

Next generation head lamp system developed jointly with Valeo in France

Ichikoh Industries obtains approval for public road testing of the AFS equipped automobile

Ichikoh Industries Ltd., a leading supplier in the automobile parts industry, obtained approval* from the Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport on March 12 for public road testing of the AFS (Adaptive Front Lighting System) equipped automobile, and already started full scale public road testing.

The lighting system, consisting of a head lamp and a light distribution control system, switches the beam between high and low with one bulb. Depending on the road environment and driving condition, the system will automatically choose high or low beam. Under this control system, the head lamp will turn its direction left or right along with the steering movement, lighting the direction the automobile is heading. It will give which will result in improvement of the field of view and visibility when driving at night or in adverse weather. The system is jointly developed with Valeo in France to make the product adaptable to the road condition in Europe in addition to that in Japan.

AFS is a new generation head lamp system which turns light distribution automatically according to the surrounding condition by recognizing the driving environment by the on-board sensor. It is expected as a system to support safe driving in areas with few lighting facilities when driving at night or in adverse weather, or driving a long distance. Preparation for legislation is currently under way in Europe and other areas, and a law regarding light distribution for bending roads is expected to be enacted in 2003, and another one regarding light distribution by different environmental condition such as urban district, express way and wet road surface in 2005.

We, at Ichikoh, plan to collect and accumulate data and evaluate practicability and safeness of the AFS equipped automobile through driving tests on general roads and expressways, continuing efforts in the development of a practical head lamp system with improved visibility against pedestrians or obstacles on bending roads and pedestrians in intersection areas, thus contributing to reduction of traffic accidents.

*An automobile built for test purpose is normally not allowed to run on public roads because there is no safety standards for vehicles such as the advanced safety automobile. Therefore, the automobile for test purpose is required to obtain approval from the minister concerned before we start testing on the public road for the purpose of establishment of new standards or improvement of current ones.

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