

Gov't To Examine Technology For Automated Cars

Joan Lowy, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An Obama administration official says the government will launch a new research initiative to determine the safety and reliability of technologies that enable cars to drive themselves.

David Strickland, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, told an automotive gathering that automated vehicles are the next "evolutionary step" in safety technology. He said his agency has held extensive discussions with automakers and Google about what needs to happen before automated cars can be safely introduced to consumers.

Google is developing a fleet of automated vehicles. Most auto manufacturers are moving in that direction as well. Three states — Nevada, Florida and California — have already authorized testing of automated cars on their roads.

Strickland declined to say when the government might propose standards for autonomous cars.

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