

Old Laws, New Tricks:

Autonomous Vehicles and Drunk Driving



Katherine Hanna, J.D. Candidate 2015, Arizona State University

Question

How do current DUI laws apply to Level 3 autonomous vehicles?

Levels of Automation

- 0-1: No adaptive technology

 Driver in control at all times
- 2: Adaptive Cruise Control -Only functions in certain situations.
- 3: Semi-Autonomous Functions autonomously in over 90% of situations.
- 4: Fully Autonomous Driver never has to take control.

Dilemma Different states have different DUI standards.

California	Nevada
"Driving" under the influence.	"Driving" <i>or</i> "actual physical control."
 Requires driver to control the movement of the vehicle. Police must witness the action. Based on action, not potential for action 	 Does not require vehicle to be in motion. Police do not have to witness the action. Potential for action is grounds for arrest.

Answer

Depends on the state! The California operator probably would not get a DUI while the Nevada operator probably would. Clear rules for autonomous vehicles that balance safety and fairness must be created before they go to market.

References

- http://www.nhtsa.gov/About+ NHTSA/Press+Releases/U.S .+Department+of+Transporta tion+Releases+Policy+on+Au tomated+Vehicle+Developme nt
- CA VC § 23152
- NV NRS § 484.013



Arizona State University