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DOT Announces Proposal to Add Rollover Ratings To Auto Safety Consumer Information Program

May 25, 2000. Washington, DC. Secretary Rodney Slater and Deputy Administrator Rosalyn Millman proposed a rating program to provide consumers with a measure of a vehicle's likelihood to roll over. The program would provide star ratings for rollover performance, the same approach currently used for providing information about performance in frontal and side crashes in the New Car Assessment Program (NCAP).

Some light trucks, including sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and many pickup trucks, are constructed with higher ground clearance, a feature that contributes to a higher rollover rate compared to other vehicle types. The rollover potential of these vehicles underscores the need for consumer awareness.

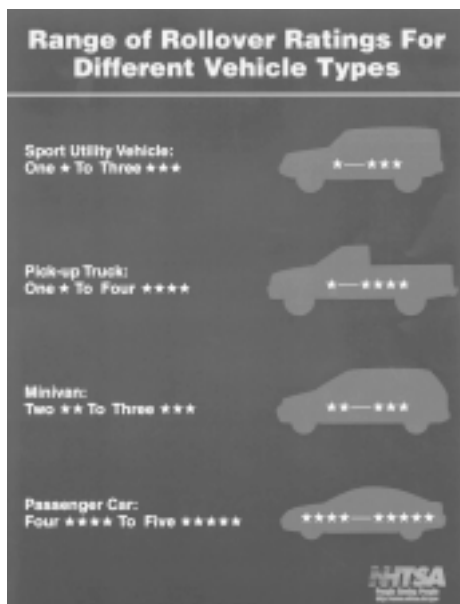
"We know from our crash test ratings that

Deputy Administrator Rosalyn Millman and Secretary Slater field questions from reporters at the news conference May 25, 2000.



when consumers have information, they buy safety. With the proposed rollover propensity rating, we are helping the public understand crash avoidance potential, in addition to our crash worthiness star ratings," said Deputy Administrator Millman.

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NHTSA and Ford Motor Company Dedicate 9th Crash Injury Research and Engineering Network (CIREN) Center

May 24, 2000. Fairfax, Virginia. Deputy Administrator Rosalyn Millman and Secretary Slater announced the 9th CIREN center at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Fairfax, Virginia. Ford Motor Company will provide up to \$2.5 million over the next five years to study the safety performance of technology such as

side air bags and other advanced restraint systems. The Ford-Inova Fairfax Hospital CIREN Center joins eight other Level 1 trauma centers across the U.S. to conduct research on crashes and injuries. A computer network links the centers, enabling researchers

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DOT Proposes to Add Rollover Ratings to Auto Safety Consumer Information Program

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After extensive research, NHTSA determined that a vehicle's "static stability factor" is the most reliable indicator of rollover risk in single-vehicle crashes. The static stability factor of a vehicle is one-half the track width (the distance between two wheels on the same axle) divided by the height of the center of gravity above the road.

NHTSA expects that its new rollover information program will motivate manufacturers to respond to consumer demand for safer, more stable vehicles. For example, in 1979 when NCAP ratings for frontal crashes began, just 33 percent of vehicles achieved a four- or five-star rating. By 1997, 85 percent had received four or five stars.

More than 9,500 people are killed every year in rollover crashes. Over 60 percent of

Matt Wald, reporter at the New York Times, (left) interviews Associate Administrator for Safety Performance, Steve Kratzke about the proposed rollover ratings.

the sport utility vehicle (SUV) occupants and more than 40 percent of pickup truck occupants killed in 1998 died in crashes when the

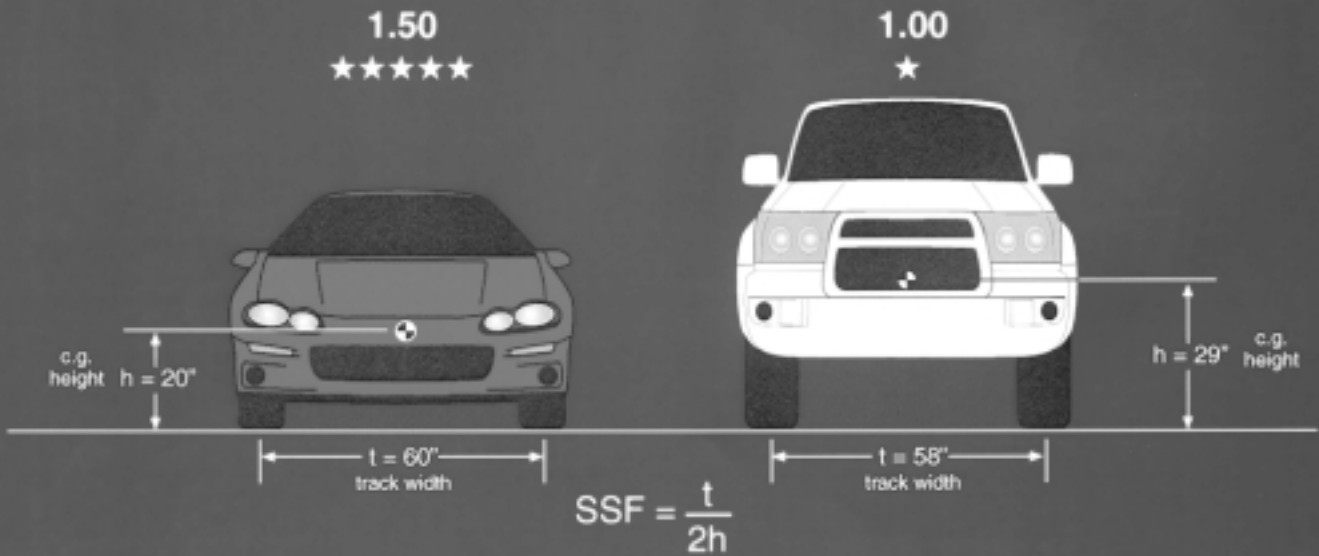
vehicle rolled over, compared to 22 percent for car occupants.

The agency is opening a 60-day comment period to solicit public views on its proposed rollover rating program. Final decisions on the rollover rating program, which is set to begin with Model Year 2001 vehicles, will be made later this year. ■



How The Government Will Rate Vehicles on Rollover

Static Stability Factor



Static Stability Factor (SSF) is a measure of the track width of a vehicle in proportion to the height of its center of gravity (c.g.). The more "top heavy" a vehicle is, the lower its SSF measurement.



NHTSA and Ford Motor Company Dedicate Newest CIREN Center

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to review data and share expertise leading to a better understanding of crash injury mechanisms.

“The CIREN system is America’s auto safety brain trust,” said Deputy Administrator Millman. “It draws on the tremendous expertise and ingenuity of those in both medical and engineering fields.”

The Ford Inova Fairfax Hospital CIREN Center will be unique among the CIREN centers

in its ability to gather real time data from crash scenes through a partnership with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Study results from crash sites, vehicle wreckage and patient interviews will be evaluated with the goal of identifying motor vehicle design features that offer maximum crash avoidance and occupant protection. Once completed, the data will be published for review by the medical community, design engineers and the public.

The new Ford Inova Fairfax Hospital CIREN Center joins NHTSA’s eight other CIREN Centers. These are the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center; Baltimore; University of Medicine and Dentistry/New Jersey Medical School, Newark, N.J.; Children’s National Medical Center, Washington, D.C.; Lehman Injury Research Center, University of Miami School of Medicine, Miami; University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Harborview Injury Prevention Center, Seattle; the San Diego County Trauma System, San Diego, and the Mercedes-Benz CIREN Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. ■



Secretary Slater announces the details of a partnership with Ford Motor Company and Inova Fairfax Hospital to study motor vehicle crashes and injuries. Deputy Administrator Rosalyn Millman delivered opening remarks.



The Fairfax County Police and Fire and Rescue hold a “mock crash” reconstruction and extrication of a victim.

DOT and NHTSA Join National Safety Council to Kick Off Operation ABC Mobilization

by Sandy Sinclair,
Traffic Safety Programs

movingly but forcefully at the event. Redfern has taken a lead role in the Mobilization

because he and his family know firsthand the tragedy of losing a child in a crash.

Early indications are that this Mobilization, like its predecessors, will earn substantial media coverage around the country and will spur additional parents to buckle up themselves and children on every ride. ■

May 22, 2000. Washington, DC. In conjunction with the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign, Secretary Slater and Deputy Administrator Millman officially kicked off *Buckle Up America!* Week and the sixth *Operation ABC* (America Buckles Up Children) Law Enforcement Mobilization at a Washington, DC news conference. More than 8,100 law enforcement agencies throughout the country participated in the Mobilization, an all-time high.

The news conference was attended by five members of the Professional football Players’ Mothers Association, including Edith Morgan, whose son, Derrick Thomas, the All-Pro linebacker for the Kansas City Chiefs, died earlier this year from injuries he sustained in a crash in Missouri. He was not wearing his seat belt at the time of the crash.

Chief Robert Redfern, president of the New England Chiefs of Police, also spoke



Region VII Partners with McDonald's

Romell Cooks, Region VII Administrator, kicks off Buckle Up America Week in Kansas City, Missouri by doing the Corporate Click with Ronald McDonald during a media event on Monday, May 22, 2000. Area McDonald's restaurants and Earp Distribution Center joined as charter members of Region VII's new "Corporate Click" campaign designed to engage businesses in promoting seat belt and child restraint use. McDonald's developed and distributed over 5,000 stickers and fliers promoting buckling up during the media event; and an additional 400,000 for the 144 McDonald's restaurants in this region during the rest of BUA Week. Earp Distribution Center, the distributor for McDonald's, agreed to place BUA stickers on all their trucks. The media event was held in conjunction with seat belt and child safety seat checkpoints conducted by 13 area metro police and sheriff agencies. There were 576 vehicles; 75 percent of the occupants were unbuckled. ■



“First There, First Care” Bystander Care Training Classes

NHTSA's Office of Traffic Injury Control Programs, EMS Division is proud to say thank you to all the DOT employees who attended and supported the "First There, First Care" Bystander Care Training classes, May 16th & 17th.

Your positive responses for bystander



Laurie Flaherty, Registered Nurse, demonstrates how to assess a crash victim.

care and your sincere interest in learning what you can do to assist crash victims is what "People Saving People" is all about!

For more information on "First There, First Care", contact Debra Kilpatrick via email at: dkilpatrick@nhtsa.dot.gov or fax written inquiries to: 202-366-7721. ■



Pictured from left to right: Captain Garry Criddle, RN; Laurie Flaherty, RN; Mary McCue, RN; Debra Kilpatrick, Bystander Care Program Coordinator

Recent People Savings People/Teamwork Leadership Challenge Awards

Patricia Tucker

Region VI

For providing unprecedented Grants Tracking System support to the Region VI states to facilitate close out of their programs.

Robert Weltzer
William Watada
Judy Hammond

Region VIII

For putting together a TEA-21 Video Conference for all six states in Region VIII, including a participant's guide and FHWA Divisional involvement, to review each state's participation and seek additional opportunities to gain further state participation. ■

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Editor

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

I can give you a six-word formula for success: Think things through — then follow through.

—Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker