

Press Release

Nov 26, 2008 | ID: 18167

VOLVO XC60 RECEIVES HIGHEST RATING FROM EURO NCAP FOR ITS WHIPLASH PROTECTION SYSTEM

The Volvo XC60, with Volvo's unique Whiplash Protection System (WHIPS), was one of only five cars to receive the highest rating in EuroNCAP's new assessment procedure for evaluating the degree of whiplash protection offered by passenger cars in rear-end collisions. The Volvo XC60 also received the highest rating of five stars in EuroNCAP's Adult Occupant Protection tests, which includes front and side impacts.

The new EuroNCAP evaluation procedure for whiplash protection consists of a number of different tests. Firstly, the seat's geometry is measured, for example, the position of the head restraint, in order to determine how well the seat can protect against injuries in a collision. Three tests are then conducted in a testing rig with varying degrees of collision severity. This rig is used to simulate a situation in which a stationary car is subjected to a rear-end collision. Finally, the results are evaluated and the car is graded on a scale of red, orange and green where red is poor, orange is marginal and green is good.

"Our latest model, the Volvo XC60, performed well in all of the tests and was given an overall rating of green," says Thomas Broberg, Senior Technical Advisor Safety, Volvo Cars Safety Centre.

Common injury

Whiplash injuries are one of the most common types of traffic injury and occur primarily in rear-end collisions. If whiplash injuries can be prevented, considerable expense and the amount of suffering by the individual is reduced.

"The reason for neck injuries is the very rapid movement between the head and body," explains Thomas Broberg. "This makes it vital for the whiplash protection system to support the entire back and head and to help the person's head move together with the torso. The design of the seat's backrest and a head restraint that is sufficiently high and positioned close to the head are also important factors."

Volvo's WHIPS is a form of protection integrated into the front seats which supports the seat occupant's entire back and head in a rear-end collision. This protective system cushions the movement through energy-absorbing deformation elements between the backrest and seat cushion. If a rear-end collision occurs, the backrest follows the occupant's rearward movement in order to reduce the forces on the neck and spine.

This year marks WHIPS' tenth anniversary. This technology was introduced in 1998 on the Volvo S80 and WHIPS has been a standard feature on all Volvo models since 2000. According to Volvo's Accident Research Team, this system reduces the long-term effects of whiplash injuries by half.

Research based on actual accidents

Volvo's work with safety is always based on real-life traffic accidents. Through Volvo's own Accident Research Team and tens of thousands of crash tests, facts are compiled that

subsequently form the basis for the development of the safety systems of tomorrow. Helping a driver avoid an accident is naturally the most effective means of reducing the number of people injured or killed in traffic. For instance, the Volvo XC60 is equipped as standard with City Safety, which is a feature that helps the driver avoid colliding with the vehicle ahead in slow-moving traffic and other similar situations. EuroNCAP does not currently test safety systems of this type.

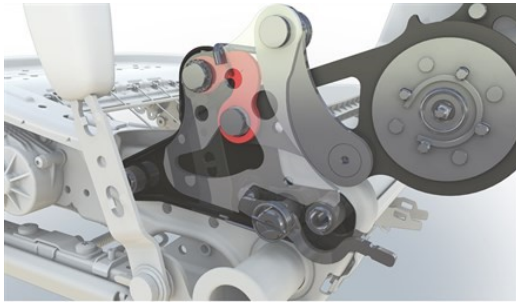
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Keywords:

Volvo XC60, Press Releases, 2009, Product News

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