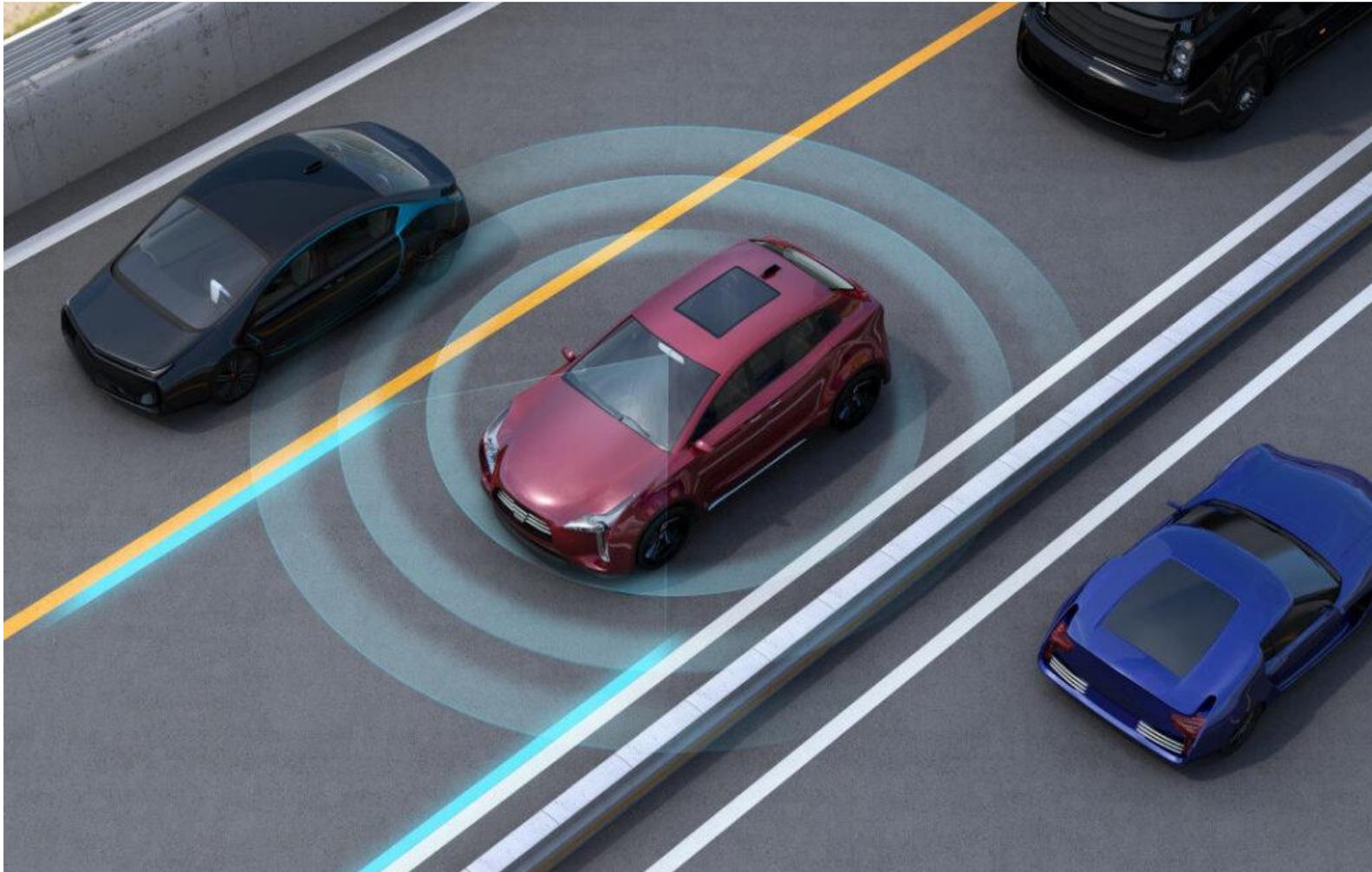


BRITAIN MOVES CLOSER TO A SELF-DRIVING REVOLUTION

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Department for Transport UK sets out changes to The Highway Code to ensure the first self-driving vehicles are introduced safely on UK roads. The changes clarify drivers' responsibilities in self-driving vehicles, including when a driver must be ready to take back control. Future technology could improve and level up transport, easing congestion, cutting emissions and reducing collisions caused by human error.

Drivers will be able to experience the full benefits of the first self-driving vehicles when they arrive, as government sets out how they should be driven safely on UK roads. The changes will help ensure the first wave of technology will be used safely, explaining clearly that while travelling in self-driving mode, motorists must be ready to resume control in a timely way if they are prompted to – such as when they approach motorway exits.

The plans also include a change to current regulation, allowing drivers to view content that is not related to driving on built-in display screens, while the self-driving vehicle is in control. It will, however, still be illegal to use mobile phones in self-driving mode, given the greater risk they pose in distracting drivers as shown in research.

With self-driving technology rapidly developing across the globe, Britain's first vehicles approved for self-driving could be ready for use later this year. Vehicles will undergo rigorous testing and only be approved as self-driving when they have met stringent standards.

The government is continuing to develop a full legal framework for self-driving vehicles to enable the safer and greener movement of people and goods in the UK. The Department for Transport will also work with industry, regulators and safety organisations to ensure drivers can access information, including online, to help them use their vehicles safely.

Transport Minister Trudy Harrison said: "This is a major milestone in our safe introduction of self-driving vehicles, which will revolutionise the way we travel, making our future journeys greener, safer and more reliable. This exciting technology is developing at pace right here in Great Britain and we're ensuring we have strong foundations in place for drivers when it takes to our roads. In doing so, we can help improve travel for all while boosting economic growth across the nation and securing Britain's place as a global science superpower."

The development of self-driving vehicles could create around 38,000 new, high-skilled jobs within Britain's industry that would be worth £41.7 billion by 2035.

The measures confirmed today follow a public consultation launched by the government, which found the majority of respondents were broadly supportive of the proposed changes to The Highway Code to clarify drivers' responsibilities in self-driving vehicles. The introduction of the technology is likely to begin with vehicles travelling at slow speeds on motorways, such as in congested traffic.

Following a landmark call for evidence, the government announced in April last year that vehicles fitted with automated lane-keeping system (ALKS) technology could be the first example of self-driving technology. Existing technology available on the market is 'assistive',

meaning drivers must currently always remain in control and responsible. Designed for use on a motorway in slow traffic, ALKS enables a vehicle to drive itself in a single lane, up to 37 mph, while maintaining the ability to return control easily and safely to the driver when required.

Meanwhile, the government expects to have a full regulatory framework in place to support the widespread deployment of the technology by 2025, helping to make the movement of people and goods safer, greener and more efficient.

The technology could improve road safety across Britain by reducing human error, which is a contributory factor in 88% of all recorded road collisions.

Source: [UK Department for Transport](#)