

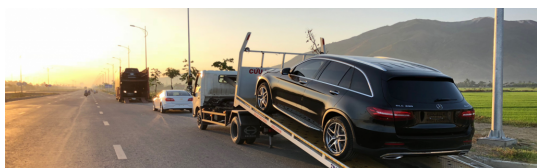
The US car makers are in trouble. The major players General Motors, Ford and Chrysler have all experienced a massive drop in sales and orders as the effects of the global recession and economic crisis have impacted on consumers. Despite laying off large numbers of workers these companies are on the verge of failure. The plan to provide \$US 14 billion in emergency loans has been rejected by Congress due to opposition from some Republicans. The rescue plan would have required the car makers to reduce debt levels, cut wages to match of the Nissan, Toyota and Honda employees based in the USA, and submit to broad government oversight directed by a car czar to be named by President Bush.

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Following the massive \$US 700 billion dollar bailout of Wall Street it is difficult to understand the reluctance to extend emergency assistance to the car industry. Analysts say that without emergency assistance, two of the country's major car manufacturers - General Motors and Chrysler - could face bankruptcy. Both car makers have warned they are running out of cash. If these companies fail the consequences will be dire. Hundreds of thousands of jobs in the USA depend directly on these car makers.

So why bailout Wall Street but not the automobile industry? Some Democrats have argued that the failure to agree on an assistance package for the car makers is a simple case of white-collar versus blue-collar bias. The Republican members who opposed the rescue package have cited union interference and doubts about the viability of the business model adopted by the US car makers. Some have argued that the car makers should be held responsible for the mess they find themselves in and should not receive help from US tax payers. This argument seems reasonable, but was this thinking applied to Wall Street? The disastrous business practices of the US financial firms and banks have resulted in the collapse of many of these companies and triggered a world wide financial crisis and recession. Yet a massive \$700 billion dollar rescue plan was put in place for this sector. The US government not only intervened but has spent huge sums of public money to save these firms and purchase the so-called "toxic" debt that triggered the financial crisis. If government assistance is not extended to the car industry then the politicians will face the charge of hypocrisy.

It appears likely that an alternative assistance package will be put into place. The failure of the [don vi cuu ho tai nha trang](#) US car makers would be a disaster. These car makers do not have the time or cash reserves to turn the situation around on their own. Some type of assistance is required. There has been some speculation that President Bush will intervene with a rescue package in the short term. This may involve the provision of emergency loans that are financed by using the fund established to assist the financial industry.



Any plan to save the US car makers will need to address the fundamental problems that have resulted in the poor performance of these car makers. These issues are deep seated. It is likely that the rescue plan will require the car makers to introduce reform to the work rules and conditions to bring them in line with those of the US-based plants that are operated by the Asian car makers. It also appears that there will be a requirement that any government assistance is used to design and produce models that address the serious energy and environment issues that the world currently faces. There will be pressure to quickly introduce environmentally-friendly vehicles that are competitive with the best models produced by foreign car makers. To survive the US car makers will need to rapidly change the types of vehicles they build and the methods they use to manufacture these vehicles. In many ways the US car makers will be required to rediscover the spirit of innovation and dynamism that characterized the US industry in the early 1900s. In the period from 1900 to 1915 the US car makers such as Ford introduced innovative models and manufacturing practices that quickly established the US car companies as the world leaders.

During this period of economic crisis it appears the survival of the US car makers will depend partly on the type of assistance package that is provided by the government and the conditions attached to the package. Even with such assistance the future of these car makers depends largely on their capacity to change and rediscover the attributes that established them at one time as the leaders of this industry.

There is no feeling quite like the one you get when you hear a wailing siren and look up to see flashing blue lights in your rear view mirror. The initial panic that you are about to get pulled over can make your driving erratic even if, as in most cases, the emergency vehicle simply wants to get by.

The police, fire service and ambulance are all permitted to use blue flashing lights and sirens when reacting to an emergency situation, they are also allowed to break certain road regulations and speed limits, including driving through red lights if the circumstances dictate. Other services are also permitted to use flashing blue lights including coastguard, mountain rescue bomb disposal and medical transplant services. Additionally a doctor answering an emergency call will use flashing green lights.

When you first see the blue flashing lights you must override the feeling of panic and stay calm, in most cases the emergency vehicle will just want to get past as quickly, safely and smoothly as possible. Avoid the temptation to slam on the brakes and pull up on the curb, instead look ahead for a safe spot to pull over and then indicate so the following driver knows what you are doing.

Once the emergency vehicle has passed you by, resist the temptation to pull straight back out again, as it is possible that the emergency may require several vehicles and so other emergency services may also be following closely behind. Once they have passed take a few moments to reassess the traffic situation before pulling back out as the event may have left other roads users slightly alarmed or confused.

Often you will hear the siren before you see the emergency vehicle, and although siren technology has advanced beyond the basic two tone siren, it can still be difficult to locate where the sound is coming from. If this occurs at a junction then take extra time to try and locate the source of the sound before proceeding.

If you are being followed by a police car which requires you to stop, then they will normally do so by flashing their car headlight bulbs, indicating and pointing to you to pull over to the left. Remember you must still find a safe place to pull over and once stopped you should switch off the engine. Remain calm and courteous to the police officer at all times and be prepared to produce your driver's license, certificate of insurance and any other relevant motoring documents.

Alongside the Police patrol cars you may now also see the Highways Agency Traffic Officers on motorways. Often their vehicles can be confused for police cars as they have similar reflective markings and blue lights on the roof. Remember, whilst a Traffic Officer cannot charge you with any motoring offenses, including speeding, it is an offence not to comply with their directions.