



European
Automobile
Manufacturers
Association



EuroRAP
EUROPEAN ROAD ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME
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READING THE ROAD AHEAD

We, the undersigned who represent Europe's road users, roads and vehicle industries and the principal safety organisations measuring the safety of roads and vehicles call on European nations to maintain our road infrastructure to keep it safe and fit for its modern purpose.

Throughout Europe the declining condition of our roads has become a matter of deep concern. The failure to maintain the value of this fundamental asset underpinning the entire European economy and society brings costs that everyone will pay in higher taxes, higher motor and health insurance, and fewer jobs.

Roads that are not regularly maintained cost many times more to repair and reconstruct. Roads that are not properly maintained, marked and signed result in avoidable death, bodily injury and damage. Roads that are unfit for purpose fail to provide the connectivity on which jobs, the economy and society depends.

We endorse the call by Ministers meeting at the International Transport Forum (OECD) meeting representing 53 countries in Leipzig in May that the failure to finance transport infrastructure must be addressed. We believe failure to manage financing for the proper maintenance roads is a failure of good government.

The report *Roads that Cars can Read: A Quality Standard for Road Markings and Traffic Signs on Major Rural Roads* published jointly by EuroRAP and EuroNCAP with contributions from the FIA, ERF, IRU and ACEA has been prepared to inform the *Developing Safe, Efficient and Connected Mobility* conference. The failure to invest in proper road maintenance is not only putting drivers at risk but also the effective operation of future vehicle safety technologies in which European companies and institutions have invested billions.

Improved vehicle safety has been the single most important reason that road deaths have fallen in the last decade in many countries. Some countries in addition have invested successfully in infrastructure. Some have invested to catch up leading countries with initiatives on seat belt use and curbing drink driving and excessive speed. Depressed activity following the global financial crisis is temporarily hiding underlying trends. In this decade, there must be concerted action on safe roads, safe vehicles and safe driving to

move the 300,000 annual deaths and serious injuries and 2% loss of GDP in Europe towards zero in line with Europe's declared long term vision.

Vehicles in the showroom today go much further in protecting life than vehicles a decade ago. They can warn, guide and brake by reading road markings and signs. At least half the travel on Europe's roads by 2025 will be in vehicles equipped with these advanced technologies. But vehicles, like drivers, cannot function well if basic road markings and signs are non-existent, non-compliant with international conventions, worn out, obscured, inconsistent or confusing.

The report identifies that standards for basic road markings and signs can be migrated at low cost to become fit for purpose during normal replacement cycles if the common standards that exist today are adopted by all European nations and applied properly. This means mainly ensuring simple consistency in the width of white lines and ensuring that they reflect back enough light to be read by drivers and in-vehicle equipment in all weathers. It means removing unnecessary inconsistencies across borders in implementing basic safety signs already in international conventions - such as signs for "stop", "give way", speed limits or banned turns. It means understanding the importance of marking the edges of roads.

Based on an overview of existing national practices, research and discussion between transport and consumer associations, safety organisations, vehicle manufacturers and sign and marking industries, we believe that road markings on Europe's roads should adopt a simple and memorable "150 x 150" standard which is already commonly in use. Lane and edge marking should be white, 150mm wide and (under dry conditions) markings should reflect light at 150 mcd/lux/m². A quantitative definition of a 'good sign' will be elaborated in the 1st quarter of 2014.

Assuring the quality of Europe's roads must start with the network of greatest social and economic importance. Around 10% of Europe's roads - the motorways, national roads and busy regional road network - carry the majority of all Europe's travel and goods distribution. The majority of those killed in road crashes die on these roads. It is unacceptable that this busy network on which so much travel and risk is concentrated should not meet basic standards.

The next pathfinding step needed is an independent survey to find out the extent to which Europe's roads of economic importance already meet the basic standard so the scale of action that needs to be taken to make Europe's roads fit for the coming decade can be identified.

We call on the Commission and all stakeholders to support this strategy to develop roads that both drivers and vehicles can read.

Brussels, 27 November 2013