

A photograph of two young children playing on a wooden play structure in a park. One child, wearing a yellow shirt and a blue cap, is sitting on the structure and holding the hand of another child who is climbing. The background is filled with lush green trees and foliage. The text 'CONNECTING WITH THE FUTURE' is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

CONNECTING WITH THE FUTURE

Enabling local diversity with global interoperability

Creating environmentally sound solutions

Building sustainable and successful schemes

Leading in future-oriented and inclusive standards

Applying technologies to deliver policies

Working in partnerships worldwide



Plans to outlaw SatNav - what next?

Spain's Dirección General de Tráfico (DGT, Directorate-General for Traffic) is pioneering the European use of radar-equipped helicopters to detect speed limit violators. It is fitting MX-15 radar units supplied by Canadian company Wescam into its fleet, used in the past mainly for video camera-based spot traffic reports, and road and accident supervision, though images have been used to report traffic offences.

The units will allow helicopters flying at heights of over 300m to record vehicle speeds at straight-line distances of 1km. A prototype system is currently undergoing evaluation at the Spanish Metrology Centre, part of the country's Ministry of Industry, to ensure that the resulting evidence is legally acceptable.

Its effectiveness emerged in a recent demonstration when radar detected an open-top car travelling at 216 km/h. The helicopter recorded the offence from a height of 150m and at a distance of 700m from the vehicle.

Once authenticated, the equipment will

begin traffic surveillance, mainly on older, single-carriageway roads which have fewer land-based detection units. Malaga, in the southern coastal area of Andalusia, is likely to be the first regional traffic management centre (TMC) to operate the scheme.

Ultimately, the DGT plans to have equipped helicopters based at other TMCs in Madrid, Valencia, Sevilla, Zaragoza, Valladolid and A Coruña.

It is also considering new legislation to fine drivers as much as €300 a time for using satellite-based navigation systems while on the road. Calculating that half of Spain's road traffic accidents (RTAs) result from driver distraction, it is adducing the analogy of mobile phones, the use of which when driving is banned.

At the same time, it is also contacting manufacturers of navigation equipment available in Spain, asking them to adapt their software to prevent its use in vehicles in motion.

www.dgt.es

www.wescam.com

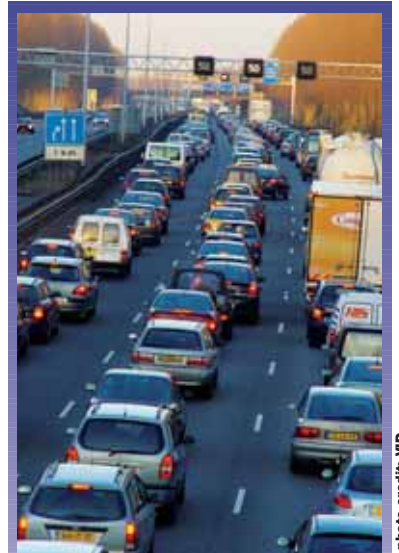


photo credit: VID

The Dutch Government will be taking an autumn decision on the next steps in the Dutch National Road Pricing Research Project following an interim report on a research study into the accuracy and reliability of satellite-based RUC systems.

Refining traffic flow predictions

Duisburg, Germany-based traffic expert Michael Schreckenberg has developed a mathematical model that constantly compares current traffic densities with stored historic data, to calculate travel times and generate congestion forecasts for the highway network of the German Land (state) of North Rhine-Westphalia. He claims that predictions up to 30 minutes ahead are 90% accurate, and that those up to one hour ahead are 80% accurate.

He warns, however, of the risks inherent in over-accurate forecasts – notably the notoriously difficult to calculate 'self-defeating prognosis

phenomenon'. If too many motorists react promptly to a radio warning and adopt alternate routes, the predicted congestion may not occur while those diverted end up stuck in traffic on the roads they have opted for.

In another German Land, Hesse, traffic experts claim that their predictions are so reliable – with a margin of error of only 10 or 15 minutes – that they are feeling confident enough to put them out on the radio, one day in advance. The main threat to their reliability comes from accidents, which cause 20% of traffic jams in Hesse.

Weather forecasts form part of the calcula-

tions, with wet roads and restricted visibility reducing road capacity by up to 15%. The Hesse computer also contains historic data on congestion-generating events; the location of Eintracht Frankfurt Football Club's opponents, for example, dictates the direction of traffic flows. Again, visitors to the Frankfurt Book Fair have different arrival and departure patterns from those attending the Frankfurt International Motor Show (which alternates each year between passenger and commercial vehicles).

www.autobahn.nrw.de

www.hswv.hessen.de

Climate change legislation looms

The EC is considering the case for major changes in present climate change legislation, ahead of the UN's annual climate change conference in December 2007. Key areas being studied include laws on greenhouse gas reduction, renewables, carbon trading and CO₂ emissions from cars.

Proposals to be published ahead of the UN conference include a controversial 130g CO₂/km target

for new passenger cars, although it remains to be seen what the EC will do about trucks, buses and coaches. Evidence of the pressure for change emerges from Netherlands environmental assessment agency MNP, which has announced that CO₂ emissions from the transport sector rose in 2006. This contrasts with figures for the country's overall greenhouse gas emissions, which fell to 3% below 1990 levels.

Commercial roll out of V2V system

General Motors (GM) is developing a new vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) system designed to reduce the risk of crashes by warning drivers of looming accidents. It will use satellite-positioning technology to locate vehicles, and then relay the information by a wireless network to others within a 300m range.

If it detects that two vehicles are heading for a collision – or that a stationary vehicle lies round an upcoming corner – it alerts drivers by audio alarms, flashing lights or haptic vibration to take avoiding action. Equally, it could avoid rear-end collisions, eg by alerting following traffic to a vehicle making an emergency stop. It could also be programmed to begin braking automatically.

The German government has already invested €53 million in a trial of 500,000 cars in Frankfurt. Models in which the system has been tested include a Cadillac CTS, a Chevrolet Epica, a Saab 9-3 estate and a Vauxhall Signum. GM's German subsidiary, Opel, is working with other manufacturers to establish a common



European industrial standard for this technology and has demonstrated the current status of development at the Dudenhofen Test Center in Germany

GM regards the system as being fully operational. But it says six years will be needed to bring it to market.

www.car-to-car.org

Cities to sign safety charter **InnovITS workshop**

European cities and regions grouping POLIS, and major cities network EUROCIITIES, are hosting a large-scale signing by public authorities of the European Road Safety Charter on 23 October 2007. The sponsors see the move as a further step in realising the EU's aim of halving road traffic accidents (RTAs) throughout the continent over the period 2001-10. In 2005, 41,600 people died in RTAs, while some 1.9 million people were injured, many severely.

Estimates put the resulting economic damage at €200bn, equating to 2% of EU GNP.

The event is designed to highlight POLIS's and EUROCIITIES' policy of encouraging all European cities and regions to carry out specific actions to improve road safety in the region. Says POLIS's Oliver Jung: 'The Charter is much more than a policy document. It is an invitation to undertake concrete actions, assess results and further promote the need to reduce road deaths.'

Signatories commit themselves to promoting Charter principles, carry out specific actions, share information on good practice, and allow assessment of their work. In return for becoming

'strategically committed to road safety', they gain official EC acknowledgement of their activity and access each others' experience through the Charter website.

Charter principles include:

- Incorporating road safety actions in major decision-making criteria;
- Pursuing concrete actions in driver training and information, motor vehicle equipment and ergonomics, and infrastructure;
- Developing and implementing relevant technologies;
- Contributing to the development of uniform and continuous monitoring of compliance with traffic regulations;
- Encouraging continuous education;
- Encouraging better understanding of accident causes and consequences; and
- Ensuring effective, high-quality medical, psychological and legal aid for RTA victims.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/roadsafety/charter.htm>
www.polis-online.org/
www.eurocities.org

InnovITS, the UK Centre of Excellence in ITS, has held a highly-successful workshop bringing together the UK's transport modelling, grid computing and industrial mathematics communities. Held jointly with the Grid Computing Now! and Industrial Mathematics Knowledge Transfer Networks, it attracted delegates from across the transport and high-level computing sectors, including government agencies, software vendors and research institutions.

The workshop looked at current issues in transport modelling, particularly the long run-times associated with existing models, and aimed to develop a common ground for developing transport modelling over the next five years and beyond. An excellent set of presentations described the challenges facing modellers and current developments in modeling, and included examples of the application of grid computing to modelling problems. Themes emerging from discussion sessions included an awareness of the scope for making significant short-term improvements by working with existing models.

One important and immediate outcome saw valuable links being made between members of the computing and modelling communities with offers of support to help optimise the use of existing models.

The presentations and workshop outputs are available to members of the ITS Knowledge Transfer Network. Membership is free and gives access to other event materials and the opportunity to participate in the ongoing development of the InnovITS technology roadmap.

www.innovits.com

Improved truck freight parking

Italian logistics electronics specialist Teleroute has joined an international consortium which aims to develop a network of reliable, secure parking sites for truck drivers across the EU. Called Secure European truck Parking Operational Services, the project aims to deliver its first parking areas over the period 2007-9.

The first step involves the development of a set of security standards for the sites. In the next, the consortium will start site construction in heavily-trafficked cross-border regions, in parallel with the upgrading of a number of existing locations.

www.teleroute.com

RFID solutions centre is located in Milan

Global IT company HP has opened a European RFID solutions centre in Milan, Italy, and announced that it is now a designated strategic RFID technology provider to Netherlands-based Euro Pool System, a specialist in leasing returnable crates and pallets for fresh products. The centre aims to encourage RFID take-up by giving HP partners and users access to new technology and the resources to develop and test integrated solutions.

Software providers include BEA Systems, Microsoft and SAP. The Centre also aims to use its R&D capabilities to anticipate new customer requirements.

Euro Pool System owns more than 88 million crates that rotate at a minimum of 414 million times per year, delivering daily orders to countries across Europe. It needed an RFID solution that could automatically track movements in real time, from manufacturing plant to cash register.

HP has worked with Euro Pool System to meet specification criteria including the ability to read RFID tags in environments charac-

terised by water and dust, to accommodate daily deliveries by waterways, road and rail. The solution is also designed to speed reconciliation processes and benchmark performance across Generation 2 RFID readers. Gen 2 technology supersedes first-generation RFID systems and claims the ability to read 300-plus tags per crate or pallet with 100% accuracy.

The solution uses the native RFID component inside Microsoft's new BizTalk Server 2006 R2 as its software platform, to bridge between the RFID systems and Euro Pool System's business applications. HP also partnered with Tyco International group company ADT, which has provided RFID reader hardware, reader deployment services and system performance tuning services to Euro Pool System.

www.hp.com
www.europoolsystem.com
www.bea.com
www.microsoft.com
www.sap.com
www.adt.co.uk

Wrong way warning

Siemens VDO is carrying out research into a wrong-way driving warning system designed to forewarn motorists

against potentially-deadly driving errors. By integrating camera-based traffic-sign recognition with the vehicle's on-board navigation system, the new electronic assistant will detect potential risks and alert motorists before they drive the wrong way, incorrectly enter motorways or one-way streets, or drive against the traffic flow. Each year, German radio stations report up to 2,000 wrong-way driving incidents. Despite being designed to be eye-catching, special traffic signs sited at motorway entrances have proved to have only limited effectiveness as deterrents.

The new solution, part of the Siemens VDO's pro.pilot array of driver aids, uses a camera mounted behind the interior rear-view mirror and aimed at the road ahead. The new solution will pick up any inconsistency and use electronic warnings – audio, visual and/or haptic – to guide the driver back to the correct lane before it is too late.

www.siemensvdo.com



Digital map challenge

The 12 October 2007 is the final date for registering for the third EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) edition of the NAVTEQ Global LBS Challenge. Entrants have the opportunity to develop a prize-winning location-enabled application that works with mobile phones and/or wireless handheld devices using dynamic positioning technology and NAVTEQ maps.

The global digital mapper has based the challenge on an established North American programme set up in 2003, which now also has an Asia/Pacific counterpart. The five categories for entries are:

- Content;
- Enterprise;
- Entertainment;
- Navigation; and
- Social networking.

Semi-finalists will be announced after 14 December 2007. The Grand Prize winner will earn €35,000 in cash and a three-year NAVTEQ territory licence to the value of €225,000; while up to three runners-up will each claim €7,500 in cash and a three-year NAVTEQ territory licence to the value of €150,000.

Entries will be judged by a specialist panel



representing wireless carriers, other industry experts and venture capitalists. Winners' will be announced at the GSMA Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, Catalunya, Spain from 11-14 February 2008.

www.navteq.com
www.LBSChallenge.com

Nokia offer a global solution for map users

Finnish mobile communications specialist Nokia has launched a new assisted GPS (A-GPS) service designed to help its maps users find current and desired locations for most geographical locations worldwide more quickly, when using mobile devices. The first to have the service built in are the Nokia 6110 Navigator and the recent software

release of the Nokia N95 multimedia computer.

The system is designed to operate in tandem with a technical framework that allows third parties, such as service providers, to provide their own regional A-GPS enhancements, to the benefit of their subscribers.

www.nokia.com

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