



AUVSI Comments in Support of NMDOT 18.24.1 NMAC

The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) is pleased to submit comments in support of the New Mexico Department of Transportation's (NMDOT) proposed new rule governing the testing and operation of autonomous vehicles within the state.

AUVSI represents companies and individuals working in the unmanned systems sector, including autonomous trucking and personal delivery device companies. Advances in automated goods movement technologies represent tangible benefits that will be enjoyed by all Americans and this proposed autonomous vehicle rule will play a significant part in delivering those benefits to New Mexicans.

Autonomous vehicle technologies will increase road safety¹, lessen greenhouse gas emissions, and improve our nation's supply chain resiliency². Numerous studies and reports have established these facts, and by propagating this new rule the NMDOT is to be congratulated for ensuring the state does not miss out on those incredible benefits.

¹ <https://www.nhtsa.gov/technology-innovation/automated-vehicles-safety#:~:text=Automated%20vehicles%20and%20driver%20assisting,prevent%20injuries%2C%20and%20save%20lives.&text=Fully%20automated%20vehicles%20that%20can,resulting%20crashes%2C%20and%20their%20toll.>

² <https://www.axios.com/how-autonomous-trucks-could-fix-our-broken-supply-chains-41162ade-3b8d-43dd-a6f2-45063cee1f45.html>

Automated trucking in particular will transform the trucking industry into a stronger and more profitable enterprise, and with this proposed rule New Mexico will be able to fully take part in this evolution. The massive truck driver shortage³ will be alleviated, current and future truck drivers will benefit from safer roadways, and driver quality of life is likely to increase⁴.

Of note in this rulemaking is the proposed Law Enforcement Interaction Plan (LEIP), and AUVSI is proud to support such a strong validation of the importance of the state's law enforcement officials. Interacting with autonomous vehicle technology is a newer practice, and the detailed LEIP creates an environment in which companies and law enforcement officers alike will feel safe and secure in regulating the operation of these vehicles on the roads.

Finally, with this proposed rule New Mexico will cement its status as a leader in the adoption of innovative transportation technologies and serve as an example to other states. Autonomous vehicles are a significant value-add to all Americans and with this rulemaking New Mexico is illustrating how government and industry can work together in delivering a better standard of living.

³ https://www.trucking.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/ATA%20Driver%20Shortage%20Report%202021%20Executive%20Summary.FINAL_.pdf

⁴ <https://locomation.ai/why-locomations-autonomous-trucks-are-good-for-truck-drivers/>