

MEDIA RELEASE

22 June 2018

Industry partnership to drive Adelaide's 'autonomous vehicle hub'

An exciting new partnership between Australian mass transit specialist Transit Australia Group (TAG) and international electric driverless technology company EasyMile has signalled South Australia as its innovation epicentre.

EasyMile currently operates in Asia-Pacific, Middle-East, America and Europe, with its flagship vehicle, the EZ10 driverless electric shuttle bus, carrying up to 15 passengers (eight seated and seven standing) and travelling at a speed of up to 45km/h.

The EZ10 can operate in diverse environments including on existing roadway and public infrastructure utilising EasyMile's proprietary software – and several public trials of the vehicle are already slated for Australia and New Zealand this year under the new partnership.

In the first collaboration of its nature in Australia, TAG's mass transit capabilities and experience nationally will be critical in supporting the integration of the vehicles into public transport systems with a focus on deployment, operations and maintenance during the trials.

TAG CEO Michael McGee said the partnership approach offered governments the opportunity to undertake a robust examination of how autonomous vehicle technology could be used as a mobility solution.

"We have combined world-leading autonomous vehicle products and technology with our expertise and innovation in designing and operating mass transit networks," Mr McGee says.

"This is an exciting opportunity for us to work with a world leader and to explore how we can integrate this emerging technology into existing public transport systems as a 'first and last mile' mobility solution."

The partnership will be based at TAG's joint venture Precision Buses, an advanced manufacturing and mobility hub in Adelaide's northern suburbs that also houses supercar company Brabham Automotive and automotive suspension systems provider Supashock.

"Through Precision Buses we are helping to transition decades of existing advanced manufacturing expertise away from automotive and into next generation urban transport vehicles," Mr McGee says.

"Adding a world-leading autonomous electric vehicle technology company like EasyMile to the mix demonstrates our commitment to technology, investment and employment in South Australia."

Mr McGee said the partnership with EasyMile presented further research and development opportunities within the autonomous vehicle market, including developing an autonomous version of TAG's ZDi electric urban bus.

“South Australia has the opportunity to benefit immensely in all areas of this emerging industry,” he says.

“Our immediate focus is on working with EasyMile to deliver successful trials across Asia-Pacific and expanding our local knowledge, skills and capabilities around driverless bus technology, operations and maintenance.”

“However, as the market for autonomous electric vehicles matures we are well positioned through Precision Buses to locally manufacture and assemble autonomous vehicles - and this is something we are very excited about for South Australia.”

“Our ZDi electric bus, which is already manufactured in Adelaide and being trialled on the city’s public transport network, has flexible architecture allowing easy adaptation and integration of new driveline technology and autonomous control systems.”

“We are also already exploring opportunities to locally manufacture and assemble EasyMile’s vehicles in Adelaide.”

Head of EasyMile Asia-Pacific Simon Pearce said TAG’s fully integrated solution was a critical advantage in delivering Easy Mile’s autonomous electric vehicles into any market.

“From operations through to maintenance and support, TAG has full service capabilities and we are delighted to be collaborating with a company equally passionate about developing an innovative autonomous vehicle hub in South Australia which creates significant employment opportunities and local economic benefit.”

The first public trial of EasyMile’s driverless electric shuttle bus under the new partnership will be announced later this year.

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Media contact

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