

Tesla chief defends self-driving cars after new crash

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Tesla CEO Elon Musk lamented reports focusing on the dangers of autonomous driving technology instead of the safety benefits

Tesla chief Elon Musk defended self-driving car technology on Tuesday after reports about the latest crash involving one of the electric

carmaker's vehicles.

Musk lamented on Twitter about what he portrayed as an unfair focus on mishaps rather than benefits of [autonomous vehicles](#) with the potential to make roads safer.

"It's super messed up that a Tesla [crash](#) resulting in a broken ankle is front page news and the (approximately) 40,000 people who died in US auto accidents alone in past year get almost no coverage," Musk said in a tweet.

"What's actually amazing about this accident is that a Model S hit a fire truck at 60mph and the driver only broke an ankle."

Whether an Autopilot feature was engaged when a Model S collided with the rear of a stopped fire truck in the US state of Utah on May 11 remained to be confirmed.

According to local media, police said the woman at the wheel of the car claimed it was in a self-driving mode and that her attention was on her phone.

Musk complained in a recent earnings call that accidents involving self-driving cars get sensational headlines while the potential for the technology to save lives is downplayed or ignored.

Among [accidents](#) to make headlines was a fiery March 23 crash in California that involved its "Autopilot" feature.

The US National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the accident, which led to the death of a 38-year-old father of two, Walter Huang.

Tesla has released several statements on the accident, including a March 30 blog post that expressed sorrow for the family but defended its technology and pointed responsibility for the crash on the driver.

Huang's hands were "not detected on the wheel for six seconds prior to the collision," Tesla said in the blog.

While its cars have Autopilot capabilities, people in the driver seats are called on to be paying attention and ready to take control of steering wheels.

The NTSB is also investigating a Tesla Model S crash that left two people dead and another injured in Florida.

The 2014 Tesla was reportedly traveling at high speed when it hit a wall then caught fire last week, the NTSB said in a release.

Autopilot self-driving capabilities of the Tesla were not expected to be involved, the NTSB said. The NTSB had yet to announce whether they will be looking into the Utah crash.

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