
Why Introducing Driverless Cars Into Australia Is A Complicated Process

Who is responsible when a driverless car has an accident? The Owner? The manufacturer? Or is it someone else's fault?

Good morning, today I am here to address the current issue of driverless cars. The big question imposed by Australia is if we should adopt these driverless cars for public use. This issue has been causing chaos in the media for some time.

Now you are probably questioning, what do you mean by driverless cars, Tyler? Well a driverless car means that the vehicle has the capability to drive itself to destinations with the help of cameras, artificial intelligence, radars and sensors without a human operator.

Are driverless cars safe? The question that plays on the minds of many hard working Australians who may work for companies such as VicRoads and RACV. Also whether it would reduce fatalities caused by human drivers.

A driverless car made for the now popular company Uber, hit an innocent pedestrian in Arizona in the US. The woman was crossing the road at night and was killed by the vehicle that was used for test purposes. Now you may be thinking that driverless cars may be safer because it doesn't have a human driver that can't get drunk, tired, angry and make human errors. But driverless cars also don't have the ability to react to uncertain situations as an attentive human driver would. As seen in the video, the vehicle does not respond to the situation as an alert and experienced driver would. Dr Zubair Baig, a senior lecturer in cyber security at Edith Cowan University recently stated and I quote... "There needs to be more scrutiny of the underlying AI [artificial intelligence] systems before the autonomous vehicles are allowed on open roads." There has also been incidents where driverless cars have had non-fatal accidents, for example. In March 2017, the popular company Uber suspended one of their driverless cars due to a crash with another vehicle at a junction.

Does this seem safe to you?

The so called 'driverless' cars are reliant on overseas technology. In other words, in Australia we do not have the technology to create such vehicles. Associate Professor Allison Kealy, who researches high performance positioning systems for intelligent transport at the Department of Infrastructure Engineering at the University of Melbourne recently stated and I quote... "The primary limitation is that to make them safe, they're very expensive. So you can spend a million bucks but nobody's going to buy it," And not to mention the EXTENSIVE hours it would take for millions of Australians to obtain the required education to operate or fix these vehicles. Everyone who would be able to afford these expensive vehicles would have to undertake a substantial amount of hours and study to be so called 'safe' on the roads in Victoria and Australia. According to Telerac, individuals would require a considerable amount of education about the driverless cars. The computer takes over once the car is turned on, although it still requires education on how to operate these vehicles safely and adequately.

It would mean that the dreadful 120 hour driving requirements currently in place for new drivers would become obsolete

Driverless vehicles if introduced, will create unemployment in the industries mentioned prior. Also the legal ramifications for liability in accidents and injuries caused by these vehicles. It has been found that over 700 Australian road laws would be broken if these vehicles were operational in Australia. This would lead a huge debt for Australian tax payers.

As I have shown, to introduce driverless cars into Australia is a complicated process and would have a negative impact on our road use, laws, safety, cost and employment. I put forward that this is not a viable option in the future.

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