

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0690/07
by Teresa Riera Madurell (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Inappropriate use of satellite navigation systems implicated in the increase in traffic accidents

Despite the Commission's recommendations of 2000 aimed at ensuring that satellite navigation systems, known as GPS, do not distract drivers, they are misused all too often, as has been reported in the media.

We should take into account that, generally speaking, the distraction of drivers causes 37% of fatal traffic accidents. Satellite navigation systems are likely to distract drivers if the GPS is programmed manually when the car is already moving or if the driver takes his eyes off the road in order to consult the screen. Other accidents are caused because the driver relies on instructions given by the GPS rather than warning signs on the road.

In order to take steps to prevent the misuse of satellite navigation systems from increasing the number of accidents, can the Commission say:

- whether it has any research findings on the impact of the use of GPS on road safety;
- whether it has accurate data on the kind of driver errors that can be caused by the misuse of GPS systems;
- whether it has monitored compliance with the recommendations of 2000 in the various Member States;
- whether it considers that the recommendations of 2000 should be updated to take account of technological developments?