

AA Awards 2004

A car that has radically re-written the rulebook of small car design, and a simple idea to reduce the number of road casualties in the UK by making roadside posts less dangerous, have been recognised in this years AA Awards. The accolades were presented today (25 February) at a ceremony at The Savoy, London, by the Leader of the Opposition, Michael Howard QC MP. They went to:

- Juralco and SignPost Solutions (joint award), for Lattix posts.
- DaimlerChrysler UK, for the smart city car.

Lattix posts saving lives at the roadside

The European Road Assessment Programme (EuroRAP) has found that more than 60 per cent of road deaths in the UK occur on roads outside built-up areas, particularly on single-carriage roads.

Last year, 300 people in the UK were killed or seriously injured in collisions with road traffic sign and traffic signal posts. The rigidity of most roadside traffic sign and traffic signal posts means that even a EuroNCAP 5-star car cannot protect its occupants adequately.

Lattix posts are designed to be forgiving when struck by vehicles at speeds in excess of 50 mph. Crash tests and real life crash incidents have demonstrated that in a collision, even at high speed, damage to the vehicle is minimal, and injuries to occupants much less severe.

Lattix posts have been developed by Juralco, a Norwegian company, and its award is shared with SignPost Solutions, the UK supplier that has researched and developed their use in the UK.

Lattix posts have proved highly successful in Scandinavia, and more recently have been crash tested by the Highways Agency and found to fully conform with British and European standards. They have been installed at more than 300 locations in the UK and Ireland.

Peter Moore, managing director of SignPost Solutions, and Kim Heglund, managing director of Juralco, received the AA Award.

smart motoring for the future

DaimlerChrysler UK collected an AA Award for its contribution towards the enjoyment of motoring, as well as towards the environment, with its radical city car the smart fortwo.

With space in urban areas often scarce, and as legislation aimed at limiting climate change starts to take effect, the smart fortwo is a real and effective way of addressing some of these problems.

The two seat smart is the most compact city car on the market, with novel features such as flexible wings and easily changed body panels, combined with up to 60 mpg fuel economy, and low emissions.

It is just 2.5 metres long with a 700 cc three-cylinder petrol engine mounted at the rear, yet it can reach 85 mph. For such a radical design the smart fortwo has been remarkably successful, and guarantees a safe, enjoyable and reliable drive. It produces one of the lowest CO2 emissions of all cars on the road at 113 grams of CO2 per km against the average city car of 144 grams per km. In the UK in 2003 more than 8,500 smart fortwo models were sold, with sales across Europe since its 1998 launch of more than 440,000.

The smart fortwo was given three stars in EuroNCAP crash tests, and was among the best of those tested in the city car group. Even the basic model has ABS and Electronic Stability Programme (ESP), central locking, and airbags.

Wilfried Steffen, president and chief executive of DaimlerChrysler UK collected the award.

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