



Radar technology

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MILITARY RADAR MAKES SELF-DRIVING CARS SAFER

 MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

Military radar technology provides self-driving vehicles a clearer image in adverse weather conditions.

The growth of autonomous transport has certainly taken off in the last few years, with innovations such as this [electric ferry](#) demonstrating the incorporation of new technology into the field. Smart technology has also been used to create [luxury cars](#). Now technology originating from the military could be instrumental in making self-driving vehicles safer and more reliable.

[Wavesense](#) is using inspiration and research from MIT-developed military radar technology to improve autonomous vehicles' capabilities in bad weather. Driving in heavy rain or snow can be difficult even for humans, who rely on guesswork and quick judgements to manoeuvre vehicles in adverse conditions. Technology, however smart, naturally does not have such abilities. Regular smart vehicles normally rely on GPS, lidar, and image processing. Changes to the environment such as a layer of snow obstructing the road can disrupt all three of these methods. This can prove dangerous to passengers.

Wavesense's technology uses radar to sweep the road a few feet ahead and below the vehicle. This gives a far more accurate image of what is ahead and allows the vehicle to stay on the road and within safe conditions. Relying on geological images of the actual ground ahead, rather than potentially unreliable surface images, means that the self-driving vehicle has more accurate information to rely on. This helps keep the car on track in any weather and improves safety for the passengers.

The technology is currently undergoing trials with test vehicles in ten urban areas and on major roads. The hope is to then implement the technology into consumer markets.

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