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 SPORT & FITNESS

Motor insurance company RAC has developed the Attention Powered Car, a vehicle that detects when drivers are becoming distracted and slows it to a stop.

In the early 1990s, Western Australia had the lowest number of road deaths per 1,000 people in the country – now, it has the highest. In order to find a solution to this problem, motor insurance company RAC has developed the **Attention Powered Car**, a vehicle that detects when drivers are becoming distracted and slows it to a stop.

Using an **Emotiv** EEG headset, the company set up trials that got drivers to complete a circuit of a racetrack while completing tasks such as checking their phone, switching radio stations and looking at objects on the side of the road. The signals from the EEG were monitored and when the driver showed signs of distraction, the acceleration of the car was disabled, causing it to slow down. Only when their attention was directed back to driving was the car able to speed up again. The idea is that drivers notice the car is slowing down and return their concentration to driving. The video below offers more details about the project:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLXMQCPiAic>

Much like the Café Amazon [Drive Awake](#) app in Thailand – which uses facial recognition technology to detect when drivers close their eyes, directing them to the nearest coffee outlet when they begin to doze off – the Attention Powered Car could help to curb the number of road deaths and injuries that occur when tiredness kicks in. While automatically slowing down a vehicle may be useful in Western Australia, with its long, straight roads and low population, it could actually be dangerous on the highways and motorways of more built-up regions. Are there other alternatives to alert distracted drivers at the moment their concentration is lost?

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