

Tesla 'on autopilot' crashes on German Autobahn: police (Update)

September 29 2016



Tesla charging stations for electric cars are pictured in Wittenburg, northeastern Germany

A Tesla electric car crashed into a tourist bus on a motorway in northern Germany, police said Thursday, adding that the driver had claimed he had activated the car's autopilot system.

The driver of the Tesla car was slightly injured, while the 29 people on

board the Danish bus were unhurt in the incident on Wednesday, police in Ratzeburg in Schleswig-Holstein state said.

The 50-year-old driver's car hit the bus as it changed lanes outside the northern town of Gudow.

"We will now have to look into why the autopilot didn't work" to prevent the crash, police said in a statement.

A Tesla spokesperson however said in a statement that "we have spoken to our customer, who confirmed that Autopilot was functioning properly and that his use of Autopilot was unrelated to the accident.

"We're glad that he's safe."

Available for Tesla's Model S electric cars since October 2015, the driverless autopilot system has come under global scrutiny following fatal crashes in northern China in January and in the US state of Florida in May.

The Florida case attracted the attention of a US Senate Committee, which demanded a briefing on the autopilot's role in the accident.

Consumer activists have called on the company, founded by PayPal billionaire Elon Musk, to disable the autopilot feature until it is updated to detect whether the driver's hands are on the steering wheel during operation, as the company says they ought to be.

The driver in Wednesday's crash told police that he had not removed his hands from the wheel while the autopilot was activated, German press agency DPA reported.

Citation: Tesla 'on autopilot' crashes on German Autobahn: police (Update) (2016, September 29) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-09-tesla-autopilot-german-autobahn.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.