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RAC comment on the planned introduction of eCall, the emergency alert system

On 28 April 2015, [the European Parliament voted to introduce eCall](#), the in-vehicle emergency alert system, into all new cars and light vans by the end of March 2018.

RAC spokesman Simon Williams said: “Automatically alerting emergency services in the event of a crash is a very positive use of technology which has the potential to benefit thousands of motorists across Europe in years to come.

“However, the key issue that needs to be addressed is around the alerting system and the fact that eCall will only be triggered when a serious collision occurs and a vehicle’s airbag is deployed. While this appears at first sight to make good sense, the potential benefit to motorists could be far greater if alerts were able to be sent in lower speed incidents, which might still lead to occupants requiring emergency assistance.

“As it is, the number of lives that would be saved by the system will be relatively small, particularly in the UK, so drivers will end up paying extra money for a service that is far less likely to benefit to them.

“So while eCall will undoubtedly offer some advantages, the system being brought in by the EU is something of an opportunity lost – crash detection technology already exists that covers the entire spectrum of accidents from low speed to high speed. If this more sensitive technology was used within eCall even more people could benefit from receiving faster emergency help from the most appropriate emergency service. In addition, insurers and – in the case of businesses, fleet managers – could be provided with appropriate information about the incident.

“While this might involve greater costs in terms of the additional verbal checks that would need to be made by call centre teams through eCall to establish the seriousness of the incident the overall benefit to motorists and their passengers would be significantly higher.

“The RAC has developed its own technology which has been found by the Transport Research Laboratory to be 92% accurate in detecting crash and non-crash events in more than 60 tests. These results are significantly higher than the industry average of less than 70% for on-road systems, and have led to talks with vehicle manufacturers with a view to incorporating the technology in vehicles at manufacture. Currently, the technology is available as a part of the RAC’s telematics service.”

The press office email address is press.office@rac.co.uk and media centre is at media.rac.co.uk. **Please note:** the press office is unable to help with individual customer enquiries - please visit the [RAC contacts page](#) to find the right contact.

About the RAC

The RAC, an iconic UK brand, provides complete peace of mind to nearly 14 million UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. As well as its premium nationwide breakdown assistance service – with an expert branded patrol workforce attending more than two million breakdowns every year – it offers a wide range of market-leading products across insurance, legal services, vehicle inspections and service, maintenance and repair. Included in this is the first-of-its-kind nationwide Mobile Mechanics service which brings the garage to homes and workplaces.

At the forefront of new solutions for business fleets and consumers, the RAC's breakdown service is electric-ready with mobile EV charging technology and can be called on using [myRAC](#) – the all-in-one route planner, fuel finder and breakdown reporting app.

Visit the [RAC website](#).

Contacts



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