

Volkswagen announces 'Temporary Auto Pilot' with advanced features

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HAVE-IT (Highly Automated Vehicles for Intelligent Transport)

(PhysOrg.com) -- Volkswagen, as part of the European wide research project HAVEit, has announced the Temporary Auto Pilot (TAP), a set of features added to a car that aids in speed control, lane-assist and crash avoidance.

Much like the highly touted driverless vehicles in the news of late, the new [vehicle](#) system from VW works by means of [sensors](#) and cameras mounted on various parts of the exterior of a vehicle. Assistance comes via [cruise control](#), automated braking when curves are noted (or to avoid a collision), steering assist to keep the vehicle in the proper lane, passing assistance and assistance in stop and go traffic. Unlike other vehicles in the news however, the TAP is not meant to serve as a driverless vehicle;

it's more of a guardian angel, watching over a driver and instantly correcting mistakes.

The company is quick to point out that the driver is still in control the entire time the TAP system is in use, and thus must continue to actually drive the vehicle; TAP should be thought of as more like driver extensions, they say, not as an autonomous system that can take over the driving when asked.

Critics have already suggested that the new additions might actually make a car less safe to drive, citing the fact that humans as a rule tend to focus less sharply when they don't have complete control of things. Since its not clear yet just how much control the human will have when the TAP is engaged, these criticisms seem premature. If after all, the person continues to drive the car the entire time the TAP is engaged, and the TAP only makes itself known if and when it performs corrective actions when errors are made by the human driver, it would seem this would require the driver to continue to maintain as much control as has been the case up to now.

In any case, the test vehicle, a modified Passat, marks another giant leapt towards fully automated cars; this because it's clear that [Volkswagen](#) fully intends to put such an equipped vehicle on the market in just the next few years. This stands in stark contrast to other concept cars demonstrated by others such as BMW, and Google, which still have many hurdles to overcome. The difference here is that VW's system is comprised of off-the-shelf components and the fact that the driver continues to maintain control at all times.

In any case, it seems clear that it won't be too long before human beings will no longer be trusted to drive themselves around.

More information: Volkswagen press release: www.haveit-

[eu.org/displayITM1....sp?ITMID=117&LANG=EN](https://phys.org/news/2011-06-volkswagen-temporary-auto-advanced-features.html)

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