

AIR CONDITIONING IN VEHICLES AS A SAFETY CONSIDERATION

Dear NETS Members,

September 15, 2011

Veelorna Valaydon (PMI) asked about the need to require air conditioning in vehicles. Her complete question is below

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Responses follow Veelorna's question.

Thank you to those of you who provided responses.

Please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Yours truly,

Jack

J. M. Hanley
Executive Director
Network of Employers for Traffic Safety
314-680-3293

QUESTION

My question is a general question as we are currently working on a worldwide program in the selection of our cars and we wanted to know if air conditioning has an impact on safe driving. This will help us decide whether we make air conditioning in the vehicle mandatory or not.

Thank you very much for your help.

Kind regards,

Veelorna Valaydon
Engineer Health & Safety
Philip Morris International
Email: Veelorna.Valaydon@pmintl.com
Tel(Office): +41 582 426 016
Tel(Mobile): +41 792 012 042

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	RESPONSES	AIR CONDITIONING AS A SAFETY CONSIDERATION
1	Acushnet <i>Terry King</i> <i>Terry_King@AcushnetGolf.com</i>	Acushnet Company has not seen any impact in respect to air conditioning to safe driving. Currently, all of our vehicles are equipped with air conditioning.
	Anonymous	<p>AC is standard on all our company cars. From a safety standpoint, I know of no supporting data that says un-air conditioned vehicles are less safe. Intuitively, I suggest that vehicles with AC create a more comfortable driving environment and may lessen a propensity for driver fatigue resulting from heat stress and possible dehydration in extreme climates.</p> <p>Obviously, vehicles with AC have a higher residual value as well.</p>
2	AstraZeneca <i>Kimberly Jamme</i> <i>Kimberly.Jamme@astrazeneca.com</i>	I do not know if air conditioning has an impact on safe driving as all of our vehicles have been equipped with air conditioning for many years.
3	BP <i>Ken Daigle</i> <i>Kenneth.Daigle@bp.com</i>	My opinion is that the need for air conditioning in a vehicle would be based on the risk posed by the environment and the potential for the occupants to overheat or for increased fatigue. In hot environments, drivers can fatigue faster when overheated and, in extreme cases, possibly cause heat exhaustion of the driver or riders that would raise a health and safety concern. With that in mind, I imagine there are some environments where air conditioning would be necessary but other locations where it may not be required.
4	Cephalon <i>Jonathan Kamanns</i> <i>jkamanns@cephalon.com</i>	With regard to the safe operation of a vehicle, I'm confident in saying that AC doesn't greatly impact the safety of a vehicle. Although, some considerations are as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engine lag with AC on (specifically on small liter 4cyl engines) 2. Reaching to control temperature during driving

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		<p>3. Effect of non-AC on driver (stress, road-rage, etc.)</p> <p>None of which I would consider a direct safety concern when choosing vehicles.</p> <p>However, there are a number of considerations with regard to acquisition cost, maintenance and resale value that should aid in the decision making process.</p>
5	<p>DHL <i>Phil Renaud</i> phil.renaud@exel.com</p>	<p>On behalf of DHL, all vehicles are equipped with air conditioning. Not sure that you can tie AC with having a direct correlation to Safety performance, but certainly the comfort and well being of the associate population is very important to goodwill and productivity.</p>
6	<p>Eli Lilly <i>Beth Stamer</i> STAMER_BETH_A@LILLY.COM</p>	<p>This is an interesting question and something to think about for our Latin America and southeast Asia organizations.</p> <p>Currently, we do not require air conditioning in our global motor vehicle standard. And have not had requests or questions from our global operations on air conditioned vehicles. Perhaps because of the other safety features we do require, the vehicles already include air conditioning.</p>
7	<p>Johnson & Johnson <i>Sandy Lee</i> SLee3@its.jnj.com</p>	<p>AC is not a global standard. Although not standard equipment in many countries (it's an option in many cases), we have US, Canada, PR and AP where AC is a standard feature.</p>
8	<p>Donna Bibbo <i>Novo Nordisk</i> dbib@novonordisk.com</p>	<p>I can't remember when we didn't include air conditioning in all of our vehicles, and I've never had a case where it had anything to do with an accident.</p>
9	<p>Roche <i>Francine Seguin</i> francine.seguin@roche.com</p>	<p>Air conditioning has always been included in our vehicles; it is a question of comfort, especially when someone has to spend several hours behind the wheel.</p>

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10	Tyco <i>Halina Caravello</i> <i>hcaravello@TYCO.COM</i>	<p>Good question and not one that I have personally thought about previously.</p> <p>In some of our operations, employees must wear PPE while in the car and we require air conditioning to eliminate a discomfort factor and help ensure the PPE is worn. For other vehicles, vehicles under normal use, we don't have a specific policy and can't think of a risk issue (e.g. driver distraction) that would come into play. However, a point to consider when purchasing or leasing vehicles you usually get "packages" and don't get ala carte selection. In some circumstances, a vehicle package with no AC would probably not have any safety equipment that isn't required by law. If you order equipment with air bags and ABS braking, the air conditioning likely is part of the package. This packaging option may be something for Valaydon to consider.</p>
11	Shell <i>Mike Watson</i> <i>Mike.Watson@shell.com</i>	<p>Faulty or lack of climate control systems can have a major impact on a driver. Warm/hot temperatures bring on symptoms such as drowsiness, headaches, loss of concentration and fatigue. Cold weather can also have negative consequences on the driver. Our policy is as follows:</p> <p><i>Vehicles are to be fitted with a serviceable climate control system or air conditioning/heating system that is able to maintain an in-cab temperature range of 5oC to 30oC (41°F to 86°F) under all local climatic and driving conditions. The air conditioning unit shall use a non ozone depleting refrigerant.</i></p>
12	Sunoco <i>Bill Sanicky</i> <i>wmsanicky@sunocoinc.com</i>	<p>I have thought of it as more a comfort than a safety item. However, I can see A/C being a safety issue so that the driver is comfortable and can concentrate on his/her driving and not the heat or weather.</p>

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13	Xerox <i>Mike McAlister</i> <i>Michael.Mcalister@xerox.com</i>	I cannot answer the question, but will provide that all leased vehicles worldwide have AC for Xerox.
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