

Press Release

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Volvo S60/V70/XC70 - New safety functions in Volvo cars

- BLIS – Blind Spot Information System – a world-first in a passenger car
- WRG – Water Repellent Glass – improves visibility when driving in the rain
- Cut-off switch for front passenger airbag

At the start of the year, Volvo Cars presented four new safety systems that will be launched in the company's car models over the forthcoming period. One of them was BLIS – Blind Spot Information System – which was unveiled on the Volvo stand at the Detroit motor show.

"BLIS is now ready to be demonstrated in roadgoing cars," says Lex Kerssemakers, Vice President, Global Marketing.

In addition to BLIS, Volvo Cars is also launching water-repellent glass for side windows and door mirrors – along with a simple and dependable method for switching off the front passenger airbag in Volvo cars.

BLIS – Blind Spot Information System

Despite large window panels and effective door mirrors, there is always the risk of offset rear blind spots while driving. This can increase the risk of accidents, especially when changing lanes or overtaking.

In order to improve safety in such situations, Volvo Cars started fitting wide-angle door mirrors for the driver's side already back in 1979 – the first car maker to do so. Now the company is taking visibility one step further with a camera-based monitoring system that keeps a watchful eye on the area alongside and offset rear behind the car.

When another vehicle enters this zone, a warning lamp comes on beside the appropriate door mirror. The driver is thus given an indication that there is another vehicle very close to his or her own. The system alerts the driver both to cars approaching from behind and cars that have currently been overtaken. This information gives the driver added scope for making the right decisions in such situations.

The production of BLIS will start in the end of 2004.

The technology behind BLIS

A digital camera is installed on each door mirror and it takes 25 pictures each second. By comparing the pictures taken, the system can register when a vehicle is moving within the BLIS zone, which measures 9.5 metres long by 3 metres wide on either side of the car.

The system is programmed to identify cars as well as motorcycles, in daylight as well as at night. Since BLIS is camera-based, however, it has the same limitations as the human eye does. This means the system will not function in conditions of poor visibility, for instance in fog or flying snow. In such a case, the driver receives a message that BLIS is not in action. It is also configured not to react to parked cars, road barriers, lampposts and other static objects.

The system is active at all speeds above 10 km/h. It reacts to vehicles that are driven a maximum of 20 km/h slower and a maximum of 70 km/h faster than the car itself.

BLIS can be switched off via a button in the centre console.

- WRG – Water Repellent Glass In order to improve safety when driving in the rain, Volvo Cars is launching WRG – Water Repellent Glass – for door mirrors and front side windows. WRG prevents rainwater from obstructing visibility. On the windows, the water gathers as pearls of moisture which blow away easily by

the wind speed, leaving a dry glass panel with unobstructed visibility. Since it is more difficult for dirt to fasten on dry surfaces, it is also easier to keep the windows clean and free of ice. WRG treatment requires that the windows be laminated. On the door mirrors, a different method is used. Here, the water is distributed evenly across the entire glass surface so that it is possible to see through the water. In certain weather conditions, the function can be speeded up if the mirror heater elements are activated. The water repellent function has been created through special treatment of the glass. On the side windows, the treatment must be renewed after about three years and then every year after that in order to ensure full effect. The door mirrors do not need to be re-treated since they are not as exposed to wear and tear. PACOS – Passenger Airbag Cut-Off Switch The findings of Volvo's safety research are clear:

- Children should ride in the rear seat
- The safety equipment that is used should be tailored to suit the child's size
- Small children should travel in a rear-facing child seat, preferably in the rear of the car
- If a child is placed in the front seat, it is essential that the car is not fitted with a front passenger airbag, or that this airbag is disconnected.

Now it is possible for the Volvo owner to disconnect the front passenger airbag using the ignition key. The lock is integrated into the end of the instrument panel. Disconnection is confirmed by a physical marker on the lock itself and with a text that appears in the interior rear-view display.

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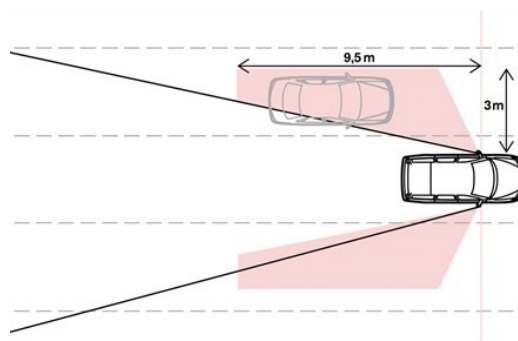
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