

INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY

NEWS RELEASE

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AUDI Q7 EARNS *TOP SAFETY PICK* AWARD

ARLINGTON, VA — The 2008 Audi Q7, a large luxury SUV, earns the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's *TOP SAFETY PICK* award. Winners afford superior overall crash protection among the vehicles in their class. The Q7's award applies to models built after December 2007.

To qualify for *TOP SAFETY PICK*, a vehicle must earn the highest rating of good in the Institute's front, side, and rear tests and be equipped with electronic stability control. Criteria to win are tough because the award is intended to drive continued safety improvements such as top crash test ratings and the rapid addition of electronic stability control, which is standard on the Q7.

"Recognizing vehicles at the head of the class for safety helps consumers distinguish the best overall choices without having to sort through multiple test results," says Institute president Adrian Lund.

Large SUVs usually aren't tested: Because of their size and weight compared with most other passenger vehicles, large SUVs start with a higher level of protection for occupants in the most common kinds of front, side, and rear crashes. They also represent a relatively small segment of the passenger vehicle market. For these reasons and because of limited test time, the Institute doesn't routinely test them. The Q7 was tested at Audi's request. When tests are conducted outside the Institute's usual schedule, manufacturers reimburse the Institute for the cost of the vehicles.

"Audi has been working hard to design vehicles that qualify for *TOP SAFETY PICK*," Lund explains. "By requesting tests outside of our normal schedule, companies are able to get test results out to consumers faster, and they're able to publicize that they're offering their customers state-of-the-art safety. More manufacturers are requesting early tests of new models or tests of models in categories we don't usually evaluate, and we accommodate this whenever we can."

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How vehicles are evaluated: The Institute's frontal crashworthiness evaluations are based on results of 40 mph frontal offset crash tests. Each vehicle's overall evaluation is based on measurements of intrusion into the occupant compartment, injury measures recorded on a Hybrid III dummy in the driver seat, and analysis of slow-motion film to assess how well the restraint system controlled dummy movement during the test.

Side evaluations are based on performance in a crash test in which the side of a vehicle is struck by a barrier moving at 31 mph. The barrier represents the front end of a pickup or SUV. Ratings reflect injury measures recorded on two instrumented SID-IIIs dummies, assessment of head protection countermeasures, and the vehicle's structural performance during the impact.

Rear crash protection is rated according to a two-step procedure. Starting points for the ratings are measurements of head restraint geometry — the height of a restraint and its horizontal distance behind the back of the head of an average-size man. Seat/head restraints with good or acceptable geometry are tested dynamically using a dummy that measures forces on the neck.

End 2-page news release on crashworthiness ratings of Audi Q7

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