

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2005/2211(INI)	Procedure completed
Road safety: the eCall system to citizens, 2nd communication eSafety		
Subject		
3.20.06 Transport regulations, road safety, roadworthiness tests, driving licence		
3.40.03 Motor industry, cycle and motorcycle, commercial and agricultural vehicles		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		11/10/2005
		PSE TITLEY Gary	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Communications Networks, Content and Technology		

Key events			
14/09/2005	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2005)0431	Summary
17/11/2005	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/03/2006	Vote in committee		Summary
27/03/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0072/2006	
27/04/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
27/04/2006	Debate in Parliament		
27/04/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0183/2006	Summary
27/04/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2005/2211(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure

Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/6/31686

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(2005)0431	14/09/2005	EC	Summary
Committee draft report	PE367.657	04/01/2006	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee	PE367.995	02/02/2006	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A6-0072/2006	27/03/2006	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T6-0183/2006	27/04/2006	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2006)2095	11/05/2006	EC	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2006)2906	31/07/2006	EC	

Road safety: the eCall system to citizens, 2nd communication eSafety

PURPOSE: To present a Communication calling for urgent action on the pan-European in-vehicle emergency call, known as eCall.

CONTENT: This Report works alongside the i2010 Communication on 'A European Information Society for Growth and Employment', the purpose of which is to outline a strategy on preparing the EU for information technology developments by the year 2010. One particular feature of the strategy is transport and how information technology can improve this vital element of the EU's economy. A flagship initiative under the Transport Chapter of the i2010 Communication is devoted to the establishment of 'The Intelligent Car'. Linked to the concept of the Intelligent Car is a pan-European in-vehicle emergency call, known as eCall, to which this present Communication is devoted.

With over 43 000 road fatalities in the EU's 25 Member States in 2004 the Commission suggests that a more pro-active engagement on road safety issues is needed if the trend in road fatality statistics is to be bucked. Further, with the EU having committed itself to reducing road accident deaths from 43 000 to 25 000 by the year 2010, a more active approach to curbing car accidents is essential. One step towards achieving this goal could be the deployment of the pan-European in-vehicle emergency call. It works thus: In case of an accident, the eCall device in the car will transmit an emergency call that automatically goes to the nearest emergency service. It can be triggered manually. Alternatively, in cases of a severe accident, the car can send an automatic distress call. The life saving feature of eCall is the accurate information it provides on the location of the accident site with the emergency services being notified immediately so that they know exactly where to go. This results in a drastic reduction in the rescue time. When medical care for severely injured people is available at an earlier time after the accident, the death rate and severity of trauma resulting from the injuries can be significantly reduced - alternatively known as the 'Golden Hour Principle' of accident medicine.

In line with the development of eCall an EU Driving Group has been established with a view to producing a framework business model for eCall and to define the roles for both the public and private stakeholders. The Driving Group has produced a Memorandum of Understanding, in which it binds stakeholders to implement eCall on the basis of common approved standards and interface specifications, including the Minimum Set of Data. Accordingly, a Road Map for eCall has been defined whereby the following principles have been agreed:

- To agree an eCall roll-out plan, business model and standards by the end of 2005.
- To establish full specifications of the in-vehicle eCall system. Development is to begin by mid 2006.
- To complete full scale field tests with early adaptors in 2007.
- To introduce eCall as a standard equipment in all vehicles entering the market after September 2009.
- For the eCall technology to work, the EU emergency services will need to equip their PSAPs with the new technology thus allowing them to process eCall location reports. The Commission proposes this be done by the end of 2007.

Key to the realisation of the eCall, however, is the active participation of the Member States. Without their involvement it will be impossible to standardise the technology so that it can be read by all of the EU's emergency services and recognised by all cars using the EU's road network.

To complement these measures, therefore, the Commission calls on the Member States to:

- Sign the MoU.
- Promote the emergency number 112 or E112
- Upgrade their PSAPs allowing them to handle location-enhanced E112 calls and eCalls.
- Provide adequate location-enhanced emergency services and language support.

The Commission concludes its report by noting that technologies and systems can and do save lives. In addition, they reduce the severity of

injuries caused by road accidents. The challenge now is to ensure the large-scale deployment of eCall across the EU. The technology exists ? and it is now up to the Member States to invest in the necessary infrastructure. Upgrading the emergency services comes with a cost, but the estimated benefit-cost ratio is considered extremely positive. The Commission, therefore, calls for an immediate Member State response to the Communication's recommendations. The Commission will follow progress closely. Should there be no further movement on the eCall initiative in line with the Road Map summarised above the Commission will consider other measures.

Road safety: the eCall system to citizens, 2nd communication eSafety

The committee adopted the own-initiative report on road safety and the introduction of the eCall system drawn up by Gary TITLEY (PES, UK) in response to the Commission's communication on bringing eCall to citizens. MEPs welcomed the pan-European eCall initiative as "the first building block of the intelligent car initiative" that "could save up to 2 500 lives a year and bring about a reduction of up to 15% in the gravity of injuries". The report recommended that all European authorities include eCall information within their public road safety campaigns, and said that "the large-scale-roll-out of eCall by 2009 is a priority of the eSafety initiative".

The committee welcomed the motor industry's "unambiguously positive" position on the introduction of the eCall system but noted the disparity between the estimates of the cost of a built-in vehicle eCall system made by the Commission and those made by the industry. It therefore called on the two parties "to pursue a deeper cost-efficiency analysis for every action to be undertaken to implement eCall". Whilst encouraging a "gradual introduction and large-scale roll-out of eCall", MEPs were also aware that new technologies may prove costly and that consumers may be unwilling to pay for these. They therefore called on all stakeholders to work together to define incentives to speed up the introduction of the eCall system. The report noted that the costs involved may be particularly prohibitive in areas where the service is needed most - i.e. rural or isolated areas..

The committee regretted that Member States had been slow in encouraging the use of the single European emergency number 112, given that the e-Call system is based on the use of 112 and E112 (location information requirements in public wireless networks for emergency calls), and therefore urged them to take the necessary measures as soon as possible. It also stressed the importance of all Member States signing the Memorandum of Understanding - a memorandum produced by the eCall Driving Group - which aims to ensure the functioning of eCall in any EU State. MEPs concluded that, for any proper improvement to be realised, this memorandum should be "converted into a letter of intent, signed by all stake holders, as soon as possible".

Road safety: the eCall system to citizens, 2nd communication eSafety

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Gary TITLEY (PES, UK) in response to the Commission's communication on bringing eCall to citizens. (Please see the summary of 21/03/2005.) Parliament recalled that, in 2004, 43 000 people died in road accidents in the EU-25 Member States. A pan-European in-vehicle emergency call service/function, eCall, could save up to 2 500 lives a year and bring about a reduction of up to 15% in the gravity of injuries. The introduction of the eCall system would reduce the annual external costs of road traffic by up to EUR 26 billion, thus relieving citizens of a burden of up to EUR 26 billion. Parliament stated that efforts should be made to reduce, not internalise, external costs. The eCall system had the potential to reduce the response time to accidents by approximately 40% in urban areas and approximately 50% in rural areas.

Parliament stated that the system is to be welcomed as the first building block of the intelligent car initiative. It stressed the importance of all Member States signing the MoU as soon as possible, in order to demonstrate a clear commitment to the implementation of eCall to other stakeholders, if eCall is to be fully rolled out in 2009. It suggested that, having regard to the agreed schedule of the Galileo Programme, it would be preferable if the roll-out of eCall could be coordinated with the fully operational phase, but that any delay in the introduction of Galileo should not obstruct the implementation of eCall.

Parliament welcomed the motor industry's unambiguously positive position towards the introduction of the eCall system. A majority of Member States had been slow in encouraging the use of the single European emergency number 112. The Commission should evaluate the implementation by the Member States of Directive 2002/22/EC on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services in relation to the appropriate answering and handling of calls to the single European emergency call number, including the caller location.

Member States should complete the implementation of E112 as soon as possible, to promote the use of both 112 and E112 and take steps to provide the appropriate infrastructure in the Public Service Answering Points such as language training, availability, location identification, and call handling to comply with the E112 regulation, which will then allow for incremental upgrading to handle eCalls.

Parliament went on to note the disparity between the Commission's and industry's estimates of the cost of a built-in vehicle eCall system. It invited the Commission and industry to pursue a deeper cost-efficiency analysis for every action to be undertaken to implement eCall.

Parliament referred to the potential cost of the eCall system, which might be higher in regions affected by permanent constraints. New car buyers (particularly at the cheaper end of the market) were not always willing or able to pay the full cost. It called on all stakeholders to work together to define incentives to speed up the introduction of the eCall system. Parliament was particularly concerned that the cost of eCall might be prohibitively expensive for those with the greatest need, for example those in rural or isolated areas. The eCall system should eventually apply to all vehicles, including Heavy Goods Vehicles.