

**Response to Law Commissions' third consultation on Automated Vehicles  
(Law Commission Consultation Paper 252; Scottish Law Commission Discussion  
Paper 171)**

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What is your name?

George Economides

What is the name of your organisation?

Oxfordshire County Council

Are you responding to this consultation in a personal capacity or on behalf of your organisation?

Personal response

**CHAPTER 4: SELF-DRIVING AND HUMAN INTERVENTION**

**Consultation Question 1** (Paragraph 4.114)

We provisionally propose that:

(1) a vehicle should not be classified as self-driving if, with the ADS engaged, the user-in-charge needs to monitor the driving environment, the vehicle or the way it drives;

(2) it is nevertheless compatible with self-driving to require the user-in-charge to respond to a clear and timely transition demand which:

- (a) cuts out any non-driving related screen use;
- (b) provides clear visual, audio and haptic signals; and
- (c) gives sufficient time to gain situational awareness;

(3) to be classified as self-driving, the vehicle must be safe enough even if the human user does not intervene in response to any event except a clear and timely transition demand.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

Agree, but 2c needs some consideration for situations this is not possible

**Consultation Question 2** (Paragraph 4.115)

We welcome views on whether self-driving features should be designed to ensure that they can be used by people with hearing loss.

Yes, or to have sufficient provisions/compatible systems as not to be excluding

## **CHAPTER 5: HOW SAFE IS SAFE ENOUGH?**

### **Consultation Question 3 (Paragraph 5.118)**

We provisionally propose that the decision whether a vehicle is sufficiently safe to “safely drive itself” should be made by the Secretary of State, as informed by advice from a specialist regulator.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 4 (Paragraph 5.119)**

We welcome observations on which of the following standards is most appropriate when assessing the safety of automated vehicles:

- (a) as safe as a competent and careful human driver;
- (b) as safe as a human driver who does not cause a fault accident;
- (c) overall, safer than the average human driver.

[Respondents chose from the following options: as safe as a competent and careful human driver; as safe as a human driver who does not cause a fault accident; overall, safer than the average human driver; none of the above.]

as safe as a human driver who does not cause a fault accident

CAVs in general should be compared to the public transport statistics rather than individual drivers, as the people trust another entity with their safety.

### **Consultation Question 6 (Paragraph 5.121)**

We welcome practical suggestions for how AV regulators can fulfil their public sector equality duty.

Auditing against accidents/incidents for bias against protected characteristics. Simulations for independent testing could also test against such biases.

## **CHAPTER 7: ASSESSING SAFETY PRE-DEPLOYMENT**

### **Consultation Question 7 (Paragraph 7.99)**

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) safety assessment should use a variety of techniques;
- (2) manufacturers/developers should submit a safety case to regulators showing why they believe that the automated driving system is safe;
- (3) regulators should:
  - (a) provide guidelines for what is in the safety case;
  - (b) audit the safety case;
  - (c) prepare guidance for manufacturers and developers on preferred standards; and
  - (d) carry out at least some independent tests.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

Yes, but that depends on the kind of application: safety cases are best for novel applications/challenging situations, while as the industry matures, independent tests and standards can be systematically used.

#### **Consultation Question 8 (Paragraph 7.100)**

We seek views on whether an approval authority that intends to use a scenario database as part of the testing procedure should consult road user groups on the range of scenarios to be included.

Yes, especially to check that inclusive representation is achieved, and groups are realistically depicted in simulations.

### **CHAPTER 8: INITIAL APPROVALS AND CATEGORISATION – PROPOSALS**

#### **Consultation Question 9 (Paragraph 8.17)**

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) unauthorised automated driving systems should be prohibited; and
- (2) this should be subject to an exemption procedure by which the Secretary of State may authorise unauthorised systems to be used in tests and trials.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

#### **Consultation Question 10 (Paragraph 8.25)**

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) the Government should establish a domestic scheme to approve automated driving systems (ADSs) for use on roads in Great Britain (a “national ADS approval scheme”);
- (2) manufacturers should have a free choice to apply for approval under either the UNECE system of international type approvals or through the national scheme;
- (3) developers should be able to submit an ADS for national approval, even if they are not responsible for manufacturing the whole vehicle.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 11** (Paragraph 8.43)

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) an ADS approval scheme should be established through regulation under the Road Traffic Act 1988, without further legislative reform;
- (2) an ADS should be defined as a combination of software, hardware and sensors, which can be installed in a “type” of vehicle;
- (3) when an ADS is approved, the approval should be accompanied by specifications for:
  - (a) the type of vehicle in which it can be installed; and
  - (b) how the ADS is installed within the vehicle;
- (4) where an ADS is installed in a pre-registered vehicle, an example vehicle should be submitted to the regulator for approval of the installation.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 13** (Paragraph 8.71)

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) once an ADS has received type approval at either international or domestic level, an Automated Driving System Entity (ADSE) would need to submit the vehicle to the UK safety regulator for categorisation as able to safely drive itself;
- (2) the safety regulator should make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for how the vehicle should be classified;
- (3) it should be open to the safety regulator to recommend that an ADS-enabled vehicle is classified in one of three ways: as not self-driving but driver assistance; as self-driving only with a user-in-charge; or as self-driving without a user-in-charge;

(4) the safety regulator should only recommend classification as self-driving (either with or without a user-in-charge) if it is satisfied that:

(a) an ADSE is registered as taking responsibility for the system;

(b) the ADSE was closely involved in assessing safety and creating the safety case; and

(c) the ADSE has sufficient funds accessible to the regulator to respond to improvement notices, to pay fines and to organise a recall.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

Yes. 4c needs to be considered locally as well as internationally.

#### **Consultation Question 14** (Paragraph 8.77)

We provisionally propose that a new legislative framework should provide regulation making powers to specify:

(a) who should assess whether a vehicle is capable of self-driving;

(b) the procedure for doing so; and

(c) criteria for doing so.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

#### **Consultation Question 16** (Paragraph 8.83)

We seek views on whether the regulator that classifies vehicles as self-driving should have power to allow their deployment in limited numbers, so as to gather further data on their safety in real world conditions.

Yes, but only in locations that local authorities also consent

### **CHAPTER 10: ASSURING SAFETY IN USE**

#### **Consultation Question 17** (Paragraph 10.82)

We provisionally propose that legislation should establish a scheme to assure the safety of automated driving systems following deployment, giving scheme regulators enhanced responsibilities and powers.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

Yes, and this should extend to the transport authorities. Traffic management for CAVs will need to be very different to its current state to ensure smooth and safe operation. The data section at the end of this document is only examining data exchange with authorities after an event.

### **Consultation Question 18** (Paragraph 10.83)

We provisionally propose that the enhanced scheme should give regulators the following responsibilities and powers:

- (1) scheme regulators should be responsible for comparing the safety of automated and conventional vehicles using a range of measures;
- (2) to do this the regulator should have power to collect information on:
  - (a) leading measures (instances of bad driving which could have led to harm) and
  - (b) lagging measures (outcomes which led to actual harm);
- (3) regulators should have power to require an ADSE:
  - (a) to update software where an update is needed to ensure safety and continued compliance with the law;
  - (b) to keep maps up-to-date, where an AV relies on maps to ensure safety and compliance with the law;
  - (c) to communicate information about an ADS to users in a clear and effective way, including where necessary through training.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 19** (Paragraph 10.84)

We welcome views on the following issues:

- (1) Should scheme regulators be empowered to approve software updates that apply only within the UK, without requiring the manufacturer to return to the original type approval authority?
- (2) Should the scheme should also deal with cybersecurity?
- (3) Are other powers needed? (Note that data is discussed in Chapter 17.)

1. Yes
2. An entity like Nominet could be established for the UK
3. Data exchange (location, speed, autonomy status) with traffic management.

**Consultation Question 20** (Paragraph 10.100)

Should the authority administering the scheme to assure safety while automated vehicles are in use be kept separate from type approval authorities (as is already the case)? Alternatively, should both functions be combined in a single body?

[Respondents chose from the following options: single body; separate bodies; other.]

Separate bodies

The VCA/DVSA separation has worked well

**CHAPTER 11: INVESTIGATING TRAFFIC INFRACTIONS AND COLLISIONS**

**Consultation Question 22** (Paragraph 11.24)

We provisionally propose that a statutory scheme to assure AVs in-use should:

- (1) investigate safety-related traffic infractions (such as exceeding the speed limit; running red lights; or careless or dangerous driving);
- (2) investigate other traffic infractions, including those subject to penalty charge notices;
- (3) if fault lies with the ADSE, apply a flexible range of regulatory sanctions.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

**Consultation Question 23** (Paragraph 11.53)

We provisionally propose that the regulator which assures the safety of AVs in-use should have powers to impose the following sanctions on ADSEs:

- (1) informal and formal warnings;
- (2) fines;
- (3) redress orders;
- (4) compliance orders;
- (5) suspension of authorisation;
- (6) withdrawal of authorisation; and
- (7) recommendation of attendance at a restorative conference.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: informal and formal warnings; fines; redress orders; compliance orders; suspension of authorisation; withdrawal of authorisation; recommendation of attendance at a restorative conference.]

Informal and formal warnings, Fines, Redress orders, Compliance orders, Suspension of authorisation, Withdrawal of authorisation, Recommendation of attendance at a restorative conference

**Consultation Question 24** (Paragraph 11.54)

We provisionally propose that the legislation should provide the regulator with discretion over:

- (1) the amount of any monetary penalty; and
- (2) the steps which should be taken to prevent re-occurrence of a breach.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

**Consultation Question 25** (Paragraph 11.69)

We provisionally propose that a specialist incident investigation unit should be established:

- (1) to analyse data on collisions involving automated vehicles;
- (2) to investigate the most serious, complex or high-profile collisions; and
- (3) to make recommendations to improve safety without allocating blame.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

**Consultation Question 26** (Paragraph 11.82)

We provisionally propose that the UK Government should establish a forum for collaboration on the application of road rules to self-driving vehicles.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

Access should be open to prevent group think.

**CHAPTER 12: THE USER-IN-CHARGE**

**Consultation Question 28** (Paragraph 12.24)

We provisionally propose that that the user-in-charge:

(1) should be defined as an individual in position to operate the controls of a vehicle while an ADS is engaged and who is either in the vehicle or in direct sight of the vehicle; and

(2) is not a driver while the ADS is engaged, and would not be liable for any criminal offence or civil penalty (such as a parking ticket) which arises out of dynamic driving.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 29** (Paragraph 12.37)

We provisionally propose that following the end of the transition demand period:

(1) the user-in-charge should re-acquire the legal obligations of a driver, whether or not they have taken control of the vehicle; and

(2) if, following a failure to respond to a transition demand, the vehicle stops in a manner which constitutes a criminal offence, the user-in-charge should be considered a driver and should therefore be liable for that offence.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 30** (Paragraph 12.45)

We seek views on whether a person with a provisional licence should be allowed to act as a user-in-charge, if accompanied by an approved driving instructor in a vehicle with dual controls.

Yes, to enable expertise into CAVs to be developed.

### **Consultation Question 31** (Paragraph 12.53)

We provisionally propose that legislation should create new offences of:

(1) using an automated vehicle as an unfit or unqualified user-in-charge; and

(2) causing or permitting the use of an automated vehicle by an unfit or unqualified user-in-charge.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 32** (Paragraph 12.59)

We provisionally propose that persons carried without a user-in-charge should be guilty of a criminal offence.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

If knowingly carried when a UIC should be present.

### **Consultation Question 33** (Paragraph 12.60)

We seek views on whether the new proposed offence of being carried without a user in-charge should only apply if the person:

- (1) knew that the vehicle did not have a user-in-charge; and
- (2) knew or ought to have known that a user-in-charge was required.

Yes.

### **Consultation Question 34** (Paragraph 12.66)

We provisionally propose that a user-in-charge who takes over control of the vehicle:

- (1) should be considered a driver; but
- (2) should have a specific defence to a criminal offence if, given the actions of the ADS, a competent and careful driver could not have avoided the offence.

Do you agree? If not, we welcome views on alternative legal tests.

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

### **Consultation Question 35** (Paragraph 12.94)

We provisionally propose that the user-in-charge should be liable for criminal offences which do not arise from the dynamic driving task, including those related to:

- (1) insurance;
- (2) maintaining the vehicle in a roadworthy condition (including installing safety critical software updates);
- (3) parking;
- (4) duties following accidents to provide information and report accidents to the police; and
- (5) ensuring child passengers wear seatbelts.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes, the user-in-charge should be liable for all offences not arising from the dynamic driving task; the user-in-charge should be liable for some but not all of the offences listed; no, the user-in-charge should not be liable for any offences; other.]

Yes, the user-in-charge should be liable for all offences not arising from the dynamic driving task

### **Consultation Question 36** (Paragraph 12.95)

We provisionally propose that the legislation should include a regulation-making power to clarify those roadworthiness failings which are (and those which are not) the responsibility of the user-in-charge.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

## **CHAPTER 13: REMOTE OPERATION: NO USER-IN-CHARGE VEHICLES**

### **Consultation Question 37** (Paragraph 13.67)

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) where an individual is exercising latitudinal and longitudinal control (steering and braking) over a vehicle remotely, that should not be regarded as a form of “self-driving”; and
- (2) where lateral and longitudinal control are exercised by an ADS, all other forms of remote operation should be regulated as “self-driving”.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

We welcome views on whether the current definition of when a vehicle “drives itself” under the Automated and Electric Vehicles Act 2018 should be amended to deal with some forms of remote operation which may involve a degree of “monitoring”.

Yes, this way monitoring can be scalably deployed.

### **Consultation Question 38** (Paragraph 13.86)

We provisionally propose that:

- (4) the regulation of self-driving vehicles should distinguish between an Automated Driving System Entity (which vouches for the design of the system) and an operator (responsible for the operation of individual vehicles);

(5) all vehicles authorised for use on roads or other public places with no user-in charge should either:

(a) be operated by a licensed operator; or

(b) be covered by a contract with a licensed operator for supervision and maintenance services;

(6) it should be a criminal offence to use a NUIC vehicle on a road or other public place unless it is operated by a licensed operator or is covered by a contract with a licensed operator for supervision and maintenance services.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

The operator and ADSE competencies are different and may or may not be found in the same organisation.

#### **Consultation Question 40** (Paragraph 13.108)

We provisionally propose that, irrespective of the nature of the vehicle, a licensed operator should be under a duty to:

(1) supervise the vehicle;

(2) maintain the vehicle;

(3) insure the vehicle;

(4) install safety-critical updates and maintain cybersecurity; and

(5) report accidents and untoward events (as defined by the regulator).

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes, a licensed operator should be subject to all the listed duties; a licensed operator should be subject to some but not all of the listed duties; no, a licensed operator should not be subject to any of the listed duties; other.]

Yes, a licensed operator should be subject to all the listed duties

#### **Consultation Question 41** (Paragraph 13.109)

We provisionally propose that legislation should include a regulation-making power by which some or all of these duties could be transferred to the registered keeper or owner, if it was shown that it was appropriate to do so.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

This would be treated carefully that the owner-keeper understands and can perform their duties, as well as compensate the public if needed.

#### **Consultation Question 42** (Paragraph 13.116)

We welcome views on how accessibility standards for Highly Automated Road Passenger Services (HARPS) might be developed.

More research and specific guidance is needed on what is needed, how it is communicated and how these are audited.

We provisionally propose that:

(1) an accessibility advisory panel should be formed to include:

(a) the Equalities and Human Rights Commission; and

(b) representative groups for disabled and older persons;

(2) the Secretary of State should be obliged to consult with the accessibility advisory panel prior to setting any national minimum standards on HARPS;

(3) there should be a duty to periodically re-consult the accessibility advisory panel at set intervals to ensure requirements keep pace with developing evidence of technical feasibility and changing needs.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

We welcome views on what the set interval for periodically re-consulting the accessibility advisory panel should be.

#### **Consultation Question 43** (Paragraph 13.133)

We welcome views on who should administer the operator licensing scheme.

Traffic commissioner

### **CHAPTER 14: CRIMINAL OFFENCES BY ADSES AND THEIR SENIOR MANAGERS**

#### **Consultation Question 44** (Paragraph 14.107)

We provisionally propose that:

(1) it should be a criminal offence for an ADSE to omit safety-relevant information or include misleading information when putting a vehicle forward for classification as self-driving or responding to information requests from the regulator;

(2) the offence should apply to senior managers (where it was attributable to the manager's consent, connivance or neglect);

(3) the offence should not apply to more junior employees;

(4) the offence should carry a higher sentence if it is associated with a death or serious injury;

(5) the offence should be prosecuted in England and Wales by either the regulator or the Crown Prosecution Service and in Scotland by the Procurator Fiscal.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

#### **Consultation Question 46** (Paragraph 14.109)

We welcome views on whether an ADSE should be under a duty to present information in a clear and accessible form, in which safety-critical information is indexed and signposted.

Yes, guidance should be given as this may lead to very high level reporting and over simplification of crucial information. More information should not be unreasonably withheld.

### **CHAPTER 15: NEW WRONGFUL INTERFERENCE OFFENCES**

#### **Consultation Question 47** (Paragraph 15.10)

We provisionally propose that legislative amendment should clarify that the tampering offence in section 25 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 applies to anything that is physically part of a vehicle and any software installed within it.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

#### **Consultation Question 48** (Paragraph 15.11)

We welcome views on whether the tampering offence should apply to external infrastructure required for the operation of the AV.

Yes, or for connected systems.

#### **Consultation Question 49** (Paragraph 15.53)

We provisionally propose that there should be an aggravated offence of wrongfully interfering with an AV, the road, or traffic equipment contrary to section 22A of the Road Traffic Act 1988, where the interference results in an AV causing death or serious injury, in:

(1) England and Wales; and

(2) Scotland.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes, in both England and Wales and Scotland; in neither jurisdiction.]

Yes, in both England and Wales and Scotland

#### **Consultation Question 50** (Paragraph 15.55)

We provisionally propose that the appropriate mental element for the aggravated offence is intent to interfere with a vehicle, the road or traffic equipment.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

#### **Consultation Question 51** (Paragraph 15.62)

We seek views on whether an approved work defence for repair or maintenance operations authorised by a vehicle manufacturer or Automated Driving System Entity is desirable.

This should be approved by the authority that is responsible for their maintenance, not the ADSE.

### **CHAPTER 16: CIVIL LIABILITY**

#### **Consultation Question 52** (Paragraph 16.24)

We provisionally propose that the way the Automated and Electric Vehicles Act 2018 deals with contributory negligence and causation is:

(1) adequate at this stage; and

(2) should be reviewed by the UK Government in the light of practical experience.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

#### **Consultation Question 53** (Paragraph 16.32)

We provisionally propose that measures should be put in place to compensate the victims of accidents caused by uninsured AVs.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

**Consultation Question 54** (Paragraph 16.47)

We provisionally propose that:

(1) product liability law should be reviewed to take account of the challenges of emerging technologies;

(2) any review should cover product liability as a whole, rather than be confined to automated vehicles;

it should not, therefore, form part of this project on automated vehicles.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

However, requirements for reasonable PLI insurance covering all parts of an CAV should be established in the meantime

**CHAPTER 17: ACCESS TO DATA**

**Consultation Question 55** (Paragraph 17.65)

We provisionally propose that:

(1) for a vehicle to be classified as self-driving, it needs to record the location as well as the time at which the ADS is activated and deactivated;

(2) the Government should work within the UNECE to ensure data storage systems for automated driving record these data; and

(3) any national system to approve an ADS should require these data to be collected, subject to safeguards.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes

**Consultation Question 56** (Paragraph 17.71)

We provisionally propose that legislation should impose a duty on those controlling AV data to disclose data to insurers, where the data is necessary to decide claims fairly and accurately.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Other

Yes, and to relevant authorities.

**Consultation Question 57** (Paragraph 17.81)

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) initially, DSSAD data from self-driving vehicles should be stored for three years; and
- (2) the issue should be reviewed in the light of experience.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

No

This is much longer than most CCTV footage, and impractical given the amount of data.

**Consultation Question 58** (Paragraph 17.95)

We provisionally propose that:

- (1) when an ADSE applies for categorisation of its vehicle types as self-driving, it should present the regulator with details on how data will be recorded, stored, accessed and protected;
- (2) the regulator should only categorise a system as self-driving if it is satisfied that that the ADSE has systems to abide by its obligations under the GDPR.

Do you agree?

[Respondents chose from the following options: yes; no; other.]

Yes