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ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

# Technical Bulletin

## Application of Euro NCAP Star Rating

Version 1.0

November 2010

TB 007

Title	Application of Euro NCAP Star Rating
Version	1.0
Document Number	TB007
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Date	November 2010
Related Documents	Euro NCAP guidelines, CSSTR Protocol 2.3
Status	Information
Application Date	Immediate

# Application of Euro NCAP Star Rating

## Background

For many years, manufacturers have sought to use Euro NCAP's star rating for variants other than the one tested. Manufacturers have also asked for 'corporate twins' – vehicles which are identical apart from name and branding – to be allowed to 'share' a star rating. Until the introduction of this technical bulletin in 2009, the star rating could not be used by any variant other than the one tested.

From the guidelines:

It is unacceptable for reference to be made to Euro NCAP or its rating in promotions for other variants than the assessed vehicle model.

Manufacturers may only advertise Euro NCAP results in their marketing material for a particular vehicle if the model variant of this vehicle tested by Euro NCAP is available to buy in the European Member State concerned.

Euro NCAP has in the past allowed the same star rating to be used for more than one vehicle, but has not done so recently. This bulletin is extended to offer a cautious approach to corporate twins, allowing Euro NCAP to offer broader consumer information where it can be certain that the assessment is correct for more than one make and model.

## Developments

Some countries have introduced tax incentives based on Euro NCAP's ratings. Application of the rating to a single variant has led to a situation where vehicles which are almost identical are taxed differently, leading to confusion amongst the car-buying public.

In order to make its ratings apply more broadly across the model range, Euro NCAP applied the Car Specification, Selection, Testing & Retesting protocol from the beginning of 2008. In contrast to previous years, where safety equipment was chosen based on standard-fit to the best-selling variant, the protocol bases the selection of the test variant on fitment across the entire model range.

Moreover, Euro NCAP no longer uses 'size categories' as its basis for comparison. Since the beginning of 2009, the website has allowed comparison between cars with broadly similar structures (e.g. passenger car, off-roader etc) and with masses within 150kg of one another.

## Decisions

It seems untenable for Euro NCAP to maintain that the star rating cannot be applied to variants within a model range which have identical front-end structure to the one tested, and very similar kerb weights.

Manufacturers may submit crash test data for evaluation by the Euro NCAP Secretariat for variants which:

- 1) have an unladen kerb mass within +/- 150kg of the variant tested, and
- 2) have identical, or almost identical, structure forward of the B-pillar (including bumper construction), and
- 3) do not differ in the number of side entry doors (3/5 door, for example), and have the same or greater level and fitment of safety equipment, including all Euro NCAP-relevant primary and secondary technologies.

A car's Euro NCAP star rating can be applied to models other than the one tested if:

- 1) Euro NCAP is satisfied that the 'alternate' model is, apart from name and branding, identical to the car tested in all ways related to safety.
- 2) The 'alternate' model has the same base safety specification as the car tested, or better.
- 3) The best selling variant of the 'alternate' brand-model has the same bodystyle and powertrain.

## **Procedure**

### **(A) Application to other variants**

- 1) Manufacturers must submit information to the Euro NCAP Programme Manager. Relevant crash test data should be submitted for all variants for which an application is being made. Unladen kerb weights should be provided showing the difference from the tested variant. For different body styles, drawings should be provided showing that the variants are structurally comparable. Where equipment differs from the variant tested (e.g. different side airbags), the differences should be noted. Information should also be submitted regarding the fitment of safety equipment to the variants under consideration. Euro NCAP reserves the right to ask for data demonstrating the performance of the variant in any area of Euro NCAP's assessment or to ask for additional tests to be done at an approved laboratory.
- 2) Euro NCAP will maintain a database of the variants to which its star rating applies and will list those variants on its website.

### **(B) Corporate Twins**

#### **1) Equipment Matrix**

- An equipment matrix should be completed for all brand models to which rating will be applied.
- The matrix should be signed by a representative of that brand.
- The base safety specification and best selling variant should be identified for each brand.
- Each manufacturer agrees to notify Euro NCAP of any changes to standard/optional fitment of safety equipment.

## 2) Supporting Technical Documentation

Documentation should be submitted to the Programme Manager which highlights differences, if any, in:

- Manufacturing plants.
- Suppliers of safety equipment.
- Powertrain options.

## 3) Testing

Where very minor differences exist, the brand-model with the lowest base safety specification or the poorer performance will be assessed.

## 4) Inspection

Alternate make/models should be made available, on request, for strip-down/parts check at time of inspection.

## **Presentation on Website**

### (A) Variants other than the one tested

On the web page of the tested car, a list of the other variants to which the star rating applies will be presented.

### (B) Corporate Twins

Models of the alternate brands will appear in the drop-down list on Euro NCAP's website. Each 'alternate' model will have its own web page, with a picture of that model. However, all of the data and comments, including details of the car tested, will be copied from the tested vehicle. The comments will make clear that Euro NCAP considers the alternate model to be a twin of the tested vehicle.

## **Use of Star Rating**

### (A) Variants other than the one tested

If Euro NCAP's star rating is to be used to advertise a specific variant which was not tested by Euro NCAP, reference must be made to the variant which was tested.

### (B) Corporate Twins

'Alternate' models may use the Euro NCAP star rating in the same way that is allowed for the tested vehicle, i.e. if star rating is to be used to advertise a specific variant different from the twin model variant, reference must be made to the rated twin model variant

## **Date of Application**

Euro NCAP will start receiving applications immediately.

