

Privacy an issue as car gadgets become the norm

By Craig Trudell, Bloomberg

Drivers' privacy needs to be protected by law, said Alan Mulally, chief executive officer of Ford Motor Co., as more vehicles use data for services such as location tracking amid the booming in-car technology market.

The company is "supportive and participating" in talks with regulators who are considering such legislation, Mulally said this week at the Detroit auto show. He countered comments made last week by the automaker's global marketing chief, who said Ford knows when drivers of its vehicles violate traffic laws through global-positioning system data.

Documents released by former government contractor Edward Snowden last year have sparked a firestorm in the U.S. related to data-privacy concerns with technology and telecommunications companies. The comments by Jim Farley, Ford's executive vice president of global marketing, have directed attention to the car industry as in-vehicle technology becomes more common.

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