



French start-up EasyMile's EZ10 autonomous shuttle will ply a 1.6km route on the National University of Singapore campus from next March as part of a year-long trial with ComfortDelGro and automotive distributor Inchcape. PHOTO: EASYMILE

Driverless shuttle on trial at NUS from next March

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From March next year, a self-driving shuttle bus will be making its way around the campus of the National University Singapore (NUS).

Transport operator ComfortDelGro announced yesterday that it will carry out 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 project.

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 opera-

tions modelling for two autonomous vehicle (AV) trials here – on Sentosa and Jurong Island – through its subsidiary SBS Transit.

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

The trial would be conducted in “real mixed traffic conditions” with other vehicles, ComfortDelGro said, with a safety engineer on board the shuttle to ensure safety. It will not ferry passengers initially, but focus 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 that 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.

Autonomous vehicles are also being tested on the roads in the one-north business district – identified in 2015 as a test site for such vehicles – as well as on the Nanyang Technological University campus.

In June, ST Engineering began a trial of driverless shuttles on Sentosa, as part of a collaboration with the Transport Ministry and the Sentosa Development Corporation.

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