

Press Release

DEKRA crash test highlights the importance of respecting the speed limit

A Narrow Escape or a Serious Accident? Speed Makes All the Difference

- At 30 km/h, stopping distance including reaction distance around 13 meters
- At 50 km/h, the driver has not even begun braking after that distance
- DEKRA experts urge drivers to respect the speed limit

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Assistance systems, automation, connected driving: When people think about road safety in the future, many immediately think of electronic systems – and indeed, their potential is not to be underestimated. However, over the medium term at least, the behavior of drivers will continue to play a crucial role on our roads. Take speeding, for example: For too many drivers, 10 km/h above the limit is nothing to speak of; even 20 km/h above the limit is acceptable for some. But the disastrous consequences this kind of attitude can have were revealed in a crash test conducted for the current DEKRA Road Safety Report.

Two test runs performed at the DEKRA Technology Center at the Lausitzring race track in Klettwitz, Germany, highlighted the differences in stopping distances between starting speeds of 30 km/h and 50 km/h. With the help of differential GPS control, the robot driver installed in the vehicle drove along exactly the same section of track and, at exactly the same point in both cases, was issued with the command to apply the brakes fully after a one-second reaction time. A child's stroller was placed in the way of the vehicle, symbolizing an unexpected traffic situation.

"The pictures are sobering. At a speed of 30 km/h, the vehicle comes to a stop right in front of the stroller after a stopping distance of around 13 meters," says DEKRA accident researcher Markus Egelhaaf. "In the second test run, which was conducted at 50 km/h, the vehicle covers a much longer distance in that initial second the driver needs to react." This means that the stroller is struck by the vehicle with undiminished speed and sent flying through the air before the driver can even begin to brake. "The baby in the stroller would be expected to suffer severe or even fatal injuries," says Egelhaaf.

Even if the speed limit in this case is exceeded by "just" 10 km/h, the consequences would still be disastrous. "With the vehicle traveling at an initial speed of 40 km/h, the stroller used in our example would still be impacted at a

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residual speed of around 35 km/h – that, too, would prove disastrous for a baby in the stroller.” This is why DEKRA’s accident experts are urging drivers to respect the speed limit. “This could help to prevent many serious accidents.”

More information (plus video) on the DEKRA crash test described in this press release can be found at <https://www.dekra-roadsafety.com/en/adherence-to-speed-limits-can-prevent-large-number-of-accident/>.

The annual DEKRA Road Safety Report was first published in 2008. This year’s report focuses on children under 15, and a special supplement especially for children underscores just how seriously DEKRA takes the safety of our youngest road users. The latest DEKRA Road Safety Report is available online at www.dekra-roadsafety.com.

Caption

The DEKRA crash test once again provides a sobering demonstration of the relationship between speed and braking/stopping distances. While a vehicle traveling at 30 km/h will come to a standstill after 13 meters, the reaction time at 50 km/h means that, even after covering this same distance, the driver has not even begun to apply the brakes. At 50 km/h, the vehicle strikes the stroller at full speed.

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 2018, DEKRA generated estimated sales totaling more than 3.3 billion euros. The company currently employs more than 45,000 people in approximately 60 countries on all six 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.