

# **Distracted Driving The FCC's Role**

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Federal Communications Commission



# Federal Jurisdiction

## Department of Transportation

- Lead Agency

## Federal Communications Commission

- Regulates wireless industry

## DOT and FCC announce joint effort to evaluate technologies that may curb distracted driving

- Announced November 4

# FCC Overview

Independent Government Agency Established  
by Communications Act of 1934

Regulates interstate and international  
communications by radio, television, wire,  
satellite and cable

## Major Functions

- Issues Licenses
- Certifies Equipment
- Issues technical and operational rules
  - Licensed services and unlicensed devices

# FCC Legal Authority

Regulate wireless carriers and approve equipment

- Scope of jurisdiction is narrowly defined
- Rules aimed at preventing interference between systems
- Does not clearly extend to promoting the general safety of the public or preventing the irresponsible use of wireless devices in cars

# How Can the FCC Help?

## Assist DOT with equipment evaluation

- Capitalize on experience with nomadic devices

## Outreach and Education

- Exploit relationships with wireless carriers, trade associations, equipment manufacturers

# Combating Distracted Driving

## Three types of technical approaches

- Software
  - Application is loaded onto mobile device
  - User initiated
- Network
  - Application rides on the wireless network
  - No action by user necessary
- Hardware/software combination
  - Device installed in vehicle which communicates with mobile device
  - User/manufacturer installs hardware
  - User sets rules

Jamming the mobile device is **ILLEGAL!**

# FCC Equipment Authorization

## All transmitters must be approved

- Mostly performed by Telecommunication Certification Bodies (TCBs) with FCC oversight
- Does a proposed distracted driving solution include a transmitter?
  - Generally Bluetooth or Wi-Fi
  - Unlicensed
  - Very low power

# Consumer Outreach and Education

## FCC Consumer Call Center

- Fielded nearly 4.5 million calls last year
- Has been educated on distracted driving issues

## FCC Consumer Information Registry

- Free e-mail consumer information service that provides subscribers with updates on hot consumer issues
- Includes distracted driving

# Materials Warning of Dangers of Distracted Driving

FCC has produced

- Distracted driving advisory for consumers
- Industry Update about technology approaches to distracted driving

FCC is developing

- Flyers, Brochures, Video

FCC is working with other organizations

- CTIA, NSC, DOT, and others

# Distracted Driving Information Clearinghouse

## Information for consumers

- Learn how to get involved
- Details on available technologies that could help reduce the risk of distracted driving
- Links to safety organizations that rely on volunteers
- Links to companies that provide products to reduce distracted driving
  - No product is endorsed
  - Companies self-report

# Additional Outreach Efforts

## Plans to develop Information Toolkit

- Downloadable resources from the FCC, DOT, safety organizations, and other sources
- To help people and organizations conduct their own distracted driving education and outreach programs

## Exhibits

- Auto shows and state fairs, etc.
  - Had booth in Safe Driver Tech Zone at CES

# Web Resources

- Web page: [www.fcc.gov/cgb/driving.html](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/driving.html)
- E-mail box: [distracteddriving@fcc.gov](mailto:distracteddriving@fcc.gov)