Cybersecurity Breaches and Private Law – Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

Title: *CyberSecurity, Privacy & Ethics in Autonomous Cars*

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Abstract:

By 2020 autonomous vehicles will generate about 4,000 gigabytes of data a day (Forbes). The automated vehicles industry is expected to create a global market worth £900bn by 2025 (Catapult.org.uk). The data generated may include highly personal and sensitive information, such as geolocation, contents of communications via mobile phones, passengers' speech and actions via sensors and microphones and more. The digital interfaces may expose the vehicle to cyber attacks that may have safety implications, and also risks to data privacy. The stakeholders will grow in numbers and originate from various countries. The complexity of the algorithms managing the vehicle will grow and possibly enter the realm of artificial intelligence.

The questions arising from this touch upon many subjects: product liability, personal liability, insurance products, cybersecurity, privacy protection, forms and locations of litigation, moral questions and perhaps more that have yet to be imagined.

The possible benefits to human society are vast and varied. A decrease in accidents and injuries due to human error, which constitute 90% of collisions; improved traffic flow, energy saving and reduction in air pollution; enhanced mobility for people with disabilities, aging populations, people who cannot afford a car or do not wish to drive.

This major change – eliminating the human driver – is not expected to occur overnight. We will probably experience a process in which car systems will gradually become autonomous, while the human driver is still responsible for some procedures, until we reach a fully autonomous vehicle.

Are there currently legal barriers that may inhibit this evolution? Do legal frameworks need to evolve in preparation for this future? Which ones and in what way? In what areas do governments need to create new policies and legal infrastructure to facilitate this new era of transportation?

My talk will start from data protection concerns and will cover recent policy papers published by government and industry.