

12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

## Press Release

### **Safety should be “Standard” on all new cars launched in 2016**

- Thatcham Research welcomes the support of ‘What Car?’ magazine as they join the call for Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) on all new cars
- While in 2015, 41% of cars on sale in the UK had AEB available, only 17% had it as standard fit. Of the remaining 24%, less than 2% of cars were specified with AEB as an “extra” by motorists
- 82% of consumers say that they expect safety features like AEB to be a “given” on all new cars – not as an “extra” (Thatcham/Direct Line Group survey)\*
- There is no longer any excuse for car makers to launch new cars without AEB as standard across the board. Where it is an “extra”, car manufacturers and dealerships, need to promote and explain the benefits of potentially lifesaving technology like AEB more effectively to consumers
- Thatcham Research spokesperson (Matthew Avery, Director of Research) available for further comment
- Visit [www.thatcham.org/car-safety](http://www.thatcham.org/car-safety) for further information

Safety experts at Thatcham Research have welcomed the calls from leading automotive consumer magazine ‘What Car?’ in supporting the availability of important, low cost, safety technology like Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) across all cars. Currently only 17% of cars available to buy in the UK have standard fit AEB.

The simplest form of AEB sensor, enabling a Lidar based system that is found on the likes of the Volvo V40 and Mazda 3, could cost manufacturers as little as £40. More advanced radar and camera based auto-braking systems, which provide additional functionality including the ability to avoid pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, have unit costs which are still likely to be under £200.

Thatcham Research applaud car manufacturer’s fast progress in developing crash avoidance technology, and point out that 41% of cars on sale in 2015 had AEB available. However, only 17% of cars available have it fitted as a standard feature. And of the remaining 24%, less than 2% were specified with AEB as an “extra” by motorists.

A recent survey conducted by Thatcham Research and Direct Line Insurance Group\*, revealed that 82% of drivers think car safety features like AEB should be fitted as standard and available for free. Not as an “extra”.

The effectiveness of AEB has already been recognised by insurers, with the standard fit system typically attracting a benefit of 3-5 insurance groups, equating to a reduction in premium of around 10%.

**Experts in Safety, Security and Crash Repair**

THE MOTOR INSURANCE REPAIR RESEARCH CENTRE  
Registered Office : Colthrop Way, Thatcham Berkshire RG19 4NR  
Registered in England No. 967763

Thatcham's Director of Research, Matthew Avery said: "There is no longer any excuse for car makers to launch new cars without AEB as standard across the board, and along with dealerships, to promote and explain AEB more effectively to consumers.

"Not only will this reduce insurance premiums, but give peace of mind for motorists by significantly reducing crashes and associated injuries."

**ENDS**

**Media contacts:**

Paul Chadderton, Communications Director at Market Engineering  
[paul.chadderton@m-eng.com](mailto:paul.chadderton@m-eng.com) t. +44 (0) 01295 277 050

Iain Wallace, Communications Executive at Thatcham Research  
[iain.wallace@thatcham.org](mailto:iain.wallace@thatcham.org) t. +44 (0) 1635 293 153 m. +44 (0) 7876 755 615

**Editors Notes**

\* Consumer survey conducted for Direct Line Group and Thatcham Research December 2015/January 2016 by Opinionium. 2,005 UK adults interviewed online; sample weighted to provide a nationally representative audience.

**The different types of AEB sensor**

**Lidar**

Lidar sensors work over short distances using light detection to calculate the distance to the vehicle in front. These are low cost sensors which are very effective at completely avoiding collisions at speeds up to 15 mph, whilst also being able to mitigate the effects of a crash up to 25mph. Examples – Volvo S60 & Mazda 3

**Radar**

Radar sensors work by using radio waves – effective over much longer distances – to detect the vehicle in front. Radar sensors are more complex and more expensive, but as such they are able to completely avoid collisions with stationary and moving vehicles at higher speeds up to 30 mph. Examples – VW Golf & Nissan Qashqai

**Camera**

Vehicles with camera technology are not only able to detect potential collision threats, but also have the ability to classify them – is it another car? a pedestrian? or perhaps a cyclist? Cameras are increasingly being fitted on vehicles to provide the full 360 view around the vehicle enabling avoidance of a range of obstacles and can be particularly helpful during parking or low speed manoeuvres. Examples – BMW MINI & Audi Q7

**Sensor Fusion**

Teaming radar and camera sensors in "fusion" is the ideal solution offering the potential to address pedestrian and other vulnerable road user crashes whilst benefitting from the longer range sensing of radar. Examples – Ford Mondeo & Volvo XC90

**About Thatcham Research**

Thatcham Research is the independent voice of automotive safety & repair, advising motorists, insurers and vehicle manufacturers to help reduce accident frequency, severity and costs and to realise the vision of 'Safer cars, fewer crashes'.

As well as its world leading crash and track research, Thatcham tests and accredits crash repair parts, vehicle repair technicians, and a number of other products and services within the collision repair industry for insurers, motor manufacturers, equipment manufacturers and suppliers.

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A founder member of the international Research Council for Automobile Repairs (RCAR), Thatcham has also been a member of the European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP) since 2004.

[www.thatcham.org](http://www.thatcham.org)