



Press Release

19 April 2007

New Generation High-Tech Vehicles for Australia's Emergency Services

A major national project has just been launched to produce safer and more effective vehicles for Australia's emergency services.

The SAFE Project – Standardised Approach for Emergency Vehicles - is an initiative of the Cooperative Research Centre for Advanced Automotive Technology (AutoCRC).

The SAFE vehicles project aims to improve power supply management for multiple in-vehicle technologies, minimise driver distraction and incorporate ergonomic and human factors principles to improve safety for drivers, passengers and other road users.

The SAFE vehicles project is co-sponsored by the National Safety Agency and AutoCRC, and includes two major collaborating research organisations: the Victorian Partnership for Advanced Computing and Monash University.

The project is structured in two phases: In the first phase, two proof-of-concept demonstrators will be developed that address the current limitations of a police vehicle.

The first demonstration vehicle was delivered in six weeks, and was created as a police demonstrator vehicle based on emerging technology to demonstrate to Australia's emergency services the potential of new and emerging technologies.

This concept vehicle, based on the new Holden VE Commodore, was built as a test bed to trial leading edge technology and standard interface solutions in the vehicle environment.

Technology incorporated into this vehicle includes remote network access, automated number plate and fingerprint recognition technology, video surveillance access, traffic information and vehicle diagnostics.

For example in the concept car there are multiple data systems for number plate recognition which can check up to 9,000 vehicle registrations from a single police car in one normal police shift.

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An in-car video surveillance with CCTV access and a sound recording system connects personnel to communications centres in real time, offering immediate incident appraisal and support and video material for use as evidence.

These technologies place severe demands on the power available from any standard car battery.

“The project is a timely one for all Australian Emergency Services as several new technologies will need advanced power management systems to ensure they can be successfully deployed”, said Matthew Cuthbertson, CEO of AutoCRC.

“Another element of the project is developing a new national standard for fitting and integrating new technology into emergency vehicles”.

The new SAFE vehicle system will be ready for deployment in the Spring of 2008.

(The CRC Programme is a Commonwealth Government initiative. For more information see www.crc.gov.au)

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Two High Resolution Photos can be downloaded at:

<http://www.autocrc.com/press/AutoCRC17.jpg>
<http://www.autocrc.com/press/AutoCRC81.jpg>

Captions:

Photo 1. Dr Charlotte Brace (Monash University) with Mr David Jones (VPAC) with the computer “brain” of the new SAFE Power Management system.

Photo 2. A new generation mobile data terminal and fingerprint scanner – the display is on a power saving LCD monitor.