

**Remarks by**  
**David Strickland, Administrator**  
**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**  
**For the**  
**Visual-Manual NHTSA Driver Distraction Guidelines**  
**For In-Vehicle Electronic Devices Hearings**  
**Washington, DC**  
**March 12, 2012**

Good morning. I'm David Strickland, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. I want to welcome all of you to today's hearing on NHTSA's proposed distracted driving guidelines.

As many of you know, NHTSA has been working on distracted driving for many years. With the emergence of ever-increasing sources of distraction for drivers, the Secretary and I have worked hard in the last three years to bring national attention and DOT focus to addressing this issue. These proposed

guidelines are an example of NHTSA's efforts to take specific action that we believe can help reduce distraction from in-vehicle technologies. Through our public hearings here and in other cities across the country this week, we are getting the chance to hear firsthand from you, the public, about these guidelines. In addition, I want to mention that on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, we will be holding a workshop at the Vehicle and Research Test Center in East Liberty, Ohio, on the technical details of the guidelines. We will announce the details about that workshop in a notice to be published soon.

Distracted driving is unsafe, irresponsible, and can have deadly consequences. In 2010 alone, more than 3,000 people in the United States lost their lives in crashes in which distracted driving was a factor.

Increasingly, the data are telling us that as technology evolves, the potential for distraction in vehicles rises. When drivers are dialing a cell phone, texting, and surfing the Internet, their

eyes, hands, and focus are diverted from their primary responsibility: driving.

On February 16, 2012, NHTSA proposed a set of safety guidelines for in-vehicle electronics systems—guidelines that directly address the important interface between electronic devices and distraction.

First, we recommend that manufacturers limit the amount of time that drivers must take their eyes off the road or hands off the wheel to operate in-dash or in-car technology.

Second, with respect to functions related to drivers manually entering an address into a GPS system or sending a text message, dialing a phone or posting to Twitter or Facebook—we recommend that all of these applications should be disabled unless a vehicle is stopped or in park.

The notion that a choice must be made between ensuring that drivers are safe and including cutting-edge new features in vehicles is a false one. I want to stress that we can and we must do both at the same time.

We recognize that vehicle manufacturers want to build cars that include the tools and conveniences expected by today's drivers. We offer real-world guidance to automakers to help them develop electronic devices that provide features consumers want—without disrupting a driver's attention or sacrificing safety.

This week NHTSA is conducting hearings in Washington, DC, Chicago, and Los Angeles to receive public comment on our Phase 1 distraction guidelines. I am very eager to hear your views this morning.

Before we begin, let me quickly review the guidelines: Our objective is to enable manufacturers to ensure that their

vehicle devices and systems do not interfere with the driver's focus and do not sacrifice safety by distracting the driver's attention.

Our first goal is to reduce the complexity and the amount of time required to use electronic devices. We propose to reduce drivers' distraction through new limitations on electronic devices. Specifically:

- Ensure devices are placed where drivers can easily see and reach them
- Ensure that devices can be operated with only one hand (leaving the other hand for steering)
- Limit the duration of individual eyes-off-road glances needed operate the device to no more than two seconds
- Limit the total eyes-off-road time needed to operate the device to no more than 12 seconds
- Limit the amount of manual inputs needed to operate the device

- Limit unnecessary visual information in the driver's field of view (such as video images and static images unrelated to driving)

Our second goal is to disable operations of various in-vehicle electronic devices while driving, unless the devices are intended for passenger use and cannot be reasonably accessed or seen by the driver, or unless the vehicle is stopped and its transmission shift lever is in park. These include visual-manual operations that can be a significant source of driver distraction:

- Text messaging
- Internet browsing
- Visual social media communications
- Navigation system destination entry by address
- 10-digit phone dialing
- Displaying to the driver more than 30 characters of text unrelated to the task of driving
- Displaying to the driver automatically rolling text

NHTSA is conducting this hearing informally. Thus, technical rules of evidence do not apply. Given the number of presenters, please limit your remarks to 10 minutes.

Panel members may ask clarifying questions during the oral presentations, but will not respond to the presentations at that time.

A written transcript is being prepared for this hearing. You may make arrangements for copies of the transcript with the staff at the hearing registration desk.

Presenters wishing to provide supplementary information should submit it by the April 24 deadline for written comments. Written statement and supporting information submitted during the comment period will be considered with the same weight as oral comments and supporting information presented at the public meetings.