



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tire Pressure & Tread Depth Monitoring come to The Ray WheelRight Technology Alerts Drivers About Underinflated Tires, Improving Safety and Fuel Efficiency

(Atlanta, GA – December 14, 2016) -- More than 35,000 drivers die in accidents on U.S. roads and highways each year, and U.S. DOT data points to underinflated tires as a cause of crashes that can result in fatalities and injuries. The International Tire and Rubber Association cites tire underinflation as the “single most common” factor in tire failure. The installation this week of a pilot site for WheelRight, a state-of-the-art, drive-over tire safety system that measures tire pressure and (for the first time anywhere) tread depth, will help keep highways safer. WheelRight is coming to the U.S. for the first time on The Ray at the Georgia Visitor Information Center (VIC) in West Point, GA, at mile marker one of The Ray, near the Georgia-Alabama state line, in partnership with Kia Motors Manufacturing of Georgia (KMMG).

“Improperly inflated tires impact vehicle performance characteristics, especially in the area of safety, when confronted with a hazard such as weather or debris,” said KMMG’s Chief Administrative Officer Stuart Countess. “At KIA, we have a continuous improvement mindset – we are always looking at innovative solutions to further advance the safety in vehicle mobility. The opportunity to partner with The Ray on a test site for WheelRight is one way we can learn more about how to improve safety on our roadways.”

KMMG and The Ray are partnering to install the tire safety technology in Georgia so that it will be free of charge to travelers on The Ray, which is a living laboratory for technologies that improve safety, generate energy and improve the economy. More than 762,000 visitors traveling in nearly 244,000 cars and trucks stop at the West Point VIC for travel information and comfort breaks each year, making it a perfect test site for this new technology. KMMG and The Ray are underwriting the cost of an air compressor, which will allow drivers to adjust tire inflation at no charge.

“The Ray is a place where we can test the big ideas, the radical innovations, and the simple, smart choices that can create safer and cleaner transportation,” said Harriet Langford, president of The Ray. “The convenience of a drive-through tire check station will save lives on The Ray, while also demonstrating how easy it can be to reduce carbon pollution on our roads.”

In a 2015 deployment of the WheelRight® tire safety system, the British agency “Highways England” measured almost 23,000 vehicles over a six-month period, and found approximately 1,500 grossly under-inflated passenger vehicle tires and 370 grossly under-inflated heavy truck tires. Highways England estimated the financial benefits from the awareness campaign and subsequent safety actions topped £3.5 million for the period.

“The introduction of our innovative technology to U.S. drivers is a major step forward for us as it exposes this easy-to-use technology to a whole new market,” said John Catling, founder of WheelRight. “The Ray is a vitally important project as it provides drivers at the Visitor Information Center with a unique opportunity to use this new environmental technology before it becomes more generally available.”

“Safety is Georgia DOT’s number one priority. With the alarming increase in fatalities on Georgia’s roads, it is gratifying to be a part of something that has real life-saving potential,” said Georgia DOT Commissioner Russell R. McMurtry, P.E. “The WheelRight roll-over tire safety check system is a remarkable achievement. And Georgia DOT is pleased to provide this service for travelers at the welcome center. Georgia Department of Transportation applauds the work of The Ray and we are delighted to partner with them to promote safety innovations like WheelRight along this section of I-85.”

The installation of the WheelRight® tire safety system is the second major financial investment that Kia Motors America (KMA) and KMMG have made to advancing and demonstrating cutting-edge technologies on The Ray. In 2015, KMA financed the installation of the Southeast region’s first Level 3 electric vehicle charging station powered by a solar array, otherwise known as PV4EV at the Georgia Visitor Information Center in West Point.

About The Ray

The Ray is a proving ground for the evolving ideas and technologies that will transform the transportation infrastructure of the future, beginning with the corridor of road that is named in memory of Ray C. Anderson (1934-2011), a Georgia native who became a captain of industry and was recognized as a leader in green business when he challenged his company, Atlanta-based Interface, Inc., to reimagine the enterprise as a sustainable company – one that would pursue zero environmental footprint. Chaired by Ray’s daughter Harriet Langford, The Ray is an epiphany of the Ray C. Anderson Foundation. Learn more at www.theray.org.

About Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia (KMMG)

Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia, Inc. (KMMG) is the first manufacturing site in North America for Kia Motors Corporation based in Seoul, Korea. With an annual capacity of 360,000 units, KMMG is located on 2,200 acres in West Point, Georgia, and began mass production on Nov. 16, 2009. KMMG is home to the Sorento CUV and the Optima mid-size sedan, two of the brand’s top selling models in the U.S. Learn more at www.kmmgusa.com.

About WheelRight, Ltd.

WheelRight, located in the UK on an Oxford University technology park, was established with a vision to research, develop and commercialize technologies to automate the inspection of tires on any vehicle whilst the vehicle is in motion. Ease of use, accuracy and simplicity are key design criteria for the web-based cloud system. The integrated, cloud technology is working 24/7 in bus and HGV depots across the UK for a range of customers and tested extensively by Highways England. Learn more at www.wheelright.co.uk.

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