

Closing Remarks:
NHTSA Retooling Recalls Workshop
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TRANSCRIPT
Tuesday, April 28, 2015

Thanks, Lydia.

Still with me? We're almost done. It was a really productive day. The first thing I'm going to do is thank all the panelists and presenters and everything. Give yourselves a hand.

[Applause.]

But the other thing we need to do is – everyone appreciates these things don't happen on their own. So there's this really strong NHTSA team that put this event on. And I'm hoping this is the first of many that you'll see the agency doing over the next couple years, so I want to make sure – starting with Alison, Kristin, Melanie, if you'll stand up, the rest of the team – Matt – I'm not going to mention all your names. All the NHTSA team, stand up.

And I want to take a moment and just highlight a couple of things today, starting with having a government attorney, Tim Goodman, actually up there talking about collaboration – the litigator talking about collaboration.

Jennifer, who knew? Not just a smart person. But that was great. And I was thinking, the day was supposed to be about generating ideas and she started by like a whole list of ideas. I was sitting there, "Don't give it all away." And a pretty face. Thank you.

The other thing in the presentation this morning what was so clear is that when you take the same creative strength that you apply to sales and apply it to recalls you get real action and real results. And so I think this morning that was the other message of that presentation is, you know, nobody had ever thought before to take that same strength and creativity and apply it to recalls. Look what happens. Nobody's stopping anybody from doing that now.

Kristin and I were talking about a couple of different categories of things to highlight. So this is something we all know about but nobody's really doing it very much necessarily and that is one of those things you can do today is check open recalls at every service and doing it before hand is even better to be sure that the parts are going to be available. So we were all there saying, "That's in the GROW AMERICA Act." Yes, that's the one that's going to take an act of Congress. but there's no reason you can't make that a standard operating procedure now. Another thing that you can start tomorrow is really interesting one of the groups started to talk about folks concerns about going in for a recall and getting an upsell. And this was discussed in a few places that you can actually have a dedicated appointment just for recalls. So they know that appointment, no matter what, is free. There's no chance you going to come in and end up still paying money for your free recall, even though it's not about the recall it's for something else. That you can start tomorrow as well.

So we come to the end of the day. The task obviously is just beginning. It continues tomorrow, every day after that until we reach our goal of 100 percent. And that's 100 percent completion of every recall. That's 100 percent commitment from everyone here because if we succeed we're talking about a victory for safety.

So we're going to start today by taking all of the ideas we've generated and shared here and find ways to incorporate them into your organizations starting tomorrow.

You've heard this throughout the day: safety really is a shared responsibility. And we at NHTSA we want to see recall remedies hit 100 percent. We also want to highlight and celebrate manufacturers, dealers, safety advocates, everything you do to help improve all aspects of vehicle and traffic safety.

So that's why I'm actually pleased to announce a new section on our website where we're going to share information and resources from today's event and future ones. So we've established an area that they're going to be videos, today's presentations, remarks, they're going to be available along with resources and a link to an open docket that will be open until May 31 so you can add questions and other kinds of comments and materials until then. Where do you find it? nhtsa.gov. Nobody needs to write that down, right? nhtsa.gov. There will be a special new section called 'events.' So you'll be able to get the resources from today as well as future events. nhtsa.gov.

So this is the number the secretary mentioned and that everybody at NHTSA knows by heart, that in 2013 there were 32,719 lives lost on our roadways. And 2.31 million injuries. That really should be completely unacceptable to all of us because we all know every single one of those crashes was preventable. And in the coming months, I'm going to be starting a dialogue with all of you and how we re-envision our approach to keeping people safe on our nation's roadway.

So just to be crystal, crystal clear about three things. One, if folks break the law an enforcement action is needed you can count on NHTSA to utilize all the tools available to us and maximum authorities that we have available to make sure that enforcement action is as strong as possible. This is one of those situations where I shouldn't have to tell people that, I don't want to have to talk about it, but this is one of those: the message should be clear.

Second is, we're here to talk about 100 percent recalls because we're trying to get defects off the road. And the ultimate, and it was interesting that President Obama was actually in Detroit before the auto show, Secretary Foxx has talked about this, but the whole focus on recalls could almost be eliminated if you caught everything early before it's every on the street. And I just want to point that out that you know...if that defect is never manufactured in the first place then it's never going to be driven.

So, I get it, today we talked about things like something that happens after 20,000 cycles etcetera, we all understand that. There will always be a role to stay vigilant but the whole idea is we're talking recalls now, wouldn't it be great to be talking about defects in the beginning and all of us hoping that this is just the first part of the process. What's the ultimate? Never seeing these things get on the roadway in the first place. And we can attain that.

The last thing I wanted to highlight is I think today should be all about action. It's great for us to talk about the collaboration, the shared responsibility. We need to change the language, the culture. I think the way we know that change is really here is when we see the action. You can have great ideas, they can't stay here, they can't stay on our website. You have to enact them. Research. Alliance. We're looking to see what you find. We're even more interested in seeing how you apply those findings to actions that will get us toward the 100 percent recall. I don't care what idea or what creativity appeared today. The bottom line, the thing we will stay focused on is looking for the actions after today that show us we're trying to move and reach 100 percent recalls.

So keep an eye out for upcoming events. Business as usual simply won't cut it anymore, at least from NHTSA. American lives are at stake. And we all play a vital role in developing innovative new ways to keep them safe...through safer drivers, safer cars, and safer roads.

So thank you again for joining us. I'm looking forward to continuing this important dialogue and seeing actions that will get us to 100 percent completion for recalls. Thank you everybody for joining us and we look forward to ongoing interactions. Thanks a lot.

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