

ComfortDelGro to trial self-driving shuttle bus on NUS campus from March next year

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A SELF-driving shuttle bus will be making its way around the National University Singapore (NUS) campus from March next year.

Transport operator ComfortDelGro announced on Monday (Nov 12) that it will be operating a year-long trial of the EZ10 autonomous shuttle, together with French start-up EasyMile, which will provide the vehicle, and automotive distributor Inchcape, which is funding the trial.

EasyMile is currently running a similar trial of its shuttle along a 1.2km route in Forus, Norway, while ComfortDelGro is participating in data collection and operations modelling for two autonomous vehicle trials here - on Sentosa and Jurong Island - through its subsidiary SBS Transit.

The shuttle, which can carry 15 passengers, will ply a 1.6 kilometre route between Heng Mui Keng Terrace and Business Link in NUS.

ComfortDelGro noted the trial would be conducted in "real mixed traffic conditions" with other vehicles, and that a safety engineer would be on board the shuttle to ensure safe operation of the vehicle.

It will not be ferrying passengers initially, focusing instead on collecting data for its mapping and navigation systems.

It will begin to take passengers only "once the trial management team is satisfied that the shuttle is ready for commuter trials", said ComfortDelGro, adding it is considering a commercial service if the trial is successful.

"We believe the experiences gained from these trials will help us gain greater insight into how to become an AV fleet operator in the years to come," said ComfortDelGro group chief executive Yang Ban Seng.

Inchcape Singapore's managing director Jasmmine Wong said the trial could be a "pivotal project" for the auto distributor in its efforts to innovate.

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