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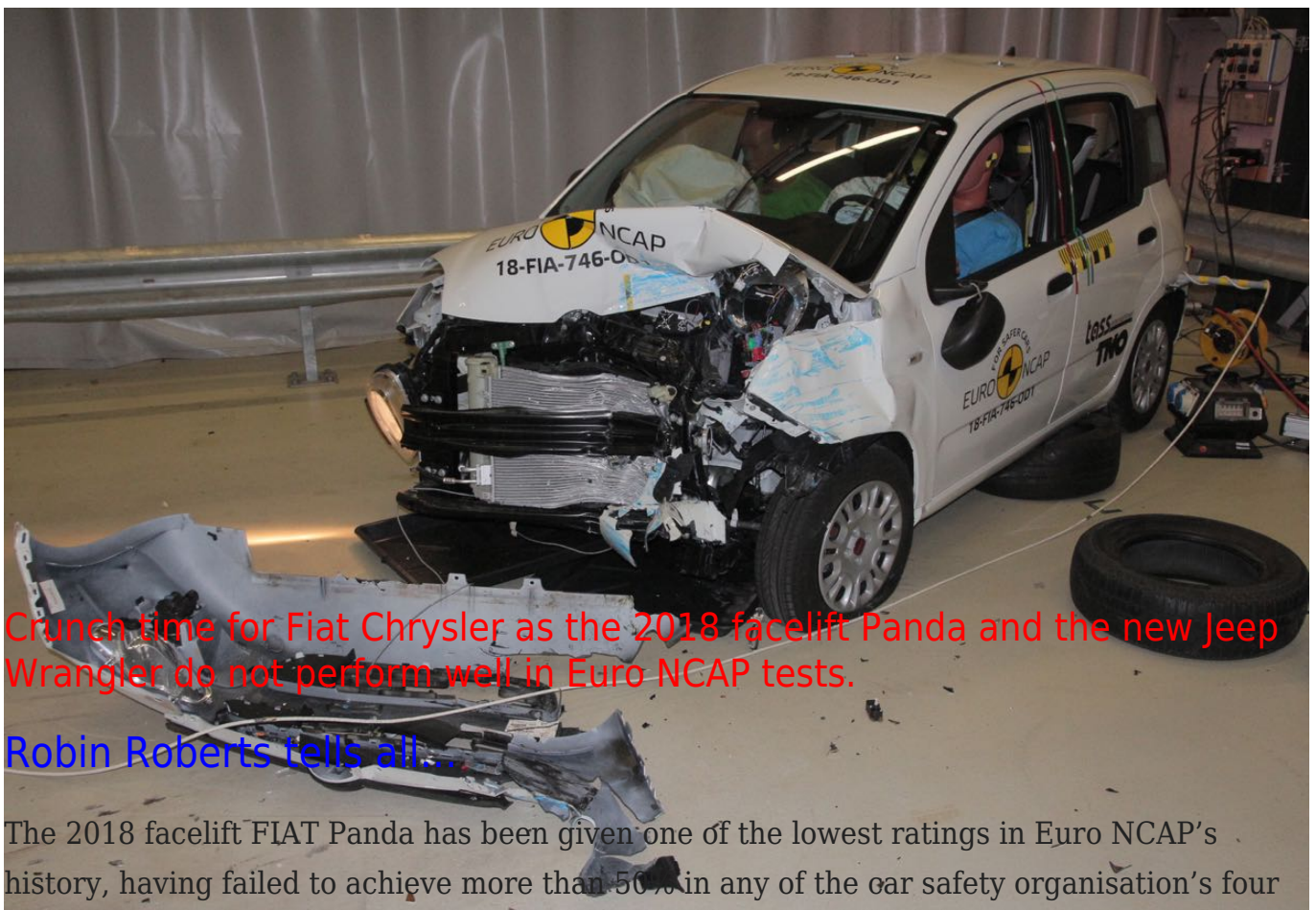
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Serious safety concerns: Surprising and worrying Euro NCAP test results...

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Crunch time for Fiat Chrysler as the 2018 facelift Panda and the new Jeep Wrangler do not perform well in Euro NCAP tests.

[Robin Roberts tells all...](#)

The 2018 facelift FIAT Panda has been given one of the lowest ratings in Euro NCAP's history, having failed to achieve more than 50% in any of the car safety organisation's four key testing categories.

The safety of children seated in the rear was of specific concern to experts, with the FIAT Panda's Child Occupant Protection score of 16% falling significantly short of the 79% average.

Matthew Avery, Director of Research, Thatcham Research comments, "Most troubling is that the FIAT Panda is seen as a good choice for young drivers and fledgling families. But



the only safety technology fitted were seatbelt reminders and the rear system failed to meet requirements, so wasn't even rated. Where budgets are tight, consider a safer small car second-hand, like the five-star SEAT Ibiza".

He continued, "Carmakers across all categories have responded positively to the more exacting tests brought in by Euro NCAP this year, especially those that assess crash avoidance technology. As the bare minimum, a standard-fit Autonomous Emergency Braking system should be available with the FIAT Panda. This is especially important since the car offers so little protection in the event of a collision.

These shocking Euro NCAP test results demonstrate an inconsistent commitment to safety, as FIAT has produced four and five-star cars in the past."

Jeep asleep at the wheel on safety

Another poor performer in this month's round of Euro NCAP testing was the new Jeep Wrangler, which achieved just a one-star rating and a 50% Adult Occupant Protection score. It joins the FIAT Punto and FIAT Panda as the three lowest rated vehicles to go through the programme.

Avery comments, "Unlike the FIAT Panda, the Jeep Wrangler is an entirely new vehicle and doesn't come cheap. Buyers outlaying over £50,000 on a car should expect more than a one-star safety rating. No AEB system (Autonomous Emergency Braking system) is fitted, which is unheard of in this price bracket. There were a number of issues with the Wrangler in impact testing too, in terms of deformation of the footwell and damage to connecting structures, while the make-up of the dashboard was seen to present a risk to occupants."

Taking the shine from the five-star cars

Despite the headline-grabbing zero-star rating for the FIAT Panda and one-star rated Jeep Wrangler, six cars with excellent safety credentials have been launched in December. The Audi Q3, BMW X5, Hyundai Santa Fe, Jaguar I Pace, Peugeot 508 and Volvo V60 all



achieved five-star Euro NCAP ratings.

Avery continues, "These six carmakers take a more consistent approach to safety across their model range, and all have made a conscious decision to meet the standards set by Euro NCAP's toughest tests.

The Audi Q3, Jaguar I Pace, Peugeot 508 and Volvo V60 are all amongst the ten safest cars produced in 2018, with the BMW X5 and Hyundai Santa Fe not far behind."

To view a video montage of the Panda tests, please click [HERE](#).

An FCA (Fiat Chrysler Automobiles) spokesman said, "Safety is of utmost importance at FCA and as such our latest Jeep Wrangler complies with all safety legislation in every market in which it's sold."

On the Panda the company said, "We take the safety of our customers and other road users extremely seriously. The Fiat Panda complies with all safety legislation in every country in which it's sold."





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