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FIA eSafety Campaign in Rome



by Coryse Borg - editorial@di-ve.com
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Some of the world's best motor sport drivers gathered on September 8 and 9 in Rome to take part in the eSafety Challenge, an annual event that promotes and highlights the life-saving potential of eSafety technologies.

The eSafety Challenge is supported jointly by the FIA Foundation, the European Commission, and EuroNCAP. The event hosted by Italian automobile club ACI is part of the eSafety Aware campaign.

Malta Motorsport Federation Chairman Tonio Cini was invited by the FIA Foundation and the Automobile Club d'Italia (ACI). The event was addressed by, amongst others, Jean Todt, President of eSafetyAware; Paul Clark MP, UK Minister for Transport; and Michael Schumacher, 7 times F1 World Champion.

"Today's eSafety Challenge shows that eSafety has the backing of policy makers, major automotive stakeholders, and some of the best drivers in the world. Just as with a seat belt today, one day it will be unthinkable to buy a car without eSafety on board. Our goal is to save lives by speeding up the process of getting these systems into the market as soon as possible," said Jean Todt. "These systems have the potential to save lives by addressing the root cause of some of the most common accidents, which could lead to major reductions in road deaths and casualties. Estimates for Electronic Stability Control (ESC) alone show that in Europe it could save 4,000 lives and prevent more than 100,000 injuries if fitted to every car."

Research released on the take up of eSafety technologies showed that there is a critical lack of awareness amongst the general population, despite safety being involved in seven out of 10 car purchase decisions. Although the research showed that safety is placed as the number 1 priority when buying a car, women are 30 per cent less likely to know about the existence of eSafety systems than men.

Encouragingly eSafetyAware's study showed that if consumers were made aware of the technologies, they were willing to pay to have them fitted, and the overall fittings could potentially double.

"I am convinced that these technologies are critical in our collective bid to improve road safety," stated Michael Schumacher. "We must continue to raise awareness of their benefits in order to achieve our goal of reducing the numbers of people killed on the roads."

During the course of the event, participants took it in turn to experience an eSafety technology, showcasing ESC, which stabilises the car in a skid; lane support systems, which adjusts steering if the car drifts out of its lane; speed alert, which warns the driver if he or she is speeding; blind spot monitoring, which warns the driver if a vehicle is in his blind spot; and finally, warning and emergency braking systems, which act to slow the car automatically in the case of an impending impact.

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