



PRESS NOTICE

TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2003

Commission to issue proposal offering 70% less pedestrian protection than requested

On 19 February the European Commission is planning to adopt a very weak legislative proposal on safer car fronts. Safety and consumer organisations fear this proposal will not provide a sufficient level of protection for pedestrians.

DG Enterprise has only consulted the car industry. Safety and consumer organisations have not been involved. ETSC, BEUC and ANEC¹ question the Commission's new forms of governance if "consultation with all stakeholders" only involves industry - in this case, the car industry.

We understand that while EEVC² pedestrian crash tests are only an option in the first phase of this draft proposal, the tests agreed in the voluntary agreement between DG Enterprise and the European car industry (ACEA) in 2001 will be mandatory. According to a new study by the UK Transport Research Laboratory³, these tests offer 70% less protection against fatal injury than the EEVC tests.

EEVC may then become mandatory in the second phase. But the content of the second phase remains uncertain, as the EEVC tests are to be subject to a feasibility study in 2004! We cannot see why the results of 22 years of EU-funded research and development validated in 1993 and used since 1996 in the EU-funded Euro-NCAP car-testing programme⁴ should be subject to a feasibility study. The timescale of 12 years to implement the uncertain second phase (EEVC) is much too lenient (a missed opportunity to save 24, 000 lives⁵) whereas a car on EU roads now, the Honda Civic, already meets 80% of the EEVC requirements.

"This is bad regulation if it can be called regulation at all", said BEUC Director Jim Murray, on behalf of safety and consumer organisations. "This weak legislative proposal is unacceptable, goes against EU Treaty obligations and flies in the face of the public interest. We urge the Commission to go back to the drawing board and look again at this proposal."

**Contact: ETSC for further briefing material, Marie Defrance, Tel: +32 (0)2 230 41 06/40 04; Email: information@etsc.be.
BEUC: Caroline Hayat, Tel: + 32 (0)2 743 15 90; Email: caroline.hayat@beuc.org**

¹ ETSC, The European Transport Safety Council; BEUC, The European Consumers Organisation; ANEC, The European Association for the Coordination of Consumer Representation in Standardization.

² EEVC (European Enhanced Safety of Vehicles Committee) is a consortium of Member States (France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom) national transport laboratories and industry, established to focus on crash safety.

³ TRL Ltd Costs and effectiveness of the Honda Civic's pedestrian protection, and the benefits of the EEVC and ACEA test proposals, April 2002

⁴ See the results of pedestrian testing in EuroNCAP at: www.euroncap.com

⁵ Estimation of casualty savings from adoption of EEVC tests: 2000 lives annually at EU level.