

Draft Guidance Document for the Task Force on Automated Vehicle Categorisation (TF-AVC)

This document aims to summarise the current state of discussions held at the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Requirements regarding vehicle categorisation for automated vehicles and shall give direction and provide guidance for the activities and expected outcome of the group.

This document is based on the Report of the 191th session of WP.29 (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/1175) and the Framework Document (WP.29-191-31) as well as the Joint statement of the expert groups on regulatory fitness for automated driving systems presented at this session (WP.29-191-29).

I. Guiding principles regarding objectives and scope

1. Vehicle categories classify vehicles according to their typical usage and common characteristics, allowing their inclusion in (or exclusion from) the scope of individual UN Regulations, Global Technical Regulations, and specific requirements within these Regulations.
2. Categories for automated vehicles are also used for administrative considerations such as vehicle registration, traffic rules and their enforcement, taxation, and road traffic safety statistics. The experts of this group shall be considerate to these aspects where possible.
3. Understanding how categories of vehicles can affect national and regional laws, the expert group is open to stakeholders from all affected Contracting Parties — including Regional Economic Integration Organisations — to strongly contribute to this work. Other stakeholders from international organisations and the industry are also welcome.
4. Categories of vehicles are relevant to international and national activities beyond the World Forum. The task force should therefore be open to experts with a strong technical expertise, and all stakeholders with a direct interest in the evolution of vehicle categories.
5. The redefinition or addition of categories should be as simple as possible and limited to what is necessary. Furthermore, new subcategories represent a lower administrative impact than new categories. Finally, maintaining existing categories is less complex than a complete redefinition of all categories.
6. The updated categories should be technologically neutral and tackle all relevant use cases for automated vehicles transporting passengers, goods, a combination of both, or neither. This includes vehicles also equipped with manual controls, those which are not designed to carry human occupants and those which are also designed for off-road operation.

7. The group should therefore:
 - a. Determine how vehicle categorisation should be approached to address automated vehicle specificities and
 - b. in doing so keeping in mind the two categorisation systems set in the consolidated resolution on the construction of vehicles (R.E.3) and consolidated special resolution concerning the common definitions of vehicle categories, masses and dimensions (S.R.1).
 - c. Prepare a proposal for automated vehicle categorisation, which could be used to adapt R.E.3 and S.R.1.
 - d. Consider the addition/amendment of definitions within proposals to accommodate automated vehicles.

II. Organisational matters

1. WP.29 recognised the urgency to consider automated vehicles and their classification by [Mid 2024]. A first meeting is held in January 2024, with a first report to WP.29 by [Mid 2024].
2. Given the complexity that vehicle categories represent and their implications for both the 1958 and the 1998 Agreement, the group is open to all participants of WP.29 and stakeholders involved across disciplines.
3. As a dedicated joint expert group of GRVA and GRSG, the co-chairs of the group will report to both GRVA and GRSG.
4. The working language of the group is English.
5. An agenda and related documents will be circulated to all members of the group in advance of scheduled meetings and will be uploaded on the UNECE wiki platform.
6. Decisions will be reached by consensus. When consensus cannot be reached, the co-chairs of the group shall present the different points of view to GRVA and GRSG, seeking guidance as appropriate.