

FBI Says Autonomous Vehicles Could Be Lethal Weapons

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With a trend toward more automation in vehicles, the FBI recently warned that fully autonomous vehicles are at risk to be hacked and used as “lethal weapons.”

A report by the FBI’s Strategic Issues Group, found by [The Guardian](#), said that autonomous vehicles “will have a high impact on transforming what both law enforcement and its adversaries can operationally do with a car.”

It’s up to anyone’s imagination what sort of new dangers self-driving cars could present.

[The Guardian noted](#) that passengers in a self-driving car could shoot from the window while making a getaway, although that is already possible with regular vehicles. Other potential dangers include terrorists using the vehicles as explosives transporters, or someone hacking a self-driving vehicle and using it to damage property or attack pedestrians.

In its report, the FBI also noted that automated procedures could make getaways easier for criminals, as traditional sticking points like three-point turns could be performed quickly and without error by a robot in situations where a human might fail.

The bureau also guessed, though, that “surveillance will be made more effective and easier, with less of a chance that a patrol car will lose sight of a target vehicle. [...] In

addition, algorithms can control the distance that the patrol car is behind the target to avoid detection or intentionally have a patrol car make opposite turns at intersections, yet successfully meet up at later points with the target.”

One conclusion of the report was a prediction that self-driving vehicles would be approved by Congress, and use by the public would be within five to seven years.

<http://www.govtech.com/transportation/FBI-Says-Autonomous-Vehicles-Could-Be-Lethal-Weapons.html>