Driverless buses, shuttles to be tested in 3 towns from 2022

The Centre of Excellence for Testing and Research of Automated Vehicles (CETRAN), which was jointly set up by LTA, NTU and JTC in August 2016. (PHOTO: JTC)

More

From 2022, autonomous buses and shuttles will be tested in three new Singapore towns as part of the government’s Smart Nation drive.

The trio of towns in Punggol, Tengah and the Jurong Innovation District will see the Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) initially deployed on less crowded roads during off-peak periods. These towns will be planned with AV-friendly features.
In addition to intra-town bus services, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) is also exploring the use of driverless buses for express transit links to connect various MRT lines.

Transport Minister Khaw Boon made the announcement at the official launch of the Centre for Excellence for Testing and Research of AVs (CETRAN) on Wednesday (22 November) morning. Khaw noted that Singapore is one of the first countries to be trialling AV buses and vehicles.

“AV technology will transform urban mobility, how we move about in the city. It is especially promising for Singapore because it can help alleviate the tight land and manpower limits that currently constrain our land transport system,” said the 64-year-old, adding that there are now at least 10 companies in Singapore doing AV trials.

The minister noted that some industry players believe Level 5 automation – meaning an AV that can drive itself through speedy highways and busy city streets without human intervention – will be achieved in 10 years.

CETRAN was set up by LTA, Jurong Town Corporation and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in August 2016 to develop testing requirements and standards for AVs.

The centre, which has advanced test equipment such as pedestrian simulators and a rain simulator, will provide a “safe, controlled and configurable testing environment for developers to trial their technologies using a range of simulated on-road scenarios,” said Khaw.