



## *News Release*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MOVING PARTS: BENDIX ENCOURAGES DISCUSSION**  
**OF THE AUTOMATED/AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE ECOSYSTEM**

*Complex, Evolving Environment Requires Participation across the Commercial Vehicle Industry*

**ELYRIA, Ohio – Aug. 4, 2017 – “Self-Driving Trucks!”**

It’s an attention-getting image, all right – and a problematic oversimplification.

As the phrase pops up more and more often in commercial vehicle industry and media conversations in North America and around the world, Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems stresses that delivering advanced automated technologies involves more than just technology.

Bendix continues to share its insight and encourage discussion of the automated/autonomous ecosystem – the complex and evolving environment in which advanced commercial vehicle safety systems are being developed, manufactured, and adopted. Taking part in recent events such as the Electric Utility Fleet Managers Conference, *School Transportation News’* STN EXPO, the Automated Vehicles Symposium, and a National Transportation Safety Board roundtable, Bendix emphasized the need for a deeper understanding of key factors across the full range of participants in the commercial vehicle and transportation industries.

“It’s not just a matter of adding new equipment to a truck and flipping a switch,” said Fred Andersky, Bendix director of government and industry affairs, who spoke at several of the events in June and July. “The technology will continue to advance, and there is definitely more automation on the way, but we’re going to be talking about driver assistance – *not* driver replacement – for quite a while yet. The various elements that come into play, from the technology to the customer to the overall industry to regulatory oversight, are all interconnected:

And they'll all need to be clicking together before this ecosystem is ready to handle a fully driverless vehicle."

### **Hype, Safety, and Practicality**

As the North American leader in the development and manufacture of leading-edge active safety and braking system technologies for commercial vehicles, Bendix knows the importance of recognizing what works over "whiz-bang." A technology demonstration is one thing – but effectively commercializing that technology to improve highway safety is something else entirely.

No matter how automated/autonomous systems evolve, safety is paramount: Eagerness to put technology in the marketplace must not override the need for it to work properly, and improve vehicle and highway safety.

"Whether we're talking about collision mitigation or wirelessly linked platooning, we shouldn't expect overnight leaps forward when it comes to advanced driver assistance systems on the roads," Andersky said. "It's evolution, not revolution: We improve sensor technology; we fuse input from cameras and radar together and integrate the data with more computing power; we tackle connectivity and data issues. Each step requires rigorous research, testing, and real-world use and feedback."

### **Technologies and Return on Investment**

Even the most impressive technology needs to deliver its user a measurable return on investment (ROI) in order for the tech to make a widespread difference. And while fuel, labor, and tires continue to be major cost factors to fleets, other significant considerations in today's environment include maintenance and uptime, accident reduction and insurance, and driver satisfaction.

"Platooning will be no different in this regard," said Andy Pilkington, Bendix product manager for Radar and Fusion. "Fleets will look for the ROI on fuel economy, but at the same time, they will not increase risk to their operations. That's one reason Bendix views the progress toward more automated vehicles as a highly structured and incremental process, with each step forward built on proven and established technologies. In the case of platooning, those technologies include anti-lock tractor and trailer brakes, electronic stability control (ESC) – also known as full stability – and advanced collision mitigation technology. Air disc brakes are also likely to be equipped on the first platooning vehicles, given that their braking performance is more predictable than foundation drum brakes."

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As technologies prove their worth, increased usage can also help shift the landscape. Well before this year's mandate requiring full stability on the majority of new Class 7 and 8 trucks, most major North American truck manufacturers were already offering it as standard equipment, based on customer demand. Not only has this had the effect of lowering the initial investment cost in the system, it also helps pave the way for further safety advancements, as fleets and drivers enjoy the benefits of the foundational technology.

### **Off-Road Factors**

Other factors come into play off the roadway, such as the regulatory outlook.

For example, although the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) full-stability rule went into effect Aug. 1, the current presidential administration has required the elimination of two federal rules for every new one added. As a result, NHTSA has introduced the possibility of dropping the full-stability mandate – an action Bendix believes would hinder the quest for safer highways across North America – which adds a measure of uncertainty to the automated/autonomous ecosystem.

Regulatory and legislative actions will happen on all levels, as seen in states allowing or restricting testing of automated technology on trucks, or exploring the update of tailgating laws to reflect the possibility of platooning vehicles. The role of government in this ecosystem will be to help make automated/autonomous vehicles develop safely, efficiently, and effectively, while enforcing the rules to ensure a level playing field.

"Bendix aims to facilitate discussion of automated and autonomous commercial vehicle technologies, and we welcome all opportunities to participate in the conversation," Andersky said. "The more perspectives and expertise that are brought to the table from participants across the industry, the safer our highways and vehicles will become for drivers, passengers, and everyone on the road."

Andersky added that no matter the solution, no commercial vehicle safety technology replaces a skilled, alert driver exercising safe driving techniques and proactive, comprehensive driver training. Responsibility for the safe operation of the vehicle remains with the driver at all times.

Bendix provides in-depth insight on the automated/autonomous ecosystem, advanced safety technology development, driver assistance systems, and commercial vehicle safety regulations – as well as a host of other product and service-related content – via podcasts, blogs, videos, and more: Explore the Bendix multimedia center at [knowledge-dock.com](http://knowledge-dock.com). For

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more information about Bendix technologies, call 1-800-AIR-BRAKE or visit [www.safertrucks.com/solutions](http://www.safertrucks.com/solutions).

**About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC**

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of the Knorr-Bremse Group, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 3,200 people, Bendix is driven to deliver solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit [bendix.com](http://bendix.com). Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at [knowledge-dock.com](http://knowledge-dock.com). Follow Bendix on Twitter at [twitter.com/Bendix\\_CVS](https://twitter.com/Bendix_CVS). Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at [brake-school.com](http://brake-school.com). And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit [bendix.com/careers](http://bendix.com/careers).

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