ET Plus® Guardrail End-Terminal System Passes All Eight Independent Crash Tests Under FHWA Oversight

The newest crash test report from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) confirms — yet again — that the ET Plus® guardrail end-terminal system (ET Plus®) meets federal criteria and is an effective highway safety product—the system has passed the second series of four independent crash tests, for a total of eight passed tests. The ET Plus® uses technology designed at the Texas A&M Transportation Institute.

The report, issued by the FHWA today, covers details from four crash tests conducted by a highly respected and independent test facility, the Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) in San Antonio, in January with 31-inch-high guardrails. Last month, the FHWA reported that the first four crash tests, conducted on guardrails that were 27.75 inches high, also found that the ET Plus® had operated as designed. The great majority of guardrails in the United States are 27.75 inches high.

Based on SwRI's crash testing and evaluation, and an evaluation of the resulting data by its own engineers and an independent outside expert, the FHWA declared that the ET Plus® passed all eight tests.

Of note, in none of the eight tests was there any spearing of the cabin by a guardrail, nor did any of the crash vehicles roll over — two key measures in determining whether a guardrail end-terminal system is safe and effective.

"We're pleased — and not at all surprised — that the ET Plus® performed so well in these tests," said Dr. Dean Alberson, TTI's assistant agency director and a research engineer. "This independent testing — the most rigorous ever applied to any guardrail end-terminal system — plus 15 years of roadside experience vindicate our confidence in the ET Plus®."

Dr. Alberson also said: "Any time a car or truck strikes a guardrail end-terminal system, the result is a violent event involving metal smashing into metal, often at a very high speed. The goal of a guardrail end-terminal system is to mitigate that violence at least enough to prevent the loss of life and to reduce injuries — and the ET Plus® does just that. Chances are high, however, the vehicle itself is going to be damaged or even destroyed."

Contrary to the claims of critics, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) confirmed earlier this week that they found no evidence that there are multiple versions of the ET-Plus® guardrail end-terminal system on the nation's roadways.

The ET Plus® was designed and tested to perform within the guidelines and crash test criteria established by NCHRP Report 350, which sets forth the performance evaluation criteria applicable to the ET Plus® and most other roadside safety devices used on U.S. highways. Manufactured by Trinity Industries in Dallas, the system has been in use in all 50 states and internationally for more than a decade.

Over the past 65 years, TTI has earned a reputation for its engineering excellence and commitment to highway safety. The ET Plus® has been a major contributor to highway safety throughout the U.S. and internationally.

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