

F2010-D-002

XENON CAR LIGHTING AS SAFETY DEVICE

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KEYWORDS

Xenon headlamp, car lighting, accident research, cost-benefit analysis, consumer research

ABSTRACT

The Clepa LightSightSafety initiative has committed itself to improve the road safety by the most basic safety feature – light. Today, Xenon car lighting systems represent the highest-performing headlamp technologies. Introduced more than a decade ago, the take rates for Xenon in new passenger cars are currently about 25% in Germany – which represents the pioneering market in Europe for Xenon – and $\pm 10\%$ in other EU member states.

Xenon headlights represent an important safety potential by improving the visibility in situations with limited sight (twilight and darkness). Accident research confirms that about 1 out of 5 accidents at night with injuries could be avoided by a full deployment of the technology. Every year thousands of lives could be saved on European roads. A recent investigation based on the probably most-detailed accident database underpins these facts in an impressive way.

From the socio-economic point of view the Xenon technology has an outstanding benefit-cost-ratio amongst innovative safety features, topped by ESC only. Given that Xenon is a mature technology it becomes obvious that quick wins for safety can be realized by supporting the accelerated penetration.

While Xenon drivers are highly satisfied with their headlamps and want to buy it again, consumer research shows that the awareness and understanding of safety devices, especially lighting, is low in general. Spending more efforts on explaining the benefits of Xenon will certainly pay-off, thereby the “experience” in test drives at night is the perfect way.

Unfortunately in smaller/mid car segments the high intention-to-buy is partly destroyed by the option price. For the sake of road safety joined efforts are necessary – carmakers/dealers have different levers to increase sales with lighting, regulatory bodies and consumer organizations should see clear opportunities to support. Successful examples exist!