

APPLICATION OF STAR RATINGS

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EUROPEAN NEW CAR ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME



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APPLICATION OF STAR RATINGS PROTOCOL

1. Introduction

Euro NCAP has in the past published a result for a vehicle with little or no follow-up regarding the continued validity of the star rating. The rating has been a 'snapshot' of the safety of a vehicle at a point in time and any changes that occur thereafter, either to the vehicle's design or to the equipment fitted to it, have not been systematically tracked.

With growing recognition and use of the star rating by national authorities, insurance companies and the general public, it is appropriate that Euro NCAP should provide information on the continued validity of the star rating that was originally issued to a vehicle.

Some attempts have been made in the past to broaden the applicability of the star rating to variants other than the one tested. Technical Bulletin 007 set out the circumstances in which manufacturers could apply to have a rating applied to other variants or to share a common rating between 'corporate twins' – vehicles which are identical except for branding. This protocol incorporates and replaces that Technical Bulletin, but the requirements are unchanged.

This protocol defines the technical aspects concerning the continued validity of the star rating. Manufacturers should also be careful to observe the requirements of Euro NCAP's "Guidelines for Use of the Star Rating".

2. Validity of Star Rating

- 2.1. Once Euro NCAP has published the base star rating and related information on its website, the vehicle has obtained a valid rating.
- 2.2. By default the base rating (and optional rating if applicable) remains valid for a maximum period of 6 years following the release of the result. The rating scheme is expected to change so significantly during this period that referring to an older result would mislead consumers.
- 2.3. If during this period the specification of the rated vehicle or safety pack alters, for instance because standard equipment is deleted or made optional, the rating may become invalid earlier. To monitor changes to rated vehicles, Euro NCAP will apply Annual and Facelift Reviews (see 3).
- 2.4. In some circumstances the star rating may be carried over from the original test model to a facelifted model, another model variant or twin model. Specific conditions apply as laid out in sections 3.2, 5 and 6 respectively.

3. Annual and Facelift Review

- 3.1. Vehicles whose results are published on or after 1st January 2013 will be subject to an annual review of their ratings.

- 3.1.1. A vehicle's base rating will be subject to an annual review every 12 months from the time the original rating was released until maximum 6 years thereafter, to establish whether or not the original rating remains valid. The annual review will comprise (for all variants and/or corporate twins covered by the rating):
- A check that the base safety equipment is unchanged and will continue so for a further 12 months.
 - A check that the fitment of safety equipment met original requirements and is expected to continue to do so for a further 12 months. This check will require information on total sales across the model range and evidence of the number of vehicles to which the safety equipment was fitted as standard equipment.

Note: Information from a third party should be provided to corroborate the sales figures (e.g. for an AEB system, information might be provided by the supplier of the radar or camera system used in that application).

- 3.1.2. Approximately nine months from the publication of the original rating, or of the previous annual review or of a facelift review, Euro NCAP will contact the manufacturer with a standard form for completion. The completed form will be reviewed by the Secretariat and the manufacturer will be contacted if further information is required.
- 3.1.3. Not returned or not completed forms may lead to discontinuation of the star rating.
- 3.2. Where a vehicle with a valid overall star rating receives a facelift and the manufacturer wishes to carry over the rating from the original test, the following rules apply:
- 3.2.1. The vehicle manufacturer should contact Euro NCAP approximately four months before the release of the facelifted vehicle.
- 3.2.2. A 'facelift review' will be conducted by Euro NCAP to establish whether or not the original star rating can be transferred. This will comprise, in addition to those items examined in an annual review (see above):
- A review of the changes that have been made to the vehicle.
 - A review of in-house test data, where appropriate.
- 3.3. Application should be made even for 'facelifts' which have no influence, or a very minor influence, on the safety rating but where the appearance of the car has been altered or where the car is to be marketed as 'new'. It is Euro NCAP's intention to keep consumers informed of the applicability of the rating and any changes which distinguish the updated vehicle from the original should be reported.
- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the vehicle manufacturer to approach Euro NCAP with information concerning facelift changes. If no information is received from the manufacturer, Euro NCAP will assume that the facelifted vehicle does not meet the requirements of the original star rating. The original star rating will no longer be valid and the facelifted vehicle will be eligible for assessment.
- 3.5. The continued validity of an optional rating based on a safety pack will be checked according to VSSTR protocol v7.0 or later.
- 3.6. The outcome of annual reviews and facelift reviews will be published on the web page of the vehicle in a simple tabulated format, indicating the date and nature of the review and whether or not the original rating remains valid. Annual reviews will be published approximately every 12 months from the date of the original rating.

4. Termination of Star Rating

- 4.1. The base rating (and optional rating if applicable) expires after 6 years or when the original rating is not considered valid for the vehicle on sale at an Annual Review (e.g. original fitment rates not met in practice) or a Facelift Review.
- 4.2. In all cases where the rating has been terminated, the website will list the VIN up to which the rating is valid. Vehicles after this VIN will not be covered by the rating and the manufacturer's advertising should make no further reference to the rating. The ratings and related information will remain on the website for reference (used car market).
- 4.3. Vehicles produced after this VIN are eligible for testing against the latest Euro NCAP protocols. The manufacturer will first be offered the opportunity to sponsor the upgrade of the rating, after which a Euro NCAP member may consider sponsorship.

5. Other Variants

- 5.1. Main Assessment
 - 5.1.1. Euro NCAP will test a single variant, as identified using the Vehicle Specification, Selection, Testing and Retesting (VSSTR) protocol. However, as part of its assessment of the vehicle, Euro NCAP will ask the manufacturer for data showing the equivalent safety performance of the following:
 - The opposite hand of drive to the one tested (e.g. RHD if LHD tested)
 - Other number of doors from the tested variant (e.g. 5 door if 3 door tested)
 - Other body styles (e.g. estate/wagon where hatchback has been tested), including cabriolets.
 - Other engine/powertrains

If suitable data can be produced, and if the other variants meet the following conditions:

- have an unladen kerb mass within +/- 150kg of the variant tested, and,
- have the same or greater level and fitment of safety equipment, including all Euro NCAP-relevant primary and secondary technologies.

then the star rating will also be applicable to these other variants in the model range.

- 5.1.2. Manufacturers must submit relevant data to Euro NCAP for all variants for which an application is being made. Information should also be submitted regarding the fitment of safety equipment to the variants under consideration. In particular:
 - 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.

- Drawings may be used to show that other engines have near-identical dimensions to the one tested (e.g. engines of the same type but of different nominal capacity). For engines/powertrains of different dimensions, in-house test results should be provided.
 - Where equipment differs from the variant tested (e.g. different side airbags), the differences should be noted.
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. Manufacturers may also apply for the star rating to be applied to other variants in years later than the one in which the rating was originally published. In such cases, no consideration will be given to the requirements in place at the time of the new application, only those which applied at the time of the original rating. Manufacturers should provide data in support of any application as described in 5.1.2.
- 5.4. Certain variants may be marketed under a different model name to the originally-tested vehicle. Manufacturers may apply for the star rating to be applied to such 'partner models' and should provide suitable data as set out in 5.1.2.
- 5.4.1. In such cases, presentation of the results on Euro NCAP's website will depend on the relative timing of the launch of the partner variants. In any case, the partner model may not share the original rating if it is released in a calendar year more than 2 years later than the date stamp of the original assessment.
- 5.4.1.1. If the partner variant is marketed in Europe in the same calendar year as the original assessment (and therefore eligible for the same date stamp on the rating), the Manufacturer may choose whether the partner is listed on Euro NCAP's website as a separate model (Model A and Model B appear separately in the list of tested cars) or shares a combined rating with the tested model (presented as Model A/Model in the list). In either case, the comments will make clear that the rating is based on the results of the tested model.
- 5.4.1.2. If the partner variant is marketed in a year subsequent to the original model (and is therefore not eligible for the same date stamp on the rating), the assessment on Euro NCAP's website will be renamed "Model A/Model B", where "Model A" is the marketing name of the variant originally tested and "Model B" is the name of the 'partner'. The comments will make clear that the rating is based on Model A but that sufficient similarities exist, and sufficient data has been provided, for Euro NCAP to apply the rating to Model B.
- 5.4.2. In-house data will not be accepted for partner models. All additional tests needed (to be agreed between the manufacturer and the Secretariat) must be conducted at a Euro NCAP laboratory and paid for by the manufacturer.
- 5.4.3. The Manufacturer must inform Euro NCAP of its intention to apply for a 'partner' rating at the time of assessment of the tested model.
- 5.4.4. The original star rating can be extended to partner models if the results of the additional tests meet the audit test requirements set out in paragraph 4.2.7 of the VSSTR Protocol v 7.0.

6. Corporate Twins

- 6.1. A vehicle's star rating can be applied to models other than the one tested if:
- Euro NCAP is satisfied that the 'alternate' model is, apart from name and branding, identical to the vehicle tested in all ways related to safety.
 - The 'alternate' model has the same base safety specification as the vehicle tested, or better.
 - The best selling variant of the 'alternate' brand-model has the same body style and powertrain.
- 6.2. An equipment matrix should be completed for all brand models to which the 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.
 - The manufacturer agrees to notify Euro NCAP of any changes to standard/optional fitment of safety equipment.
- 6.3. Documentation should be submitted to Euro NCAP which highlights differences, if any, in
- Manufacturing plants.
 - Suppliers of safety equipment.
 - Powertrain options.
- 6.4. Where very minor differences exist, the brand-model with the lowest base safety specification or the poorer performance will be assessed.
- 6.5. Alternate make/models should be made available, on request, for strip-down/parts check at time of inspection or before.
- 6.6. Manufacturers must ask for other brand models to be considered as corporate twins at the time the original assessment is to be done. Retrospective application for other brand models to 'share' the original rating will not be considered.
- 6.7. Data for publication on the corporate twin will be taken from the original model tested. Euro NCAP will make no distinction between the models.