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NEMA Awards Cooper Standard CEO

James S. McElya, executive chairman and chief executive officer of Cooper Standard, was presented with the Triangle Award by the Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA) at its 2012 Outlook Conference and 14th annual members meeting in Detroit earlier this month. "From its inception, the Triangle Award has not been an annual award," said Bob McKenna, MEMA president and CEO. "It is only presented when truly deserving candidates are found - those who have advanced the motor vehicle parts supplier industry. "It's MEMA's most prestigious

award, presented only to truly outstanding candidates in recognition of unselfish contributions to the automotive industry. Jim McElya is just such an honoree." McKenna noted McElya's career of more than 33 years in the automotive industry, including his rise to his current position of Cooper-Standard Holdings Inc., and its principal operating subsidiary Cooper-Standard Automotive, which is a Novi-based global automotive supplier. "Jim has had a wonderful career with his day job in the industry, but that's not why we are recognizing him.

Advanced Safety Systems Not Just For Those Who Can Afford Them

by Irena Granaas



Lane keeping assist tracks lane markings and puts torque on the steering wheel to guide the car back to the center if it strays.

Automotive safety has been undergoing an evolution. Instead of focusing on protecting vehicle occupants in a crash, for some time now safety experts and the automotive industry have been putting the focus on preventing crashes altogether whenever possible, a goal TRW Automotive is fully on board with. John Wilkerson, senior communications manager for TRW Automotive, said TRW defines active safety systems as technologies that help the driver avoid accidents, or at least mitigate the effects of an accident that does occur. And producing technologies to prevent crashes is a natural part of TRW's DNA.

"We're a supplier of active safety systems, primarily on the braking and the steering side, but also passive systems such as seat belts and air bags . . . (which) help protect you once you've gotten into an accident or a crash. But active systems are the things that we'd like to think would keep you out of that crash in the first place," he said. TRW is a leading manufacturer and supplier of these technologies, which include lane departure warning systems, automatic braking, forward collision warning and electronic stability control. Recently, the U.S. National Traffic Safety Board has been pushing toward requiring all auto manufacturers to include the latest collision prevention systems as standard equipment in all vehicles. According to the NTSB, installing these technologies as standard equipment in all vehicles can cut highway fatal accidents by more than half. The board's data says that accidents from running off the road, rear-ending other vehicles and driver errors during lane changes are the cause of 60 percent of highway fatal accidents. "We don't want safety to be only for the people who can afford it," said NTSB Chairman Deborah Hersman. At the same time, OEMs say they don't want consumers to face the possibility of greater expense with the added technologies. Some of the more advanced technologies used for vehicle ac-

tive safety systems include systems for braking and steering, as well as electronic stability control systems, which help the driver avoid skids and slides on the road. Advanced systems start getting into elements like cameras and radar systems, which help the driver be more aware of what's going on around the vehicle. An example of a very advanced safety system is automatic emergency braking, where a camera and radar would both be looking forward, seeing another car in front of the vehicle and helping to warn the driver that he should take action, and if the driver doesn't start braking in time, activate the brakes fully.

"So the whole realm of active safety," said Wilkerson, "is a big horizon of possibility, because as you start to bring those cameras and radar into the cars, then your braking and your steering systems can help drivers to react to things that are going on. So it's a very exciting realm right now." He added that the way things in government are trending, active safety systems will take on even more importance, not only to consumers but to auto manufacturers and suppliers. The viewpoint has definitely shifted toward keeping vehicles - and people - out of crashes, which is the ideal outcome, and where a lot of the regulation is heading, both in Europe and here in North America. "I think the classic example was Volvo in the beginning, but you can see a lot of automakers that look at safety as being a very important part of what they're doing to differentiate their cars and their brand," Wilkerson said.

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