



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development,
Communications and the Arts



Law enforcement and emergency services interaction protocol

This paper **expands** on previous policy work

April 2024

Overview

The design of an Automated Driving System (ADS) must allow for safe interactions with law enforcement, emergency services (first responders) and other authorised people, and those people will need to know how to interact with the ADS.

Each Automated Driving System Entity (ADSE) will be required to prepare a law enforcement and emergency services interaction protocol (LEESIP, or the protocol) for its ADS. The protocol will provide information and instructions to safely interact with the ADS.

This paper sets out the proposed requirements and seeks feedback.

Key points

A LEESIP will be required for each ADS.

The protocol for each ADS will be prepared by the responsible ADSE. It will provide information and instructions to law enforcement and emergency services to enable them to identify and interact with the ADS safely.

The regulator will consider the LEESIP for an ADS when a corporation is seeking certification as the responsible ADSE.

The ADSE will need to keep the LEESIP updated over the design life of the ADS, and the new regulator may direct an ADSE to update its protocol.

Consultation question

We welcome feedback on all elements of the regulatory framework. In relation to the proposed law enforcement and emergency services interaction protocol, we are especially interested in the following.

4. Are there are other matters that the law enforcement and emergency services interaction protocol should account for?

Why do we need a LEESIP?

When an ADS is operating on the road, it is important that it is able to recognise, and make safe and appropriate responses to, people, things and events, including:

- emergency services workers and vehicles
- law enforcement officers and vehicles
- directions from law enforcement officers
- temporary traffic controls used by law enforcement, emergency services and others.

An ADS will need to be designed in a way that it can safely interact with law enforcement, emergency services and other authorised people. Depending on the capabilities of the ADS and the its level of automation, this interaction could take various forms. For example, the ADS could respond to directions independently, be operated remotely, or issue an alert to a fallback-ready user that they need to take over driving when the ADS identifies an interaction it cannot manage.

In addition, law enforcement and emergency services will need to know how they can interact with ADS-equipped vehicles safely.

What is a LEESIP?

A LEESIP is a document or protocol prepared for an ADS by the entity seeking certification as the responsible ADSE. The protocol is intended to inform and instruct enforcement officers and emergency services personnel how to safely interact with the ADS.

The LEESIP would include information such as:

- how the ADS would recognise enforcement and emergency services on the road or at the roadside
- how enforcement or emergency services personnel would be able to intercept, direct, or disengage an ADS, if necessary (and where personnel are authorised to do so)
- how an enforcement officer can access ADS data (where authorised)
- how first responders can safely interact with an automated vehicle at a crash scene (including how they may safely remove or tow an automated vehicle when it is creating an obstruction to traffic).

The minimum requirements for a LEESIP could be included in a legislative instrument. This would allow updating from time to time in response to changes in enforcement practices and as new information is learned about how ADSs are performing during interactions with law enforcement and emergency services. These minimum requirements would need to be developed in consultation with state and territory law enforcement, emergency services and other relevant agencies to make sure they meet their practical needs.

The new regulator will also be able to develop guidance about LEESIP requirements, in consultation with state and territory enforcement and emergency service agencies, to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Minimum requirements and guidance will help ensure that there is a level of consistency for first responders across different ADSs.

Consultation question

4. Are there are other matters that the law enforcement and emergency services interaction protocol should account for?

The LEESIP life cycle

The ADSE will need to prepare the LEESIP for an ADS in order to achieve certification, and will be required to maintain the protocol for the design life of the ADS.

At the time of certification

An applicant seeking certification as the ADSE for an ADS will be required to provide the LEESIP for its ADS. The regulator will consider the LEESIP and ensure it meets the minimum requirements.

The applicant would need to include information in its safety management system about the measures it has in place to ensure continued compliance with the LEESIP. The regulator will also consider the safety management system when deciding whether to certify a corporation as an ADSE.

For more information about the safety management system, see the [Safety management systems for vehicles with an ADS](#) paper. More information about certification requirements see the [Automated Driving System Entity certification](#) paper.

While the ADS is in-service

Once an ADSE has been certified, the regulator would provide the LEESIP to relevant state and territory law enforcement and emergency services agencies.

Over the design life of the ADS, the ADSE will have an ongoing duty to implement, review and update its LEESIP. Specific times when an ADSE will need to update the protocol include when:

- a modification to the ADS will affect the interaction between the ADS and law enforcement and emergency services
- it is directed to do so by the regulator.

For more information about the duties and obligations on ADSEs, see the [Automated Driving System Entity in-service obligations](#) paper.

LEESIP updates

As ADSs are updated over time, an ADSE may make changes to a LEESIP. ADSEs will need to notify the regulator of any changes and provide a copy of the updated protocol. The regulator will check that the LEESIP continues to meet minimum requirements, and provide the latest version to law enforcement and emergency services agencies.

The regulator may direct an ADSE to amend its LEESIP in a particular way within a specific time frame (which would be at least 28 days). A direction to amend the protocol would be used to account for changes including:

- emerging safety issues that apply across multiple ADSs
- new enforcement practices or international standards.

The regulator would give a written notice to the ADSE stating the reasons for the required changes. An ADSE would have the right to:

- seek a review of the decision to issue the notice
- provide reasons it believes the changes are not necessary
- propose alternative changes that would achieve the same outcome.