

# SMART DRIVING CARS



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3rd edition of the 5th year of SmartDrivingCars

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## Motor-vehicle deaths up 6% in 2016

Press release, Feb. 15, "With continued lower gasoline prices and an improving economy resulting in an estimated 3% increase in motor-vehicle mileage, the number of motor-vehicle deaths in 2016 totaled 40,200, up 6% from 2015 (*10% in NJ*) and the first time the annual fatality total has exceeded 40,000 since 2007. The 2016 estimate is provisional and may be revised when more data are available. The total for 2016 was up 14% from the 2014 figure.... The estimated cost of motor-vehicle deaths, injuries, and property damage in 2016 was \$432.5 billion, an increase of 12% from 2015. The costs include wage and productivity losses, medical expenses, administrative expenses, employer costs, and property damage...." [Read more](#)

*Hmmm... Just the facts, mam! :- ( Alain*



## Motor Vehicle Deaths in 2016 Estimated to be Highest in Nine Years

Press release, Feb. 15, "NSC offers insight into what drivers are doing and calls for immediate implementation of proven, life-saving measures...

With the upward trend showing no sign of subsiding, NSC is calling for immediate implementation of life-saving measures that would set the nation on a [road to zero](#) deaths:..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... "Automated Collision Avoidance" or anything having to do with 'Safe-driving Cars' is not mentioned anywhere in the Press Release. One of us is missing something very fundamental here!! So depressing!! :- ( Alain*



## [U.S. Traffic Deaths Rise for a Second Straight Year](#)

N. Boudette, Feb. 15, "Over the last decade, new cars have gotten electronic stability control systems to prevent skids, rearview cameras to prevent fender benders and more airbags to protect occupants in collisions. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on campaigns to remind the public of the dangers of drunken driving, failing to buckle up and texting while on the go.

Despite all that, more Americans are dying on roads and highways than in years, and the sudden and sharp increase has alarmed safety advocates....

"The way to bring down the rise in deaths is with a wide range of the nuts-and-bolts measures, not self-driving cars," the consumer advocate Ralph Nader '55 said in an interview in October..."

" [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Technically, Ralph is correct; however, what would be effective are 'Safe-driving Cars'. I am dumbfounded by the malaise of US DoT, NHTSA and the Insurance industry (including insurance regulators) in failing to recognize the virtues that ALWAYS ON Automated Collision Avoidance, Lane Keeping and Speed Limiters would have in actively addressing the inattention and aggressive driving that is fueling this growing carnage on America's roads. Technology essentially exists today that works effectively and has a very attractive ROI; yet this article and the NSC fail to even mention it. I'm totally flabbergasted. Alain*



## [Road Warrior: Would you disconnect a safety feature?](#)

J. Cichowski, Feb 16, "If you've wondered why road crashes are killing more people now than they were 50 years ago, the National Safety Council trotted out many of the same old reasons this week – speeding, texting, booze, pot, and gas prices low enough to encourage us to drive – and crash – more than ever before.

But in a poll involving 2,001 motorists that accompanied the NSC's latest figures, the safety group discovered another reason, one that rarely gets much attention: Drivers are disabling built-in safety features designed to help them either detect or respond to risks...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Of course they are turned off. They don't work well enough. They must/should be made so well that folks don't want to turn them off. This one is on the car manufacturers and NHTSA. Manufacturers haven't been serious enough about these things nor made them well enough so that buyers would NOT turn them off and NHTSA has not been vigilant enough to insist that automakers make them well enough. NHTSA should have "recalls" to entice the auto industry to make these well. Also, many of these systems are/have been "warnings" and were set such that they had/have way too many 'false alarms". Consequently, they are simply annoying and they should be turned off. Again, my point has been that we have simply glossed over 'Safe-driving cars'. No one admits that they don't drive safely, safety isn't 'sexy', and it doesn't 'sell' (consumers won't/don't buy). We're all in denial. In reality, we don't drive safely, it does end up costing us a lot (and for some, the ultimate) and insurance isn't doing enough/ anything to encourage auto maker to make, and for us to to buy and not turn-off, Safe-driving*

*technology even though this is Insurance's highest fiduciary responsibility its stock holders. I simply don't get it! :-) Alain*



### [Young Millennials Top List of Worst Behaved Drivers](#)

T. Johnson, Feb 15, "A new report from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that 88 percent of young millennials engaged in at least one risky behavior behind the wheel in the past 30 days, earning the top spot of worst behaved U.S. drivers. These dangerous behaviors — which increase crash risk — included texting while driving, red-light running and speeding. .."

[Read more](#) *Hmmm... see also [Link](#), [And insurers aren't insisting that these kids only drive 'Safe-driving Cars' \(cars equipped with Automated Collision Avoidance ,... systems\)](#). i don't get it. They need technological oversight. Alain*



### [Thune and Peters Announce Joint Effort on Self-Driving Vehicles](#)

Press Release, Feb 13, WASHINGTON – Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.), the chairman of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and Sen. Gary Peters (D-Mich.) today announced a joint effort to explore legislation that clears hurdles and advances innovation in self-driving vehicle technology. Thune and Peters offered the following joint statement on this new partnership:

“More than any other automotive technology in history, self-driving vehicles have the potential to dramatically reduce the more than 35,000 lives lost on our roads and highways every year and fundamentally transform the way we get around. Ensuring American innovators can safely develop and implement this technology will not only save lives but also solidify our nation’s position as the world leader in the future of mobility...[Read more](#)”

*Hmmm... 'Self-driving' is interesting; however, Automated Vehicles have a broad spectrum which in my mind ranges from*

#### ***'Safe-driving'***

*( Automated Collision Avoidance and Lane Keeping that is on ALL the time ready to spring into action (much like today's anti-lock brakes and electronic stability control) keeping the driver from getting into a collision-prone situation. This technology is essentially available now and with encouragement from Congress can most quickly deliver substantial safety benefits. 'Safe-driving's biggest challenge is that 'safety does not sell'. Consumers need to be convinced.*

*Congress could help by strongly promoting (without mandating) this safety technology. A simple beginning is by having NHTSA up its safety standards/ratings to explicitly include Automated Collision Avoidance (ACA) systems that actually work be a part of those ratings. NHTSA/ congress could also encourage the development of after-market ACA systems so as to accelerate the penetration/adoption of these systems into many of the cars, trucks and buses that are on the road today. ),*

#### ***'Self-driving'***

*(which extends the Safe-driving's safety benefits and delivers the comfort and convenience of taking hands off the wheel and feet off the pedals some of the time. Since Self-driving extends Safe-driving, it doesn't itself contribute additional safety except that it delivers comfort and convenience benefits that sell. Indirectly it will be getting consumers 'to buy safety'. That is why the auto industry is focused on self-driving. It believes consumers will be willing to pay for technology and thereby pay for the base ACA systems. In this arena, Congress/NHTSA need only be welcoming.)*

*and 'Driverless'*

*(this extends self-driving to places/conditions/times when it can do it all the time, never needing any human driving assistance. Driverless will revolutionize mobility in those places/conditions/times by providing inexpensive, sustainable and resilient mobility to 'everyone', including freight/goods, in those places/conditions/time. We are close to having driverless in very limited places/conditions/times. Congress could really help by supporting the still needed research and development to as rapidly as possible extend driverless to more places/conditions/times.)*

*Alain*

## **WIRED** [Congress Could Make Self-Driving Cars Happen—or Ruin Everything](#)

A. Davis, Feb. 15, "Congress just stepped into the robocar game. In the past two days, a pair of senators started drafting legislation to advance autonomous vehicles, and the House Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection held a two-hour hearing exploring how on the tech might be deployed. For your elected officials, it's a considerable, if tentative, step into the future of transportation...It could start by revising the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards to reflect autonomous technology. For example, the rules require things like foot-activated brakes. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration can amend the regulations, but it requires several rounds of draft rules and public comments. That takes years. Congress can make the same change quickly with a law, or even a clause tucked into, say, an infrastructure omnibus.

It could also tweak Title 49 of the US legal code, which allows the secretary of transportation to exempt vehicles from federal standards—to a point. The law (specifically section 30113(d) and 30113(e)) limits those vehicles to 2,500 per manufacturer in a 12-month period, and the exemption can't last more than three years. Federal regulators may be happy to let Google produce a car without a steering wheel or brakes, but without congressional help, that goodwill can only go so far. [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very interesting!! Alain*



## [Autonomous Vehicle Implementation Predictions: Implications for Transport Planning](#)

T. Litman, Jan. 2, "This report explores the impacts that autonomous vehicles are likely to have on travel demands and transportation planning. It discusses autonomous vehicle benefits and costs, predicts their likely development and implementation based on experience with previous vehicle technologies, and explores how they will affect planning decisions such as optimal road, parking and public transit supply. The analysis indicates that some benefits, such as independent mobility for affluent non-drivers, may begin in the 2020s or 2030s, but most

impacts, including reduced traffic and parking congestion, independent mobility for low-income people (and therefore reduced need to subsidize transit), increased safety, energy conservation and pollution reductions, will only be significant when autonomous vehicles become common and affordable, probably in the 2040s to 2060s, and some benefits may require prohibiting human-driven vehicles on certain roadways, which could take longer." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Very nice study; however, Table 6 p11 "Navigation Systems"... 1985 was the absolute beginning, which would be equivalent to 2005 for driverless cars. Navigation started to move in 1997 (When ALK Inc. 1st put CoPilot on the market) and the adoption was fueled by CoPilot and other after-market products which led to today's total market penetration over a 30 year span.*

*The only way to achieve substantial market penetration of either Safe-driving Cars or Self-driving Cars in 30 years (by 2035) is either through Federal Mandates (as was achieved with Airbags) or after-market (as with Navigation).*

*Driverless Cars could take less time because they will be a fleet -play rather than a consumer-play (but they have yet to start). There is a lot more in this report worth serious contemplation. Alain*

### **Associated Press**

#### [Ford Bets \\$1B On Startup Founded By Waymo, Uber Vets](#)

M. Liedtke, Feb. 13, "Ford Motor is spending \$1 billion to take over a budding robotics startup to acquire more expertise needed to reach its ambitious goal of having a fully driverless vehicle on the road by 2021. The big bet announced Friday comes just a few months after the Pittsburgh startup, Argo AI, was created by two alumni of Carnegie Mellon University's robotics program, Bryan Salesky and Peter Rander.

The alliance between Argo and Ford is the latest to combine the spunk and dexterity of a technologically savvy startup with the financial muscle and manufacturing knowhow of a major automaker in the race to develop autonomous vehicles. Last year rival General Motors paid \$581 million to buy Cruise Automation, a 40-person software company that is testing vehicles in San Francisco..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Very interesting!! Alain*

### **Bloomberg Technology**

#### [One Reason Staffers Quit Google's Car Project? The Company Paid Them So Much](#)

#### [Them So Much](#)

A. Barr, Feb 13, "For the past year, Google's car project has been a talent sieve, thanks to leadership changes, strategy doubts, new startup dreams and rivals luring self-driving technology experts. Another force pushing people out? Money. A lot of it.

Early staffers had an unusual compensation system that awarded supersized payouts based on the project's value. By late 2015, the numbers were so big that several veteran members didn't need the job security anymore, making them more open to other opportunities, according to people familiar with the situation. Two people called it "F-you money."... [Read more](#) *Hmmm...They earned it! Congratulations! Alain*

[DriverlessGuru.com](http://DriverlessGuru.com) [Fully autonomous shuttle service unveiled in New Zealand](#)

Feb 10, "In the same week that Paris launched a driverless shuttle service on a bridge [across the Seine](#), New Zealand has unveiled its own autonomous shuttle trials at Christchurch Airport. In the first on-road research trials in New Zealand, the fully autonomous, electric-powered Smart Shuttle, which can carry up to 15 people, will run on private roads on the airport campus.

The driverless vehicle trial is being conducted in partnership with HMI Technologies, a New Zealand-based Intelligent Transport System provider...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Congratulations to Paris & Christchurch! Alain*



[Las Vegas launches the first electric autonomous shuttle on U.S. public roads](#)

D. Etherington, Jan 11, "Las Vegas, transportation beat reporters can't quit you; CES was like a car extravaganza, and now you're launching a self-driving, fully electric shuttle on public streets. The shuttles are the result of a partnership between shuttle-maker Navya, fleet logistics provider Keolis and the city of Las Vegas, and began picking up members of the public today, riding a regular route along iconic Fremont Street between Las Vegas Boulevard and Eighth Street — right in the thick of regular traffic.

The route will run between January 11 and 20, and will use Navya's ARMA shuttle, which previously underwent testing in the U.S. at the University of Michigan's MCity autonomous testing facility, and which has been deployed in France since 2015.... [Read more](#) *Hmmm... Old news I had missed. Alain*

[Reader's Comments..](#)



[with respect to my comment in the previous issue:](#)

*Hmmm... Some nice ideas; however, Google/Alphabet/Waymo may just offer it for free and have its advertisers pay to have the opportunity to secure your undivided attention to buy stuff during the ride. Hmmm...\$\$\$ Alain...* Steffen Bartschat wrote: "With advertising revenue for Facebook and Google estimated to be in the range of \$100 per user per year in the US, I don't see how an advertising revenue model can work to support building, operating, and maintaining an unlimited private transportation service, even if the value of those captive eyeballs increases by an order of magnitude." *Hmmm... Steffen, excellent point! I stand corrected. Advertising\$\$\$ aren't that great. Thank you! Alain*



### On the More Technical Side

<http://orfe.princeton.edu/~alaink/SmartDrivingCars/Papers/>

### Half-baked stuff that probably doesn't deserve your time

**TheNational**

#### Dubai to launch driverless flying cars by this summer

C. Nelson, Feb 13, "Dubai skies are set to be abuzz with driverless flying cars within months, the emirate's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) announced on Monday, in what will mark another world's first for the city.

The RTA, in collaboration with the Chinese firm Ehang, has carried out the first test run of an autonomous aerial vehicle (AAV) capable of carrying a human, the Ehang 184, and the authority said it is set to launch operations very soon...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...?????? Alain*

### C'mon Man! (These folks didn't get/read the memo)

**THE SUNDAY TIMES**

#### Driverless cars will attract hefty insurance premium

Feb 16, "MOTORISTS will face high insurance costs to run driverless cars under government plans for specialist policies that cover crashes caused by a vehicle's on-board computer. Owners will be required to take out one premium covering both driver error and vehicle malfunctions, to ensure that accident victims get easy access to compensation without having to lodge multiple claims.

Legislation being outlined by the Department for Transport will force insurers to pay up even if cars crash as a result of being hacked. Ministers insisted that the all-encompassing insurance system, which is outlined in the Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill, to be published within weeks, will cut red tape and make it much easier for driverless cars to be run on British roads...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...This will ensue that individuals won't own **Driverless Cars** and fleets will self-insure with manufacturers. [C'mon Brits!](#) Alain*