

DRIVER SAFETY

IAM'S wearable tech warning

Road safety charity the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) is warning drivers about the potential risks associated with smart watches while driving.

Wearable technology, such as the forthcoming iWatch from Apple, will allow users to make and receive calls, check their messages and monitor their health. However, the IAM warns that this could significantly impair driving performance. Existing research on smartphone use between 2006 and 2010 found distraction from a mobile phone was a contributory factor in 1,960 road accidents which resulted in injuries; this figure includes 110 fatal accidents.

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POLICE VEHICLES

German police planning a round of e-Golf



At the General Police Equipment Exhibition and Conference (GPEC) in Leipzig this month, the special edition Volkswagen e-Golf was unveiled as the police patrol car of the future. The specially-designed e-Golf has been fitted with a SoSi siren system, light bar across the roof and new digital radio. Like the standard model, the car is powered by a lithium-ion battery which feeds an electric motor that develops 113bhp (85kW) and 270Nm (199lb ft) of torque. This enables the hatchback to accelerate from 0-62mph in 10.4 seconds and travel 130-190km (80-118 miles) on a single charge.

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HYDROGEN VEHICLES

Hydrogen will struggle outside of Japan says VW chief

Volkswagen Group Japan President Shigeru Shoji believes that cars powered by hydrogen fuel cells will probably struggle to catch on beyond Japan's borders.

Government subsidies of as much as 3 million yen (£17,310) per vehicle offered in Japan will probably be too high for other countries to match, Volkswagen Group Japan President Shigeru Shoji said in an interview. Even in Toyota's home country, refuelling will be impractical because handling hydrogen is challenging and building out infrastructure will be costly, he said.

"It may fly within Japan, but not globally," said Shoji, 51. Fuel cells could become another example of the "Galapagos syndrome" that plagues Japanese companies for making products that are only popular at home, he said.

Shoji joins Tesla Motors chief executive officer Elon Musk among skeptics of fuel cells and his comments illustrate the growing divide within the auto industry over which technology will prevail in replacing traditional gasoline and diesel cars. In Japan, fuel-cell vehicles have won government financial support, paving the way for such cars to benefit just as hybrids including Toyota's Prius have.

"In order to survive, you need to come up with new products, better products," said

Thanh Ha Pham, a Tokyo-based analyst at Jefferies Group Inc. "It's not nationalistic."

Fuel-cell cars, which only emit water vapour, offer one of the best solutions to reduce carbon emissions in Japan, said Dion Corbett, a Toyota spokesman based in Tokyo. He declined to comment on Shoji's remarks. "Fuel-cell system costs are still relatively expensive so we need subsidy support from the Japanese government," Corbett wrote in an e-mail. "It's difficult to imagine that FCVs will become widely used in the next couple of years alone."

In June, Toyota said it expects Japan, Germany, California and the US East Coast to generate the highest demand for fuel-cell vehicles. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, leader of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, has outlined a vision for creating a "hydrogen society," with fuel cells powering homes and office buildings, as well as cars made by the Toyota-led auto industry.

"It's an Abe and Toyota deal," said Yasuo Maruta, a Volkswagen Japan spokesman. "It's an industry giant and the most powerful LDP party, and they are working very closely."

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FORMULA E

Lucas Di Grassi wins spectacular first Formula E race in Beijing



Lucas di Grassi took first place in the first-ever Formula E race in Beijing, after Nicolas Prost and Nick Heidfeld crashed spectacularly in a battle for the lead going into the last corner. Frenchman Franck Montagny (Andretti Autosport) took second place, with Britain's Sam Bird (Virgin Racing) taking the last podium spot. Read more about the Formula E series of races on page 25.

LOWCVP AWARDS

BMW cleans up at September's LowCVP Awards

The BMW Group won the 'Grand Prix' Award for Outstanding Achievement in Low Carbon Transport at The LowCVP's Low Carbon Champions Awards, held in Milton Keynes. The awards presentation, hosted by TV personality Robert Llewellyn (Kryten from Red Dwarf) also saw Professor Dame Julia King, author of the *King Review of Low Carbon Cars*, recognised with a special award for outstanding individual achievement.

BMW also scooped the Low Carbon Car / Van Manufacturer of the Year, with an entry which impressed the judges.

BYD Europe B.V. won the Low Carbon Heavy Duty Vehicle Manufacturer of the Year Award for demonstrating impressive carbon saving through its innovative electric powertrain systems and for providing a compelling business case with high market growth potential.

Around 25 entries were shortlisted for awards. One of the judges, Philip Sellwood, chief executive of the Energy Saving Trust, said: "The road transport sector has been a real success story in terms of cutting carbon as well as delivering growth and dynamism to the UK economy. I was delighted to play a part in celebrating the successes of the entrants to these awards who are making an important contribution to current, and future, UK economic success."



Dame
Julia King

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LOW CARBON ENGINES



3 million and counting at Dagenham

Ford's three-millionth UK-built small-capacity diesel engine has rolled off the line at the company's manufacturing centre at Dagenham. Low-carbon diesel engines have been built at the Dagenham Diesel Centre plant for a variety of models across the Ford range, and for other manufacturers, since production started in May 2007. On average more than 30,000 engines are produced every month, with total

production of the small-capacity diesel engine for 2013 exceeding 365,000. By September 2015 all Ford diesel engines will comply with the latest Euro-6 emission regulations, which reflect an 84 per cent reduction in Nitrous Oxide (NOx) emissions from diesel cars since 2000.

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LowCVP's Andy Eastlake Fuelling the future

Watching the LowCVP's Twitter feed as I write this, I see the *GreenFleet* elves are clearly very busy confirming and announcing the extensive range of vehicles to be present at this year's Arrive 'N' Drive at Rockingham. Together with a wide range of supporting partners services and technology, the show looks set to be a great place to see many of the options fleet managers have to cut carbon emissions and save money.

The event will showcase some great examples of the future technologies and products that manufacturers are working on to deliver cheaper and less polluting driving. What the future looks like, however, for the energy that will be used in those vehicles is not quite so straightforward. To address this challenge the LowCVP and the DfT are collaborating to bring together a new, high level group which aims to map the future for transport energy.

The group will have to grapple with the immediate requirements to introduce more renewable energy to the road transport fuels mix by 2020 (under the EU's Renewable Energy Directive) and also define a trajectory for the fuels which will be used to 2030 and beyond. The group will define the key issues and detailed work that will be required to identify the transport energy mix of the future.

We need to make sure that not only our vehicles, but the energy they use is produced and distributed as efficiently as possible in order to deliver the low carbon future we crave. The UK has an opportunity to lead the way, identifying a coherent fuels pathway to complement the progress we're seeing in vehicles like those on display at Arrive 'N' Drive and those we will be driving further into the future. For more information about the LowCVP's current projects and activities, and how to get involved, see the website.

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.lowcvp.org.uk and follow LowCVP on Twitter: @theLowCVP and @aeastlake