Majority of UK road users believe new eye-tracking technology to check driver attentiveness could help improve road safety, but public awareness remains low, according to survey

- Over two thirds of survey respondents (70%) believe that in-vehicle Driver Monitoring Systems can improve road safety and help reduce accidents caused by distracted or fatigued drivers
- However, 72% of UK consumers have little to no knowledge of this new technology, which is becoming mandatory for carmakers to install around the world and is present in Ford's Bluecruise-equipped Mustang Mach-E vehicles that have been approved for use on the motorway network in Great Britain
- Drivers in London are more likely than the national average to believe that DMS would make them a better, more attentive driver
- Young drivers are more likely to agree that DMS would make them a better, more attentive driver, compared to older drivers

Tuesday 30 May 2023: As hands-free driving technology is given approval for use on the motorway network in Great Britain for the first time, Driver Monitoring Systems (DMS) inside the vehicle that use eye-tracking cameras to check driver attentiveness, are rapidly becoming a key tool for governments and carmakers seeking to prevent road accidents.

However, the results of a recent study commissioned by **Seeing Machines**, an advanced computer vision technology company that designs AI-powered systems to improve transport safety, show that UK consumers still need convincing as to the benefits of this advanced technology that monitors for fatigue and distraction, with many having yet to hear about the technology.

Seeing Machines conducted a nationally representative poll of 2,147 UK consumers, carried out by Find Out Now, in May 2023 to gauge awareness of DMS and better understand consumer attitudes towards the technology.

As carmakers implement a range of new automated Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (or ADAS), from Blind Spot Detection to Adaptive Cruise Control, understanding what the driver is or is not doing becomes increasingly important. Driver Monitoring Systems provide the critical link between assisted driving features and driver safety, with the technology only being noticed if required to intervene.

70% of those surveyed said that they believed technologies used to monitor and improve the performance of drivers had the potential to help improve road safety and reduce road accidents, a sign that consumers' anxieties about DMS may be due to a lack of awareness around the technology.

The results also revealed some interesting regional variations, with drivers in London being on average 32% more likely to believe that DMS would improve their driving, while those in high level professional occupations were also 40% more likely than their junior colleagues to think the same. Drivers in the North East were the group least likely to believe that DMS could lead to improvements in their driving ability, with only 6% supporting the view that DMS could make them a more attentive driver.

Another insight offered by the survey is the attitude of different age groups towards DMS.

The results show higher levels of support for DMS among younger adults, with 18 – 24-year-olds being the age group most likely to pay extra for a driver safety system to be installed. 14% said they would pay up to £250 for the technology, compared to on average only 9% among those over 45.

That said, only 5% of respondents across all age groups said that they thought that DMS should be a legal requirement for all UK vehicles, suggesting that potential legislative changes to make driver monitoring systems compulsory for all new vehicles may be out of step with popular sentiment.

“On the back of Ford’s recent announcement that its ‘hands-off, eyes-on’ assisted driver technology has been approved for use on certain motorways in the UK, the prevalence of driver monitoring systems in the vehicles we drive will only increase in the years ahead,” said **Paul McGlone, CEO of Seeing Machines.** “Every year, around 1.35 million people die, and between 20 and 50 million people are injured, due to some form of transport accident caused by human error, negligence, risky behaviour, unpredictable events, or unsafe conditions. Getting everyone home safely is what matters and regulators around the world understand that sophisticated cameras to check driver attentiveness can help reduce accidents.”

“The survey shows that there is much work still to be done by carmakers, suppliers and policy makers in educating the public as to the benefits of advanced driver monitoring systems and the regulatory changes which will make it an unavoidable legal requirement in the decade ahead. Even so, the results indicate that most UK drivers are receptive to these changes and are willing to try out a technology with clear benefits for driver safety, as DMS technology becomes as commonplace as the seatbelt in the years ahead.”

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About Seeing Machines (AIM: SEE), a global company founded in 2000 and headquartered in Australia, is an industry leader in vision-based monitoring technology that enable machines to see, understand and assist people. Seeing Machines is revolutionizing global transport safety. Its technology portfolio of AI algorithms, embedded processing and optics, power products that need to deliver reliable real-time understanding of vehicle operators. The technology spans the critical measurement of where a driver is looking, through to classification of their cognitive state as it applies to accident risk. Reliable "driver state" measurement is the end-goal of Driver Monitoring Systems (DMS) technology. Seeing Machines develops DMS technology to drive safety for Automotive, Commercial Fleet, Off-road and Aviation. The company has offices in Australia, USA, Europe and Asia, and supplies technology solutions and services to industry leaders in each market vertical.

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