

**Media Release  
2015**

**21 July**

## **ARRB announces first driverless car trials on Australian roads**

### ***South Australian Government first to road-test cars of the future***

Driverless cars will be tested on Australian roads for the first time in November 2015, the country's national independent road research agency, ARRB Group, has announced today.

Through its Australian Driverless Vehicle Initiative, ARRB is supporting governments in bringing together leading local and international experts from industry and academia, including technology partners Telstra and Bosch and automotive partner Volvo, to run Australia's first driverless vehicle demonstration trials.

By applying international research to the local road environment, the partner organisations will together seek to understand what is required to make driverless technology appropriate for Australian roads and safe for road users.

Supported and hosted by the South Australian Government, the Australian-first trials of automated vehicles will coincide with a Driverless Vehicle Conference to be hosted by the state from 5-6 November.

ARRB Group Managing Director Gerard Waldron said automated vehicles are far from science fiction, but rather a short-term reality that Australia needs to be prepared for.

"The advent of driverless cars is an opportunity to foster technological innovation and revive Australia's manufacturing industry – the South Australian Government has been quick to recognise this," said Waldron.

South Australian Premier, Hon Jay Weatherill, said: "This trial presents a fantastic opportunity for South Australia to take a lead nationally and internationally in the development of this new technology and open up new opportunities for our economy."

ARRB Group's national research initiative puts Australia on the map along with the UK, the US and Sweden as international leaders in automated vehicle research.

"ARRB will establish how driverless technology needs to be manufactured and introduced for uniquely Australian driving behaviour, our climate and road conditions, including what this means for Australia's national road infrastructure, markings, surfaces and roadside signage," said Waldron.

The trials in South Australia this November will be the first of many trials nationally, with discussions underway in a number of jurisdictions. ARRB Group is calling for additional states, territories and partners to support this important national research initiative.

"Driverless cars have a range of benefits that could significantly improve road safety and the quality of life of everyday Australians, add to the nation's economic competitiveness and help relieve rapidly growing congestion that is crippling our infrastructure and creating productivity deficits in our capital cities.

“We’re seeking technology and automotive industry partners to assist us in Australia’s driverless vehicle innovation,” added Waldron.

Mark Jackman, Regional President, Vehicle Safety Systems of Robert Bosch Australia, said: “We’re excited to be a part of the ARRB Australian Driverless Vehicle Initiative and anticipate that this will be a major step forward in advancing Bosch automated driving technologies in Australia for now and into the future.”

Kevin McCann, Managing Director of Volvo Car Australia said: “As a leader in the development of autonomous drive technologies, Volvo’s aim is to make this technology realistically available for customers in production cars in the near future.

“At Volvo we believe autonomous drive will lead to significant consumer and societal benefits, including improved traffic safety, improved fuel economy, reduced congestion, and the opportunity for improved infrastructure planning. We are delighted to be involved with the ARRB demonstration event in South Australia, where we believe Volvo Car Australia can make a positive and significant contribution.”

Vish Nandlall, Telstra’s Chief Technology Officer said: “We look forward to working with ARRB and seeing how we can use our technology and networks expertise to help make autonomous vehicle use in Australia a reality.”

Penny Gale, RAA General Manager Public Affairs said that by 2020 all cars that come off the production line will have some ability to drive themselves, and we need to prepare.

“This type of technology has the potential to be a real win for road safety and mobility. Removing the need for a driver will open up a whole new transport opportunity for many of our members, particularly people with disabilities and the elderly. While removing the reliance on human behaviour will undoubtedly save lives.

“This trial will help us gauge the opportunities and issues road users might face, and help us better prepare our members for future of transport that is rapidly approaching.”

– ENDS –

#### **Notes to Editors**

##### **List of partners supporting ARRB’s Driverless Vehicles Initiative:**

Government of South Australia  
Volvo  
Bosch  
Telstra  
RAA

Adelaide Airport Limited  
Flinders University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Cohda Wireless

Further information is available at <https://www.arrb.com.au/Transport/Self-Driving-Vehicles.aspx>.

ARRB Group is a leading expert globally in road research and technology. For the last 55 years we’ve been helping transport, road and infrastructure bodies to identify and adopt best practices for developing and maintaining safe and sustainable roads.



For more information, images or to speak with an ARRB spokesperson, please contact Sarah Robertson or Jessica Howard at Keep Left:

[sahr@keepleft.com.au](mailto:sahr@keepleft.com.au) | 03 9268 7800 | 0419 410 901

[jessicah@keepleft.com.au](mailto:jessicah@keepleft.com.au) | 03 9268 7800 | 0422 587 362