



GOOD HABITS

2022 fines for distracted driving exceed those in 2021

Mobile phone use represents 95% of the total and that is why the ACA and Mobility are starting a campaign

A spot will visualize the consequences of driving on television, cinema and internet



► The press conference to present the campaign, last Monday in the meeting room of MoraBanc of Andorra la Vella

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TOTI SASPLUGAS

GEN. SECRETARY OF THE ACA

«The habit has been incorporated and it is an unperceived risk; you have to be aware that it's not a game and that you have to respect others»

JAUME BONELL

DIRECTOR OF MOBILITY

«Problems must be identified with an external view, as we may have lost a bit of perspective»

tractions, the avoidable and the non-avoidable, and the campaign focuses on the avoidable, and they can be visual, auditory, physical and cognitive, and the use of the mobile phone affects all four types and, therefore, «it is the most dangerous», assured Sasplugas, since it can lead to leaving the road, collisions and being run over, among other consequences.

A distraction to answer the mobile phone can last between 6 and 20 seconds. For example, if driving at 50 kilometers per hour on an urban road, dialing a phone number may require an attention time of between 6 and 10 seconds, which means that the vehicle travels a distance of 100 meters without the driver's attention on that on driving, with the risk that this entails. The director of the Department of Mobility, Jaume Bonell, for his part, emphasized that the objective is to reduce mortality to 0 deaths and 0 accidents by the year 2050, while, previously, they want to reduce deaths by 50% road accidents towards the year 2030. In the case of the country's roads, he recalled that the recent audit prepared by the RACC pointed to the state of safety on these roads with three out of five stars, and now a second evaluation is underway. «It is necessary to identify where the problems may be, with an external and uninfluenced view, as we may have lost a bit of perspective», explained Bonell. ≡

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Penalties for distracted driving up to September 5th this year are already higher (206) than those recorded throughout 2021 (200), according to data from the Police Force released on Monday passed in Andorra la Vella by the Automobile Club of Andorra (ACA), in the presentation of the fourth edition of the national road safety campaign Zero accidents mission. However, it should be borne in mind that the new traffic code came into force in September 2021, 2021 was a pandemic year and that these sanctions are usually only applied during operations carried out by the Police.

In addition, 20% of accidents ta-

ke place because of distractions (more than 600 in 2021) and the vast majority of fines - 95% - refer to the use of mobile phones, and for this reason the ACA and the Department of Mobility have decided that the campaign will make an impact on this problem, with the aim of reducing to zero the accidents caused by distractions while driving.

The general secretary of the ACA, Toti Sasplugas, assessed that «the fines are a measure, but it is not the only one, since it must be supplemented with information, because often the driver knows that the fine costs money, but he doesn't know what can happen if he is distracted because he is talking on his cell phone.» So, he added, «the driver must be made aware of the dangers of distracted driving», since «the mobile phone habit has be-

fines for distractions

year	number
2017	142
2018	133
2019	190
2020	176
2021	200
2022	206

(until September 5)

en incorporated into driving», because «it is an unperceived risk, and drivers must be aware that it is not a game and that you must have respect for others», said Sasplugas.

The campaign, which will last one month and will cost 20,000 euros to the ACA and the Government, will consist of a spot that will be broadcast on television, cinema and social networks, with the slogan *Nothing happens until it happens*, in what will be perceived that answering a message on the phone while driving can lead to an accident. According to those responsible for the campaign, they seek to influence human behavior and, at the same time, reach children, so that the youngest are the first to alert their parents when they are driving and using their mobile phone.

There are different types of dis-

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BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Gallardo affirms that the candidacy will be presented next call

The Government modifies the calendar on the official website in response to the news published about the postponement

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The Minister of the Presidency, Economy and Business, Jordi Gallardo, wanted to get out of the way of the information published in media such as EL PERIÒDIC around the decision to postpone the presentation of Andorra's candidacy to Unesco to become a Biosphere Reserve. In particular, Gallardo regretted that «the news that has come out does not correspond to the point at which the candidacy is «and criticized that «they have not been checked», so he chose to «proactively explain what state he is in». In this way, the minister assured that «the candidacy is in a very good state» and «the technical and research parts are finished», and even, «we have shaped what would be a possible governance plan». But, despite these advances, the head of the Presidency explained that «we are waiting for the municipalities to approve the part of the zoning that has been proposed to them», and emphasized that «it is a file that has a very high degree of complexity», added to the need for «interaction of many institutions», being precisely the point where the work is.

In any case, what Gallardo wanted to clarify through statements with the media is that «the Government has neither postponed, nor renounced the project», insisting that «there is no problem at this time, beyond the complexity of a dossier of these characteristics». In this way, the minister assured that «the goal we had set for ourselves is to be able to deliver the dossier before the end of the year, or at the latest, in the first quarter of 2023», and therefore, to be included in the next year's call, which will end on September 30th, 2023, in order to be able to opt for appointment by Unesco for 2024.

However, the reality is that in the various presentations and town meetings, the Executive had always informed of the desire to present the candidacy in September of this year. It wasn't until last Monday at noon, a few hours before the minister's appearance, that the web page of the Andorra Biosphere Reserve project changed its calendar. However, the Government did not update all the contents



Jordi Gallardo
PRESIDENCY MINISTER

«There is no problem at this time, beyond the complexity of a dossier of these characteristics»

SFGA / JAVILADOT

of this, and in the press kit attached to the website it was still possible to observe that the initial program provided for the presentation of this candidacy was in 2022 and not in 2023. In fact, the date of September of this year was also mentioned during the statements of the Minister of the Presidency, when he acknowledged that «we would have liked to be able to present it already this September 30th, because it would mean that we would have the assessment by the 2023», but «we did not reach the deadline» due to the fact that «the dossier was not mature enough to present it on that date and we did not want to rush it».

Therefore, with an eye already on next year, Gallardo explained that the fact of delivering the dossier on time will allow «to have feedback from Unesco, and if there is a factor that we have to correct, to be able to do it before the end of the term». This is what the director of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences and secretary of the Unesco Biosphere Reserve Program, Noéline Raondry Rakotoarisoa, assured the minister during his meeting last week in Paris, where according to Gallardo, the person in charge conveyed the organization's «enthusiasm» to receive the nomination. «They are expecting to receive it because it would result in a very powerful message», he indicated, adding that «it would serve as an example, in the words of Unesco, as a commitment to the environment for the rest of the countries and territories,

given the international situation we now have with the energy crisis and the fight against climate change». In addition, Gallardo also highlighted that «a country has never been nominated as such, and therefore, we are paving the way». In the last instance, the minister was also willing to strengthen the participatory process towards the project, which «is one of the main axes in a Biosphere Reserve». Thus, despite stating that «we have had no elements that make us think that there has been no social support or acceptance of the project», it is true that «we would have liked more people to be at the town meetings».



► Above, the Minister of the Presidency, Economy and Business, Jordi Gallardo, attending to the press last Monday in his office. Below, the original press kit about the candidacy, still with the date initially planned for this year.

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