

NHTSA Announces Internet Forum, Public Meeting on Driver Distraction

Beginning in July, the **US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** will sponsor an Internet Forum entitled "The Safety Impact of Driver Distraction When Using In-Vehicle Technologies."

According to NHTSA's announcement, the forum is devoted to presentations of research studies and initiatives related to the safety impact of driver distraction when using in-vehicle devices that receive, transmit, or display various types of information (for example, wireless phones/faxes, electronic navigation, enhanced night vision, and wireless Internet).

The Internet Forum will also feature interactive discussions on the subject. NHTSA's goal is to provide opportunities for researchers, designers, and the public -- both in the US and internationally -- to become more informed and involved in these issues.

During the Forum, technical experts and the general public will be able to download technical papers, ask questions about the papers, relate their experiences regarding the use of in-vehicle devices, offer their opinions on the impact of the devices on safety in general (and driving performance in particular), and exchange views on a range of related technical issues. Researchers and technical experts are invited to submit papers for inclusion in the Forum (*see box*).

Mike Perel of NHTSA and **Eddy Llaneras** of **Westat** llanere1@westat.com are serving as the forum co-organizers.

The forum, open to all, will run July 5 through August 11, and is scheduled alongside's NHTSA's July 18th public meeting on the same subject. At this meeting, representatives of the public, industry, government, and safety groups are similarly invited to share information regarding strategies to minimize potential adverse effects on safety when using telematic devices

In particular, NHTSA is interested in hearing about different technologies and devices being proposed for use in vehicles which may have a bearing on safe driving. Other topics are likely to include how to promote best practices in



Suggested Topics of Interest for Papers:

- **How In-Vehicle Technologies Influence Driver Distraction: Effects on Safety and Safety-Related Driver Performance**
- **Methodological Challenges in Measuring Distraction & Its Effect on Driving Safety**
- **Effective Government, Industry and Consumer Actions to Minimize Distraction**
- **Current and Future Research Needs to Support Actions to Minimize Distraction**



designing in-vehicle devices, how to evaluate accurately their safety impacts, and recommendations for research and safety initiatives. Those wishing to present a viewpoint at the meeting are asked to contact Mike Perel of NHTSA as soon as possible at driverdistraction@nhtsa.dot.gov or Mike.Perel@nhtsa.dot.gov.

NHTSA will utilize the information from the public meeting and Internet Forum as a basis for discussions at a later Technical Workshop of invited researchers and technology developers. The Technical Workshop will aim to generate specific recommendations for distraction-reducing strategies, data needs, and research methodologies.

