

Autonomous Vehicle Testing in Michigan



Conversation Starter



- The Michigan Department of Transportation inquired as to “what type of plate would a company use to test these types of vehicles?”
- Secretary of State response was Manufacturer plates (“M” plates)
- This initiated the process of changing the law to extend “M” plate access beyond the traditional “manufacturers” and their subcomponent manufacturers

Conversation Starter , cont.



- Michigan had manufacturers testing on “M” plates already
- Through conversations with manufacturers and Tier 1 suppliers we found out smaller suppliers were running on “M” plates under partnerships with a manufacturer or Tier 1 supplier
- Other companies were using Municipal plates (“X” plates) through agreements with universities (University of Michigan in particular is conducting extensive technology research).

Who Are the Autonomous Players Here?



- Existing Motor Vehicle manufacturers in Michigan - GM, Ford, Chrysler (now Fiat)
- Existing Tier 1 suppliers “subcomponent manufacturers” – e.g., Visteon and Delphi
- Universities – University of Michigan
- Global automobile manufacturer suppliers – Bosch, Continental and others
- Not testing here to our knowledge – Google

Legislative Challenges



- Keeping focused on testing, not future public use
 - Safety issues
 - Insurance requirements
 - Creating a testing environment that meshed with our existing testing environment for other automotive world products
 - Make it as invisible to the public as possible
- Existing State interests versus the new players
- General political environment in Michigan

Statute Sites



- **Public Act 231 of 2013 (SB 169):**
 - 257.2b – New definitions
 - “Automated motor vehicle”
 - “Automated technology”
 - “Automatic Mode”
 - “Manufacturer of Automated Technology”
 - “Upfitter”
 - 257.35a – alteration of the definition of “operate” or “operating” to address the dual nature of this process.

Statute Sites *(continued)*



- 257.36 – alteration of definition of “operator” to address the new “automated motor vehicle” definition.
- 257.244 – Manufacturer plate (“M” plates) use section was altered to allow “manufacturers of automated technology” access to registration use for testing of this technology. SOS needs to “recognize” a particular company in order to authorize use.
- 257.602b – alteration of texting/hand-held phone use ban law to accommodate the “operator” definition change

Statute Sites *(continued)*



- All new sections dealing with Autonomous Testing:
- 257.663 – prohibition on automated operation outside of the specific allowances delineated in Sec. 257.665.
- 257.665 – requirements for operation for testing of the vehicles and its technology:
 - Proof of insurance in compliance with the normal Michigan insurance – “No Fault” policy

Statute Sites *(continued)*



- 257.665 – requirements for operation for testing of the vehicles and its technology: *(continued)*
 - Operated by an employee, contractor, designee of the manufacturer of the technology;
 - Person physically present in the vehicle to ensure the technology is operating properly and, in case of a failure, take over the operation of the vehicle;
 - Operator who turns on the “automated” technology and the person present in the vehicle (if different) are both properly licensed to operate a vehicle in the state (not suspended, revoked or denied under state law);

Statute sites, cont.



- 257.665 – requirements for operation for testing of the vehicles and its technology: *(continued)*
 - Report to the Legislature no later than Feb 1, 2016, if there are any other requirements needed in state law for “continued safe testing of automated motor vehicles and automated technology”
- 257.666 – penalty for violating this division (Sec. 663 and 665) is a civil infraction to an operator of the vehicle

Statute sites, cont.



- 257.817 – Manufacturer immunity: “A manufacturer of automated technology is immune from civil liability for damages that arise out of any modification made by another person to a motor vehicle or an automated motor vehicle, or to any automated technology, as provided in section 2949b of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.2949b.”
- Companion bill for the Civil Liability issue – SB 663 – Public Act 251 of 2013 – effective Dec. 27, 2013.

Implementation and “Obstacles”



- PA 231 of 2013 will become effective March 27, 2014.
- Changing the application form for these plates - “M” plates are centrally issued, as are most unique/specialty plates in Michigan.
- Identification of the “new guys”
 - As SOS is not the Autonomous technology expert in Michigan, we are relying on our partnership with MDOT to assist in identifying new players in the field.

Implementation and “Obstacles” *(continued)*



- Identification of the “new guys”, cont.
 - Universities are bringing new businesses to light
 - New software developers/upfitters/equipment manufacturers
- Safety concerns balanced with new technology use
- Keeping the focus on what is happening in the marketplace versus “the future is going to be...”

Next Steps



- SOS has a long history of working with the manufacturing community to address issues as they arise
 - Keep working with the different interest groups as this technology is further developed.
 - NTHSA recommendations will be reviewed and discussed with our partners for future statute fine-tuning.
- SOS is responsible for the driver education regulation and will be opening dialogue with our education partners for some of the recommendations from NTHSA

Further Contact Inquiries



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Links to the bills:

SB 169:

[http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(fp2nsqfdjxa43w2cykfymfuy\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectname=2013-SB-0169](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(fp2nsqfdjxa43w2cykfymfuy))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectname=2013-SB-0169)

SB 663:

[http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(fp2nsqfdjxa43w2cykfymfuy\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2013-SB-0663](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(fp2nsqfdjxa43w2cykfymfuy))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=2013-SB-0663)