



Department
for Transport

Baroness Brinton of Kenardington
House of Lords
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Lord Davies of Gower
Minister for Maritime, International and Security

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Dear Baroness Brinton,

Automated Vehicles Bill 2nd Reading – Follow Up Letter

Following the recent 2nd Reading debate on the Automated Vehicles Bill held on 28 November, I am writing to provide further clarity and detail on the points you raised in the debate and address questions where through time constraints and volume of issues, I could not respond directly in my closing speech.

Accessibility

You raised questions in relation to accessibility of self-driving vehicles. As mentioned in the debate, the granting of authorisations will be subject to the public sector equality duty. Government intends to make equality impact assessments part of the authorisation process, and for the safety principles to include equality and fairness.

Clause 87(3) also provides that in deciding whether to grant an automated passenger permit, the appropriate national authority must consider whether the permit is 'likely to lead to the improvement in the understanding of how automated passenger services should best be designed for, and provided to, older and disabled people'.

The needs of mobility impaired road users have been a key research theme throughout the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CCAV) Research and Development programmes.

There are already some success stories in this space which we can point to:

- We have funded and supported cutting-edge projects to explore how connected and automated mobility can improve mobility for an ageing population (Project Flourish in Bristol [Project INSIGHT: State-of-the-art](#))

[autonomous low-speed vehicle designed for city environment | Birmingham City University \(bcu.ac.uk\)](#)) and visually impaired people (Project Insight in Birmingham [FLOURISH Project: Improving Accessibility with CAV Technology - Connected Places Catapult](#)), including the world's first 4D tactile display in an automated vehicle. In 2019, Coventry's Aurrigo partnered with Blind Veterans UK on the world's first trial of self-driving pods with blind veterans (in Brighton)".

- The ServCity project (2020-2023) examined and evaluated human-machine interfaces for self-driving taxis with a range of user-groups, including older populations, wheelchair users, and people who might have specific journey related needs, such as parents and carers travelling with dependents. Insights can inform the design of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platforms – booking and journey management systems, smartphone apps, in-vehicle displays and so on – to ensure accessibility of interfaces.
- The Great Self Driving Exploration (2023) [Self-driving vehicles: public perceptions and effective communication - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) engaged a wide variety of people, including vulnerable road users, mobility impaired, different socio-economic groups, and regional spread in Manchester, Taunton and Alnwick. Feedback and insights were given from a range of community engagement activities including a journey in a self-driving vehicle. Findings will be useful for designing community engagement actions to inform the public about self-driving technologies.

Human factors research which will be carried out through CCAV over the next year will examine the range of tasks that passengers will need to perform during self-driving transport journeys and during emergency scenarios, in order to identify where targeted support might be needed.

Strict sampling quotas have been defined to ensure participants represent all protected groups, as well as different types of passenger, including rural vs urban dwellers, and those who do not use internet connected devices. Findings will inform the requirements for suppliers of self-driving transport services to ensure passenger needs are met across the whole journey taskscape.

As mentioned in the debate, my office will be reaching out to you and Lord Holmes of Richmond to offer a further discussion around accessibility ahead of Committee Stage.

Access to Personal Data - Government and other Departments

You asked a series of questions regarding Government access to personal data created by self-driving vehicles.

On Government personal data access – DfT, OGD and law enforcement.

Most personal data is likely to be collected under authorisation requirements. Clause 14 enables regulations to provide for sharing with other public authorities and private businesses. The data that is likely to be needed by the in-use regulatory scheme and insurers is likely to include the date, time and location of each occasion when a: self-driving feature is activated or deactivated, a transition demand is issued or a collision is detected.

On other government departments and public bodies access

There is no current policy intention to mandate sharing of personal data with other government departments or public bodies. Any such proposals will be subject to consultation on the regulations.

Police/law enforcement access

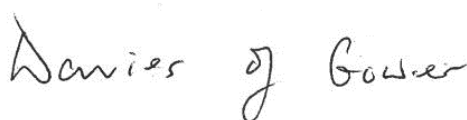
The User-in-Charge immunity from liability for criminal offences in clause 46 applies while the self-driving feature is engaged. Clause 51(1) puts the evidential burden on the driver so that it will be the driver's decision to share personal data with law enforcement in order to establish the right to the immunity. The technology around the collection and storage of self-driving vehicle data continues to develop. If there are technological or policy reasons to mandate that the data is shared with law enforcement, any regulatory provisions will be subject to consultation.

Commercial use of data by regulated bodies

Use of data by regulated bodies is subject to the data protection legislation, enforceable by the Information Commissioners Office. The regulatory scheme will not impose additional data processing requirements and the regulator will not have a role in enforcing data protection legislation.

Once again, I thank you for your interest on these issues and for their participation in the debate. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with my office to request further information.

I will place a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Davies of Gower".

LORD DAVIES OF GOWER