



Federal Transportation Agency Calls for Speed-monitoring Software in Cars

A federal agency is calling for a nationwide mandate requiring new vehicles to have software surveilling American drivers for adherence to local speed limits.

On November 14, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) published a [news release](#) advocating “intelligent speed assistance technology and countermeasures including interlock program for repeat speeding offenders” in “all new cars.”

The agency cited an investigation it conducted into “a multivehicle collision in North Las Vegas, Nevada, last year that resulted in nine fatalities” — finding it was “caused by excessive speed, drug-impaired driving and Nevada’s failure to deter the driver’s speeding recidivism due to systemic deficiencies” — as its rationale for mandating the new technology.

The NTSB’s news release explains how intelligent speed assistance technology (ISA) functions and operates:

Intelligent speed assistance technology, or ISA, uses a car’s GPS location compared with a database of posted speed limits and its onboard cameras to help ensure safe and legal speeds. Passive ISA systems warn a driver when the vehicle exceeds the speed limit through visual, sound, or haptic alerts, and the driver is responsible for slowing the car. Active systems include mechanisms that make it more difficult, but not impossible, to increase the speed of a vehicle above the posted speed limit and those that electronically limit the speed of the vehicle to fully prevent drivers from exceeding the speed limit.

The NTSB further urges car manufacturers to install ISA in new vehicles, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to promote and mandate such technology, among other recommendations.

The NTSB’s recommendation is not the first assault on privacy and individual freedom in relation to driving. For example, car manufacturers are currently mandated to install equipment in cars to detect intoxicated or impaired drivers and, if impairment is detected, prevent the car’s operation — a mandate the U.S. House [failed to stop](#) earlier this month.

With such broad-based assaults on individual liberty and privacy, an informed and vigilant electorate is more important than ever.



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