



Media Release

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All aboard Victoria's first driverless shuttle bus

All aboard Victoria's first driverless shuttle bus Victorians will soon have the opportunity to be part of a new and exciting autonomous shuttle trial that will help shape the future of public transport.

In the first project of its kind in Victoria, an autonomous shuttle bus is being trialled in Melbourne's north at La Trobe University's Bundoora campus.

Partly funded by the Victorian Government Smarter Journeys Program, the La Trobe Autonobus project brings together the private sector, academia and Victoria's largest member organisation.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety Luke Donnellan said the innovative project shows that Victoria is at the forefront of automated vehicle technology.

"Automated vehicles will revolutionise how we move around our communities, that's why we're investing in trials that explore ways technology can be used to reduce congestion and keep people safe on our roads," Mr Donnellan said.

Jonathan Myers, Head of Growth, Innovation and Partnerships at Keolis Downer, said the project will explore how driverless vehicles complement existing public transport solutions.

"We welcome the opportunity given by the Victorian Government to test driverless technology in mixed traffic to understand what evolutions might be needed to provide a safe and integrated travel experience to local communities," said Mr Myers.

The La Trobe Autonobus trial will run on an existing transport route at La Trobe University until July 2018.

RACV's General Manager of Public Policy and Corporate Affairs Bryce Prosser said the project would explore world-leading driverless technology.

"This is an exciting opportunity to look into the future of transport and how autonomous vehicles can be used to meet passenger demand and complement existing transport options," Mr Prosser said.

"The purpose of the trial is to gain a better understanding of the technology - how it works, how it can best be developed and how it can be implemented. We will look at all aspects of safety, operations and integration."

CEO of HMI technology Dean Zabrieszach said members of the public would have the opportunity to test the bus first-hand from April 2018.

“We will be transporting a range of people around the campus during the trial - focusing on picking up customers from tram/bus interchanges or car parks and allowing them to hop off close to their destination,” Mr Zabrieszach said.

“This will give us a good idea of how the bus integrates with other modes of transport and interacts with people.”

La Trobe University Vice Chancellor Professor John Dewar said the University was leading the way.

“Our researchers have the expertise and track record in developing technology that links business, enhances mobility and shapes smart cities of the future,” Professor Dewar said.

“The trial also fits with our own smarter campus ethos which is to make it easier for students to use technology and enhance their education experience.”

Stuart Ballingall, VicRoads Director of Transport Futures, said the trial would set the groundwork for the introduction of driverless vehicles.

“We hope to learn how this technology can be used while interacting with other road users, which will help to inform the development of a legal and regulatory framework for the safe introduction of automated vehicles across Victoria and Australia.”

Autonobus is a collaboration between VicRoads, founding partner Keolis Downer, La Trobe University, HMI, RACV and ARRB.

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