircea Steriu at mircea.steriu@etsc.eu, or Policy Director Ellen Townsend at ellen.townsend@etsc.eu, tel. +32 (0)2 230.41.06.

Notes to editors:

¹ ETSC is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries in transport in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 46 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.eu

² The study is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/vehicles/speed_limitation_evaluation_en.pdf

³ Road Safety Target in Sight: Making up for lost time 4th ETSC Road Safety PIN Report
<http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC%20PIN%20Report%202010.pdf>

⁴ European Parliament (2011) Report on European road safety 2010/2235(INI)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONGML+REPORT+A7-2011-0264+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

⁵ Link to FAQs

⁶ The figures below show the percentage of HGVs exceeding the speed limit on EU roads. For more details, see ETSC (2013) Back on track to reach the EU 2020 Road Safety Target? 7th Road Safety PIN Report
http://etsc.eu/documents/PIN_Annual_report_2013_web.pdf

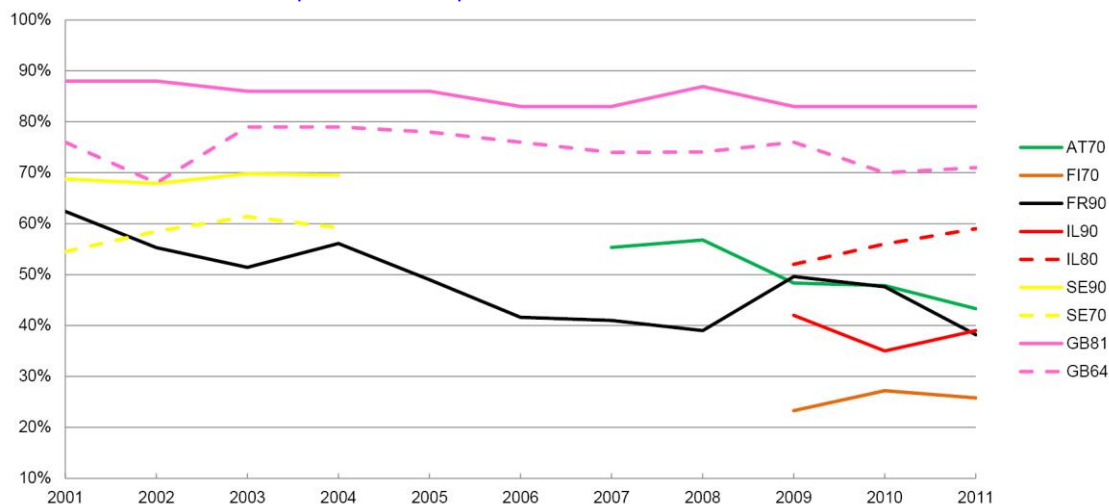


Fig. 1 Percentage of goods vehicles over 3.5 t exceeding the speed limit on rural roads other than motorways.

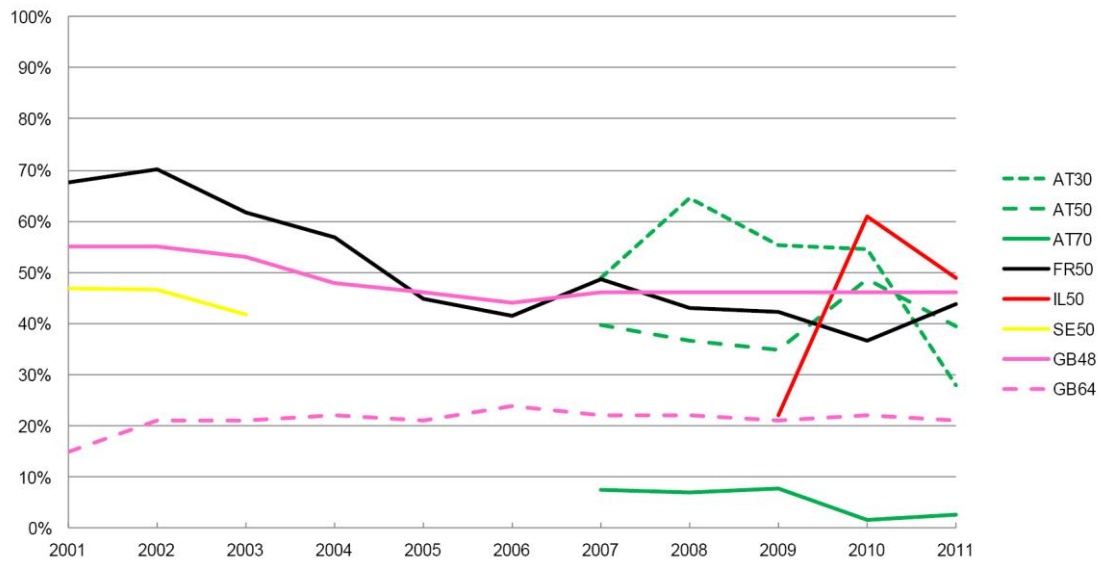


Fig. 2 Percentage of goods vehicles over 3.5 t exceeding the speed limit on urban roads.