

Leading Automakers' Commitment to Implement Rear Seat Reminder Systems

ALLIANCE OF AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS, INC.
ASSOCIATION OF GLOBAL AUTOMAKERS, INC.

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INTRODUCTION

Heatstroke is a condition caused by the body overheating, usually as a result of prolonged exposure to or physical exertion in high temperatures. Heatstroke can occur if the body temperature rises to 40°C (104°F) or higher.¹

Since tracking began in 1998, more than 800 children have died of heatstroke from being trapped in a hot car.² Many instances of deaths due to heatstroke are attributable to a child being left in the vehicle by a parent or caregiver.

Despite communication efforts by the Department of Transportation, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, automakers, and other stakeholders in both the public and private sector, young children continue to be endangered when left unattended in cars regardless of the outside temperature. Children are particularly susceptible to heatstroke because their bodies cannot regulate temperature as efficiently as an adult. Further, the speed at which the temperature inside a vehicle rises, even with mild ambient temperatures outside, may not be well understood by parents or caregivers.

Several automakers have begun to supplement necessary public awareness and education efforts by implementing methods for reminding drivers to check rear seats, where children are most often seated, upon leaving the vehicle. Reminding parents and caregivers to check rear seats upon exiting a vehicle could be—when combined with

¹ <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heat-stroke/symptoms-causes/syc-20353581>

² Through June 2019. See <https://www.noheatstroke.org/index.htm> for more information.

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increased public awareness concerning the dangers of leaving children unattended in vehicles—one part of an overall effort to help reduce the number of times that children are left alone in a vehicle.

Embracing their role in an overall effort to reduce pediatric heatstroke deaths, the vehicle manufacturers listed below as Participating Manufacturers make the following voluntary commitment to continue the deployment of vehicle-based Rear Seat Occupant Reminder systems to all new Covered Passenger Motor Vehicles in the Commitment Fleet.

REAR SEAT REMINDER SYSTEM COMMITMENT

Definitions

1. “**Commitment Fleet**” means the fleet of vehicles designated by a Participating Manufacturer to be equipped with Rear Seat Occupant Reminder Systems, which shall consist of not less than 95 percent of the Participating Manufacturer’s annual production of Covered Passenger Motor Vehicles each model year.
2. “**Covered Passenger Motor Vehicle**” means each vehicle in a Participating Manufacturer’s annual production of Passenger Motor Vehicles that meets the conditions in the Applicability section of this Agreement, subject to the exclusions authorized by that section, to the extent the Participating Manufacturer elects to exercise one or more exclusions.
3. “**Designated Seating Position**” means a seat location that has a seating surface width, as described in 49 C.F.R. 571.10(c), of at least 330 mm (13

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inches). The number of designated seating positions at a seat location is determined according to the procedure set forth in 49 C.F.R. 571.10(b).

4. **“Emergency Motor Vehicle”** means a motor vehicle manufactured for use as an emergency or law enforcement motor vehicle.
5. **“Model Year”** means the annual production period as determined by the Participating Manufacturer consistent with applicable law.
6. **“Motor Vehicle”** means a vehicle driven or drawn by mechanical power and manufactured primarily for use on public streets, roads, and highways, but does not include a vehicle operated only on a rail line.
7. **“Passenger Motor Vehicle”** means a passenger car, multipurpose passenger vehicle or truck meeting the definitions of those terms in 49 C.F.R. 571.3, with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating up to 4,536 kilograms (“kg”) (10,000 pounds), produced for sale in the United States market.
8. **“Realization Year”** means the period from September 1 of the calendar year for which the year is named through August 31 of the following year.
9. **“Rear Designated Seating Position”** means any designated seating position that is rearward of the front seat.
10. **“Standard Equipment”** means non–optional equipment included on a vehicle in a manufacturer’s Commitment Fleet.
11. **“Trip”** means the period comprised of a single ignition cycle from vehicle motor activated to vehicle motor deactivated by the operator.

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Rear Seat Reminder System Requirements

The performance criteria for this Commitment are specified below. The means to support this Commitment may continue to evolve – nothing in this Commitment is intended to preclude continued technological development and innovation. This Commitment is intended to provide Participating Manufacturers with the flexibility needed to develop innovative systems meeting the terms of this Commitment, and Participating Manufacturers may offer systems or technologies with more advanced features than those described herein.

Participating Manufacturers, when designing or redesigning Covered Passenger Motor Vehicles in their Commitment Fleets, will install as standard equipment no later than the 2024 Realization Year, or the 2025 Model Year if implementing this Commitment on a Model Year basis, a Rear Seat Reminder System satisfying the terms of this Commitment having a means to assess Rear Designated Seating Positions for potential rear seat occupants and provide an alert to the vehicle operator when exiting the vehicle.

1. Rear Seat Occupancy

- A. Each System must provide a means of considering the potential presence of an occupant(s) in Rear Designated Seating Positions for a trip.

2. Alerts

- A. The system, when enabled, shall be designed to provide an alert when the Rear Seat Reminder System infers, or otherwise determines, the potential presence of an occupant(s) in a Rear Designated Seating Position, for a trip.

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B. The alert required in subsection (A) above shall:

- i. include a distinct combination of auditory alert and visual alert; and
- ii. activate after the vehicle engine or motor is deactivated by the operator.

Applicability

This Commitment applies to all vehicles in a manufacturer's Commitment Fleet. The Commitment Fleet includes Passenger Motor Vehicles with:

- (1) one or more Rear Designated Seating Positions; and
- (2) having at least one door for ingress/egress adjacent to a Rear Designated Seating Position.

Participating Manufacturers may elect to exempt from its Commitment Fleet, for purposes of conformance with this Commitment: an Emergency Motor Vehicle and a vehicle with re-design or end-of-life cycles occurring within 12 months following the end of the Realization Year, or one Model Year if implementing this Commitment on a Model Year basis, provided that the redesigned vehicle is equipped with conforming standard Rear Seat Reminder System or the original vehicle is not replaced.

Time Frame for Implementation

Participating Manufacturers independently and voluntarily commit to making Rear Seat Reminder Systems, as described in this Commitment, standard equipment on all Covered Passenger Motor Vehicles in their Commitment Fleets no later than the 2024 Realization Year, or the 2025 Model Year if implementing this Commitment on a Model Year basis.

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Monitoring Progress

1. **Annual Report Required.** – Participating Automakers agree to keep the public informed about this Commitment.
 - a. Beginning in 2022, Participating Automakers will publicly disclose by October 31 of each year an Annual Report setting forth the vehicle nameplates and the proportion of vehicles manufactured for sale in the United States beginning on September 1 of the previous year through August 31 of the current year that are in its Commitment Fleet. If a Participating Manufacturer is implementing this commitment on a Model Year basis, then the reporting under this paragraph may be with respect to vehicles manufactured for sale in the United States in the previous model year.
 - b. Once a Participating Automaker has achieved full conformance with this Commitment, the Participating Automaker will no longer be required to disclose such Annual Reports publicly (though may elect to do so) and expects to be deemed as having fulfilled its obligations under this Commitment.
2. **Product Information.** –
 - a. To increase consumer awareness, the Association of Global Automakers (“Global Automakers”) and the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, Inc. (“Alliance”) agree to publish progress reports, including lists of the year/make/models of vehicles with standard Rear Seat Reminder Systems, as defined herein.

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- b. Participating Automakers will make an effort to inform its customers about the availability of standard Rear Seat Reminder systems in their product lines.

Superseding Federal/State Regulation

A Participating Manufacturer may terminate its Commitment in the event that any competent authority or jurisdiction promulgates a final rule, regulation or safety standard (collectively "final rule") concerning rear seat reminder systems that differs from or is inconsistent with this Commitment.

Contact Information

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AUDI OF AMERICA

BMW OF NORTH AMERICA, LLC

FCA US LLC

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

GENERAL MOTORS LLC

HYUNDAI MOTOR AMERICA

JAGUAR LAND ROVER

KIA MOTORS AMERICA

MASERATI NORTH AMERICA, INC.

MAZDA NORTH AMERICAN OPERATIONS

MERCEDES-BENZ USA, LLC

MITSUBISHI MOTORS NORTH AMERICA, INC.

NISSAN NORTH AMERICA, INC.

PORSCHE CARS NORTH AMERICA, INC.

SUBARU OF AMERICA, INC

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

VOLKSWAGEN OF AMERICA

VOLVO CAR USA