Manitoba legislation paves way for testing automated vehicle technologies

May 28, 2021

On May 20, 2021, Manitoba's new legislation allowing testing of automated driving systems came into force. Bill 20, *The Vehicle Technology Testing Act*, amends *The Highway Traffic Act*, *The Insurance Act* and *The Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) Corporation Act* to allow for the testing of vehicles with automated driving systems or other new technology on Manitoba roads.

What this means

Under *The Highway Traffic Act*, the minister may issue a technology testing permit to allow a test vehicle to be driven on Manitoba's provincial roads for the purpose of either testing a type of vehicle or vehicle technology, or evaluating the safety or performance of a type of vehicle or vehicle technology. In addition, a vehicle or new vehicle technology with a technology testing permit, can be exempted from certain highway traffic law requirements found in *The Drivers and Vehicles Act*, *The Off-Road Vehicles Act* or their respective regulations.

The legislation leaves the door open for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make various regulations respecting the permits, including terms and conditions of the permits, insurance requirements to drive a test vehicle, driver training, collision reporting and limitations on when, where and how test vehicles can be driven.

Under The Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) Corporation Act and The Insurance Act, vehicles with a technology testing permit may be exempted from being insured through MPI, although MPI may recover from the permit holder, the costs of property damage and personal injury benefits paid out as a result of an at-fault accident caused by the vehicle.

Final thoughts

Under *The Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) Corporation Act* and *The Insurance Act*, vehicles with a technology testing permit may be exempted from being insured through MPI, although MPI may recover from the permit holder, the costs of property damage

and personal injury benefits paid out as a result of an at-fault accident caused by the vehicle.

It is not clear how Manitoba plans to administer testing permits and the specific insurance requirements in respect of a vehicle or vehicle technology tested under the auspices of this framework. Overall, with the adoption of this regulatory framework, Manitoba joins other Canadian provinces that have introduced automated vehicle testing regulations.

By

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