

25/09/2018

Parliamentary Working Breakfast on the Front Brake Light

Statement

Dr. Dieter-L. Koch, MdEP, Vice-Chair Committee on Transport and Tourism

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you to the presentation of the Front Brake Light. You have the chance to experience the start of an extraordinary important development. In a short-term this development will not only improve road safety and ensure stress-reduced driving, but will be an important component on the way to high-automated driving.

Gestures and possibilities for visual contact between drivers and between drivers and pedestrians or cyclists are good, but not always reliable and sometimes not even existing. Only a clear signal, which appears at each braking action, means clear communication between the road users. This is the case right now and will be even more the case when gestures cease, because the driver is busy with something completely different. Vehicles transmitting a clear sign ensures safety, enhances traffic flow and reduces stress.

I completely understand a certain skepticism as regards this new idea. Actually, I have to admit, that I myself was very skeptical in the beginning.

However, the more I familiarized myself with the effect of this signal system the more it appeared to be useful. As a result, I asked myself repeatedly in different traffic situations, if the Front Brake Light would have an added value to one or the other road user. Many times, I concluded that: YES there is an added value.

Therefore, I decided to take over the patronage and promote actively the further development and implementation of this idea. I am convinced that we should not miss any chance to contribute to the improvement of road safety, to make traffic run smoother and to reduce stress of all the participants in road transport.

Stress, inattentiveness and misunderstandings are only three of the main causes for accidents, in which yearly around 25.300 people die and 135.000 are seriously injured, often suffering lasting damages.

I am sure you experienced already a situation, in which you are standing at the end of a traffic jam and you can see in your rear view mirror a 40 tons heavy duty vehicle approaching. You can simply not assess if he is going to brake or if he is distracted by his mobile and does not even see that there is a traffic jam. Alternatively, you want to turn from a

side road to a main street and you are not sure, if the driver coming from the left is about to turn to the right into your street. Maybe he just forgot to switch off his turn indication.

In addition, let us think about the highly automated/ autonomous driving. Here the Front Brake Light become very important. Since there will be no more gestures and visual contacts between the drivers and between the drivers and the pedestrians/cyclists additional sources of information are indispensable. Vehicles have to give signals in order to communicate their forthcoming conduct. This creates safety, reduces stress and enhances traffic flow for the passengers in the vehicle and the persons outside the vehicle.

Building on the laboratory study a field study has been performed at the Airport Berlin Tegel in order to test if the Front Brake Light really increases safety. The results convinced the participants that the Front Brake Light has the potential to contribute to improve traffic flows and lead to accident-free driving.

I am curious to know if the Front Brake Light really has the potential to become an effective and active part of a vehicle, which avoids accidents and leads to psychological relief in and outside of the vehicle. We will see if the scientific research findings will manage to remove your initial skepticism.

A first, maybe even the most important, step is done!