

## Press Release

DEKRA presents Road Safety Report 2018 on Transport of Goods in Brussels

# European Commission Remains Determined to Increase Road Safety in the Union

- There is still plenty of potential for optimization
- Ongoing training remains important for professional drivers
- Disabling life-saving driver assistance systems is a risky business

DEKRA e.V.  
Corporate  
Communications  
Handwerkstrasse 15  
70565 Stuttgart,  
Germany

[www.dekra.com/en/press](http://www.dekra.com/en/press)

**The European Commission remains determined to increase road safety. Henrik Hololei, Director-General for Mobility and Transport: “Cooperative, connected and automated mobility solutions offer tremendous potential for eliminating road deaths and serious injuries. As digitalization opens up new opportunities to ensure interoperability between the different operators of the freight and logistics multimodal supply chain, innovative services aim to improve safety and reliability of operations. In order to future-proof road safety activity, our recently appointed European Coordinator for Road Safety, Matthew Baldwin will help drive forward the new road safety strategy 2021-2030, complemented by a comprehensive approach on cooperative, connected and automated mobility.” Hololei spoke at the DEKRA Annual Reception in Brussels where the international expert organization presented its 2018 Road Safety Report with a focus on the transport of goods.**

The accident figures from the EU member states clearly show that trucks are much safer than their reputation would suggest and are much less likely than cars to be involved in accidents. Yet this is still no reason to sound the all-clear. After all, due to the high masses involved, accidents involving heavy goods vehicles weighing twelve tonnes or more in particular often entail especially serious consequences – not only for truck drivers themselves but also, and above all, for car drivers and vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. “We have to make more efficient use of the potential inherent in the active and passive safety systems in commercial vehicles,” said DEKRA Board Member Clemens Klinke, presenting the report.

“Horror Crash on Highway,” “Truck Crashes at Full Speed into End of Traffic Queue,” “Three Dead After Collision with Wrong-Way Truck,” “Family Crushed Between Two Trucks” – These headlines and more regularly appear in the media, with the accompanying reports telling of accidents involving commercial vehicles in which people have either been seriously injured or lost their lives. Yet however tragic such accidents might be for those involved, we should not lose sight of the fact that in relation to the amount of miles they cover, trucks are much less likely

Date Stuttgart / Brussels, October 16, 2018 / No. 099-A  
Contact Wolfgang Sigloch  
Tel. (direct) +49.711.7861-2386  
Fax (direct) +49.711.7861-742386  
E-mail [wolfgang.sigloch@dekra.com](mailto:wolfgang.sigloch@dekra.com)

than cars to be involved in accidents involving injury. Accident figures show a fundamentally positive trend in many parts of the world – a trend that has been ongoing for many years now. In the EU member states, for example, the number of people killed in accidents involving commercial vehicles weighing 3.5 tonnes or more fell from 7,233 in 2006 to 3,848 in 2015 (down 47%). Although the figures are decreasing, the percentage of people killed in accidents involving commercial vehicles in relation to all traffic fatalities in the EU has remained at around the same level for a number of years. The other road users most frequently involved in such accidents are cars. Fifty-five percent of fatalities in accidents involving trucks occurred on rural roads, 25% in urban areas and 19% on highways.

“Even these few figures underline the need to counter these trends over the long term,” said Clemens Klinke. Addressing people, vehicle technology and infrastructure, the Road Safety Report highlights where action needs to be taken to make efficient use of all the available optimization potential for further enhancing the road safety of trucks.

### **Devastating consequences of collisions at the ends of traffic queues**

As one example of successful action, the DEKRA Management Board member mentioned the continued improvement of truck brakes over the past decades. In a study conducted by DEKRA comparing a modern-day Mercedes-Benz Actros with its predecessor, the SK, from 1997 (both fitted with a semi-trailer with a gross weight of 38.5 tonnes), the modern-day truck came to a stop after 41 meters in a full-braking maneuver from 80 km/h. The older vehicle, however, was still traveling at 43 km/h after covering this same distance and did not come to a standstill until after 57 meters.

The difference this shorter braking distance makes was demonstrated in DEKRA crash tests in which a truck traveling with a residual speed of around 40 km/h collided with the end of a traffic queue. “This kind of accident scenario unfortunately occurs all too often – frequently with devastating consequences,” said Klinke. “If a truck traveling at a high relative speed collides with a stationary or slow-moving car, the car can expect to suffer extreme deformation. And it is often the case that several cars are pushed into each other,” he explained.

Klinke stated that effective improvements can therefore be achieved primarily through the use of driver assistance systems designed to either avoid or reduce the severity of accidents. The aim is to ensure that distracted drivers are appropriately and quickly re-alerted to the reality of what’s happening around them on the road or, as soon as a collision becomes unavoidable, that braking is initiated automatically.

In DEKRA’s view, equipping vehicles with ever more assistance systems is an effective step toward “Vision Zero” – the objective of a world in which nobody is killed or seriously injured on our roads. It is crucial here, however, that drivers understand the system functions so that they do not potentially disable the “wrong”

system – such as the life-saving emergency braking system – due to a lack of knowledge.

“Drivers must also be aware that assistance systems cannot break the laws of physics – for example, as far as braking performance on wet or icy roads is concerned,” cautioned Clemens Klinke in Brussels.

Another requirement of all electronic systems is that they function reliably throughout a vehicle's entire service life, because only then can they have their desired impact. Regular vehicle inspections will therefore become even more important than they already are, not least because of the growing complexity of the systems and the risk of electronic tampering.

### **DEKRA's commitment to greater road safety**

Like the preceding reports since 2008, the latest DEKRA Road Safety Report, too, is much more than a collection of facts about the current state of affairs. It provides food for thought and specific recommendations for action for politicians, traffic experts, manufacturers, scientific institutions and associations. It is also meant to act as an essential companion for all road users.

DEKRA has been committed to improving road safety for over 90 years. The expert organization was one of the first signatories of the European Road Safety Charter and is just as unwavering in its support of the EU's action program to once more halve the number of deaths caused by road accidents by 2020. In national and international bodies, DEKRA's experts are highly valued as partners in dialog.

DEKRA's Road Safety Report 2018 is available online at [www.dekra.roadsafety.com](http://www.dekra.roadsafety.com). The site also features more detailed information on the content of the printed report, including videos and interactive graphics, as well as all reports published since 2008.

### **DEKRA's demands for greater road safety**

- Assistance systems briefly disabled by the driver – such as the emergency braking system – must be automatically re-enabled after just a few seconds.
- The electronic turning assistant should be among the legally required equipment for all commercial vehicles, as the emergency braking system and lane keeping assist already are.
- Like all other road users, professional drivers also have to be taught about how driver assistance systems and automated driving work, as well as the potential and risks associated with them.
- The functional capability of mechanical and electronic vehicle safety components must be ensured throughout the vehicle's entire service life, which is why the procedures involved in checking the relevant components as part of the regular main vehicle inspection should be made to comply with a high minimum level that is internationally recognized as far as possible.

- As the most important life-saver, safety belts must also be worn at all times in commercial vehicles.
- Professional drivers, too, must be made even more aware of the dangers of becoming distracted at the wheel.
- Required safety standards have to be defined for platooning trials, including the special identification of platoon vehicles to distinguish them from other vehicles.
- Better knowledge of proper load-securing methods and how to handle of hazardous materials is urgently needed.
- Standardized and internationally comparable accident statistics are absolutely crucial for defining measures aimed specifically at improving road safety – for example, the implementation of successful best-practice measures.

**Picture Captions:**

RSR 2018 Brussels: DEKRA Board Members Clemens Klinke, Ivo Rauh and Stefan Kölbl (from left) welcoming Director-General Henrik Hololei (right).

RSR 2018 brake comparison 1-3: A study conducted by DEKRA comparing a modern-day truck with its 20-year-old predecessor highlights the technical advances that have been made in brake systems.

RSR 2018 crash test 1-3: Recent DEKRA crash tests show the potential consequences of a collision involving a truck traveling at a residual speed of around 40 km/h.

**About DEKRA**

*DEKRA has been active in the field of safety for more than 90 years. Founded in 1925 in Berlin as Deutscher Kraftfahrzeug-Überwachungs-Verein e.V., it is today one of the world's leading expert organizations. DEKRA SE is a subsidiary of DEKRA e.V. and manages the Group's operating business. In 2017, DEKRA generated sales totalling more than 3.1 billion Euros. The company currently employs more than 44,000 people in more than 50 countries on all five continents. With qualified and independent expert services, they work for safety on the road, at work and at home. These services range from vehicle inspection and expert appraisals to claims services, industrial and building inspections, safety consultancy, testing and certification of products and systems, as well as training courses and temporary work. The vision for the company's 100th birthday in 2025 is that DEKRA will be the global partner for a safe world.*