



NEWS RELEASE

German Bundestag discusses introducing Alcolocks

15 November 2007, Berlin – Alarming drink driving death rates and measures to combat alcohol misuse in road transport were in the spotlight at the round-table discussion in the German Parliament today attended by Bundestag deputies, road safety experts, police officials. The event was organised by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)⁽¹⁾ and the Social Democratic group (SPD) in the framework of ETSC's "Safe & Sober" anti-drink driving programme.

Drink driving is the second greatest cause of road deaths in the EU, accounting for 10,000, or roughly 25%, of total road deaths. Between 2% and 3% of drivers in the EU are estimated to have an illegal Blood Alcohol Content (BAC). In Germany alone, 603 victims died in alcohol related accidents in 2005. Although the number of drink driving accidents in Germany has been going down in the past years, every ninth road victim still dies due to drink driving.

This is happening despite efficient ways to fight drink driving which exist already now. By far the most effective of these are Alcohol Interlocks (or simply "Alcolocks") which are well-known in several EU member states, the US and Canada. The 45th German Traffic Law Day (Verkehrsgesetztag) in 2007 stated that Alcolocks are very useful devices which prevent an individual from drinking and driving. Moreover, the German Traffic Congress (Verkehrsexpertentag) 2006 proposed Alcolocks to be used for rehabilitation programmes for recidivist drink driving offenders in conjunction with other measures.

The experience of using Alcolocks in the EU and their possible introduction in Germany was discussed in depth at today's round table of ETSC and SPD Transport Policy. The meeting addressed the question of whether field trials for commercial drivers or recidivist offenders would be desirable and feasible here, as well as some other aspects of the drink driving problem and possible solutions to it.

The objective of the discussion and the "Safe & Sober" campaign, which is run by ETSC in partnership with VOLVO, is to raise awareness amongst policy makers, the private sector as well as some key opinion leaders for a systematic approach to reduce drink driving, especially in commercial transport. The campaign will identify and promote Best Practice from the health and transport sectors alike. It will include measures relating to education (e.g. effective information campaigns), enforcement (e.g. random breath testing) and engineering (e.g. alcohol interlocks).

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Note to Editors:

(1) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of transport crashes and casualties in Europe. ETSC seeks to identify and promote effective measures on the basis of international scientific research and best practice. It brings together 37 organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.