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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW IN DRIVER'S SEAT FOR AN AUTOMATED FUTURE

The NSW Government will launch its biggest trial yet of automated vehicles today, testing cars with the latest technology on one of our state's major motorway networks.

Motorway operator Transurban and some of the world's leading carmakers will join forces on an innovative research project to ensure the state's roads function with new life-saving vehicle automation technologies and lay the foundation for driverless vehicles of the future.

Carmakers BMW, Lexus, Hyundai, Mercedes, Audi, Tesla and Volvo have signed up to participate in the project, which will test how the most technically advanced vehicles work with our current motorway infrastructure.

"This groundbreaking project will position NSW as a leader in automated vehicle technology and build trust and reliability for the driverless vehicles of the future," Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Andrew Constance said.

"This research will show us where we may need to make changes in how we maintain and improve our current road infrastructure, as well as how we design, build and manage smart infrastructure in the future.

"This is another example of us being at the forefront of innovation and change – we're not waiting for this technology to come to us, we are partnering with the key players to get ahead."

Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight Melinda Pavey said that as more cars come onto the market with automated technology, it is important NSW roads are ready.

"Automated technologies like Lane Keep Assist, Adaptive Cruise Control and Traffic Sign Recognition are becoming more common and are no longer just the domain of luxury brands," Mrs Pavey said.

The on-road trials begin from today and run until October on the Sydney orbital network including the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Hills M2 Motorway, Westlink M7, the M5, Eastern Distributor, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Sydney Harbour tunnel.

The cars will operate under different conditions and at different times of the day and the data they collect will be published by the end of the year.

This project is one of several connected and automated vehicle trials happening in NSW, which also includes: the NSW Smart Shuttle at Sydney Olympic Park, Cooperative Intelligent Transport Initiative project in the Illawarra and the current expression of interest for automated vehicle trials in regional NSW.

Mrs Pavey said advances in driving technology and the innovation of road infrastructure will benefit the public with sustainable and efficient networks, accessible services and, importantly, safety.

“Last year we lost 392 people on our roads, 12 more than in 2016,” Mrs Pavey said.

“We know that a majority of crashes occur due to human error, technology is giving us the opportunity to see real safety benefits on our roads.”

“Automated driving technologies not only have the potential to save lives, but will help us manage congestion and create sustainability and improve efficiencies on our networks.

Transurban Group General Manager NSW Business Operations, Kristine Cooney, said the company is proud to be involved in this partnership with Transport for NSW and Roads and Maritime Services.

“This trial brings together seven major car manufactures to create tangible, shared findings to road infrastructure across the state for the future of connected and automated vehicles,” Ms Cooney said.

“We are pleased to be able to capture data from the trials digitally, via an Australian-first, purpose built app. We have created this app specifically to track, record and measure the interaction between these vehicles and the existing road infrastructure”.

Transurban video footage can be accessed at: <https://app.frame.io/f/839f1c91-ae6e-4cc5-a408-988a851d9b19>

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