

In-car hazard warnings to enhance safety

Published on 11 June 2009

By IET Transport Newsdesk



German researchers studying the use of wireless technologies to improve road safety have demonstrated the results of their work at the MAN Nutzfahrzeuge test facility in Munich.

MAN and the other participating companies in the AKTIV CoCar (cooperative cars) project used existing cellular communications systems to transmit relevant information from vehicle to vehicle, as well as between vehicles and the infrastructure.

The objective of the research was the timely provision of information relevant to safety to vehicles in the immediate vicinity, for example a warning about the end of a tailback or the emergency braking of a vehicle ahead of them. With this hazard warning, serious rear-end collisions can be avoided and traffic safety considerably improved.

For the demonstration, three scenarios were used to show how future early warning systems could be deployed. A MAN truck and two passenger vehicles from Daimler and VW were equipped with the appropriate technology.

> Emergency braking warning: when a vehicle brakes sharply, the information is transmitted to a server and received by CoCar-equipped vehicles in the danger zone;

> Warning about the end of a tailback: A vehicle transmits a warning as soon as its hazard lights are activated. The server relays the information to other vehicles, depending on their location and direction of travel;

> Warning about an emergency service vehicle: a vehicle transmits a warning when its flashing lights are switched on. Vehicles ahead assess this warning as relevant and alert their drivers by displaying a symbol together with the distance calculated.

Visitors were also able to watch the information being received and processed by the traffic management centre on a monitor. In actual operation, the traffic management centre is able to advise road users how to react.

Because CoCar uses standard mobile technology, there is no distance limit on its operation and no requirement for costly new communications infrastructure.

<http://www.aktiv-online.org/englisch/aktiv-cocar.html>

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