

## LTA extends driverless car trials to NUS, Dover, Buona Vista



An autonomous vehicle undergoes a test drive at the One North district. AP file photo

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SINGAPORE — The Land Transport Authority (LTA) is extending the on-road trials for driverless cars from the one-north vicinity to neighbouring areas such as the National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Science Park 1 and 2, Dover and Buona Vista.

This would add another 55km to the present 12km test routes for autonomous vehicles, it said in a press release on Friday (June 23), and the extra "on-road scenarios" would help speed up the technology development.

Participants in the trials can start testing their autonomous vehicles in NUS and Singapore Science Park 1 and 2 from Friday.

For those doing trials in the mixed-use, residential estates in Dover and Buona Vista, they must demonstrate to the LTA and the Traffic Police that their vehicles can handle more dynamic traffic environments in autonomous mode.

Signboards will be put up in the test areas, and all autonomous vehicles involved will also continue to sport decals and markings for easy recognition by road users.

All test vehicles must have a qualified driver at the wheel to take control of the vehicle should the need arises, and the vehicles have to undergo a thorough safety assessment before they are approved for use in on-road trials. These are among the safeguards put in place by the LTA, which regulates the trials.

Participants also have to share data from the tests with the LTA to evaluate the trials.

Mr Lam Wee Shann, the agency's chief technology officer, said: "To achieve our car-lite vision, it is imperative that we facilitate and pave the way for the future deployment of shared autonomous transport modes. Deploying autonomous vehicles for shared transport will help enhance our first- and last-mile commute and bring greater mobility to the elderly and other commuters who may have difficulties in taking public transport today."

The first trials involving autonomous vehicles in Singapore began in July 2015. These have made "good progress" over the last two years, the LTA said. In September last year, the authority doubled the length of the test routes within one-north from 6km to 12km, after trial participants showed their capabilities in navigating mixed traffic environments.