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Anti-crash radars: Commission enables cars to be equipped with road safety technology

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Bruss

Anti-crash radars: Commission enables cars to be equipped with road safety technology

Short-range radars that can detect collision dangers and automatically apply a car's brake available by mid-2005, further to a Decision adopted today by the European Commission, which allocates a specific radio frequency band to short-range radar devices, is the result of a drive by the Commission and EU radio spectrum and road safety experts. According to the Safety Action Programme, the number of road accident victims is to be halved in the EU by

Information Society and Media Commissioner Viviane Reding said: "Short-range radar can save lives. This technology, developed by industry partly with the help of EU-funded research, will reduce the frequency and cost of road accidents. Today's decision opens radio bands to short-range radar while preventing radar from interfering with other essential users of these frequencies. The Commission thereby provides a sound legal basis for the use of short-range radar technology. I hope the automotive industry will make full use of this opportunity."

To permit the use of short-range radars, an EU-wide radio frequency band had to be made available. This was done pursuant to the 2002 Radio Spectrum Decision which provides for a coordinated EU approach to radio spectrum matters. As effectively all radio frequencies are already used, the challenge was to enable short-range radars to operate in frequency bands at present used for other important purposes, including mobile telephony, satellite navigation, radio telescopes and police radars. The Commission thus had to ensure that short-range radars would not interfere with the accuracy of weather monitoring or the reliability of mobile networks. The Commission had therefore invited the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (Conférence Européenne des Administrations des Postes et Télécommunications) to work out detailed rules to avoid interference and also consulted the Radio Spectrum Committee, which had given a favourable opinion.

The use of short-range radar now made possible by the Commission is the first large-scale application of Ultra-wide Band in Europe. Ultra-wide Band is a low-power wireless technology that re-uses spectrum already employed for other services. Many other useful applications of this technology are also being developed with the support of EU-funded research, for example to enable wireless high-data transmission systems within the home and to help save victims in emergency situations.

Today's decision, which is to enter into force in mid-2005, opens the 24 GHz frequency band for a limited use of car radars across the EU. Beyond 2013, by which time the number of cars using SRR may reach a high level where other wireless services could be affected, new automotive radar applications will be required in the 79 GHz frequency band (79 GHz) already harmonised by the earlier Commission Decision 2004/545/EC.

Further information available on:

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/policy/radio_spectrum/ref_info/documents/legislative_documents/2005/ip0554.htm