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UK Prepares to Introduce Breathalysers and Black Box Devices in All New Vehicles

July 31, 2025

— Categories: Breaking News



The UK is moving towards new road safety regulations that would require all newly manufactured cars to be fitted with alcohol breathalysers and data recorders. The plan, reported by *The Telegraph* on 30 July 2025, follows developments across Europe and reflects ongoing alignment with international safety standards.

The proposed changes would introduce in-vehicle technology including Event Data Recorders (EDRs), which store key driving data such as speed, braking, and steering actions around the time of an accident. Cars would also be built to accommodate alcohol

interlocks, devices that measure a driver's blood alcohol level before allowing the engine to start. Although the breathalysers would not be activated by default, the infrastructure would be in place to enable them where required by law.

These measures are part of a broader vehicle safety initiative linked to the European Union's General Safety Regulation 2 (GSR2), which became mandatory for new cars sold in EU member states from July 2024. The UK is not obliged to follow EU rules post-Brexit but has signalled interest in maintaining close safety standards, particularly in line with existing rules already applied in Northern Ireland under the post-Brexit arrangements.

While the technology is designed to improve road safety and support accident investigations, questions have been raised about how driving data is stored and who can access it. A 2023 YouGov poll showed that more than two-thirds of UK drivers were concerned about the idea of continuous monitoring inside their vehicles.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) has confirmed discussions with government officials and carmakers are ongoing. SMMT Chief Executive Mike Hawes said the industry supports improved safety but will need clarity on how the new rules will be applied and when.

At present, no start date has been confirmed. The Department for Transport is expected to release further guidance following a consultation process with industry experts, safety groups, and data privacy organisations.