

Fiat Chrysler taps Aurora for self-driving commercial vehicles

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Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) said it will develop autonomous technology for its commercial vehicles in partnership with tech startup Aurora

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles said Monday it would develop self-driving systems for its commercial vehicles in partnership with Aurora

Innovation, a tech startup led by a former Google car executive.

Under the partnership, Aurora will supply a self-driving platform that comprises the hardware, software, and data services that aim for "level 4" autonomy which can navigate without human intervention.

"As part of FCA's autonomous vehicle strategy, we will continue to work with strategic partners to address the needs of customers in a rapidly changing industry," said Mike Manley, FCA's chief executive.

"Aurora brings a unique skillset combined with advanced and purposeful technology that complements and enhances our approach to self-driving."

The deal is the latest for Aurora, co-founded by former Google car executive Chris Urmson, and which has integrated its technology into sedans, SUVs, minivans and trucks.

"We are thrilled to forge a partnership with FCA US to develop a meaningful business model for delivering the benefits of self-driving commercial vehicles," said Sterling Anderson, Aurora co-founder and chief product officer.

Aurora earlier this year secured \$530 million in new funding that included a "significant" investment from Amazon.

The funding round led by Silicon Valley venture capital powerhouse Sequoia reportedly valued the startup launched just two years ago at more than \$2.5 billion.

Aurora is developing the technology for autonomous vehicles, but leaving the making of cars to other companies, working alongside, rather than competing with automakers.

Volkswagen said last year it would work with Aurora to create self-driving cars, hoping to deploy fleets of autonomous taxis to city streets by 2021.

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