



MEDIA RELEASE

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Next generation of SA road users give thumbs up to driverless vehicles

Under the watchful eye of parents, a class of reception students from Glen Osmond Primary today enjoyed a first-hand glimpse of what a future ride to school may feel like in a driverless vehicle – with all giving the transport technology the big thumbs up.

The experience – coordinated by the Australia and New Zealand Driverless Vehicle Initiative (ADVI) – saw 25 youngsters climb aboard the Flinders Express (FLEX) electric driverless shuttle trial and take a tour of the Tonsley Innovation District.

Ms Rita Excell, ADVI Executive Director, said it was interesting to contrast the eagerness of the students with the reaction of their parents, especially with a recent survey showing that having a child riding in a driverless vehicle remains one of the greatest concerns for most people.

“A recent ADVI-commissioned survey involving more than 6,000 respondents from across Australia and New Zealand showed that more than 85% of people had a level of concern when it came to allowing a child to ride in a driverless car by themselves. That’s not a surprising result when you consider that this is very new, largely untested technology that most people have not yet had the chance to experience,” Ms Excell said.

“That is why it is important to provide an opportunity like today’s event to people of all ages to see this technology in action. It is one thing telling people that driverless vehicles offer major safety benefits, will reduce congestion and have a profound effect on how we get around but letting people experience this first-hand is so much more powerful because it helps them to better understand what that all means for their own circumstances,” she said.

“While we are still largely at the beginning of this exciting transport transition, South Australia continues to lead the pack through its support for innovation, and the state remains well-placed to claim its share of an industry that is estimated to be more than \$95bn per annum and likely to create 16,000 new jobs.”

It is also fantastic to see trials underway in most parts of Australia to put driverless vehicles of all shapes, sizes and uses through their paces, and identify what technology best suits our unique Australian conditions – whether that is within a city, metropolitan area or indeed within a regional location.”

Australia now has at least 15 connected and automated vehicle trials and pilot programs underway across the country, which include priority systems for freight vehicles, driverless shuttles and the nation’s first vehicle to pedestrian trial.

The Flinders Express (FLEX) electric driverless shuttle trial is part-funded through the State Government’s Future Mobility Fund and involves Flinders University, RAA and DPTI partnering with industry supporters Cohda Wireless, Renewal SA, SAGE Automation, Telstra, UPG, ZenEnergy and public transport operator Keolis Downer.

The event also saw a creative art/futuristic design competition announced, where students can provide artwork of what they think the future of transport looks like in 20 years.



Australia &
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Short-listed entries will be displayed at the International Driverless Vehicle Summit to be held in Adelaide from 31 October – 2 November, with delegates able to vote for their preferred submission. Winners will be selected from two categories - Best Primary School (Hand Drawn) and Best Secondary School (Digitally Drawn). More about the competition terms and conditions can be found at <https://advi.org.au/iamtheevolution-futuristic-competition/>

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About the Australia and New Zealand Driverless Vehicle Initiative (ADVI)

ADVI is the peak body that spans the wide ecosystem of driverless vehicles in Australia and New Zealand. With a membership of more than 120 leading organisations across a wide range of sectors, ADVI offers a unique opportunity for partners to collaborate with Governments, Industry and researchers, to position Australia and New Zealand amongst the world leaders in the development and deployment of driverless technology. ADVI's education, advocacy and demonstration efforts help to inform and raise awareness, encourage community acceptance, and ensure understanding of the economic, environmental and lifestyle benefits of driverless vehicles.

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