



ROBO TAXI STARTUP PIPS UBER TO THE POST

 MOBILITY & TRANSPORT

US based innovation, nuTonomy, launches the first fleet of driverless taxis, now trialing in Singapore.

Driverless cars have left science-fiction and arrived on our roads. We recently wrote about a company offering [driverless car insurance](#) and a retrofit kit that turns traditional 18-wheel commercial trucks into smart driverless vehicles. Uber has [announced](#) it's been testing driverless cars in Pittsburgh. Relatively unknown startup, [nuTonomy](#), appears, however, to have beaten Uber to the draw and launched the first fleet of driverless cars offering a service to the public. The nuTonomy trial is taking place in Singapore's 'One-North' district.

The company's aim is to curb congestion, reducing the number of cars on the roads in Singapore by one third. The so-called 'robo-taxi service' is not yet fully driverless, however. Each car will include an engineer who will observe how the technology performs and will take control if needed. CEO and co-founder of nuTonomy, Karl Iagnemma, said "The trial represents an extraordinary opportunity to collect feedback from riders in a real-world setting, and this feedback will give nuTonomy a unique advantage as we work toward deployment of a self-driving vehicle fleet in 2018."

Partners of the innovations include the Singapore Economic Development Board, who formed part of a panel of high-profile backers earlier on this year in May. The company is also working with Jaguar and Land Rover to run trials in Michigan and London, respectively.

nuTonomy plans to launch a fully-autonomous "robo" taxi service by 2018. Given the concerns around hacking and the recent fatal road accident involving a driverless car, will this be sufficient time to reassure customers that driverless cars are a safe and practical option?

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