

30 October 2019

## RACQ drives next generation vehicle testing

Driverless cars and traffic lights that talk to vehicles will be trialled right here in Queensland, with RACQ unveiling plans to make Brisbane home to the premier vehicle research, testing and training facility in the southern hemisphere.

The RACQ Mobility Centre of Excellence (MCE) at Mount Cotton, will officially open today with the site set to welcome vehicle manufacturers who would conduct Queensland-based testing of connected and autonomous technology under real conditions.

RACQ Head of Public Policy Rebecca Michael said the Club's purchase of the facility from the Queensland Government, and investment of a further \$15 million for its development, was emblematic of RACQ's 115-year commitment to mobility and road safety.

"Our focus has always been and continues to be to save lives on roads," Dr Michael said.

"Keeping pace with the rate of disruption in the transport sector is an enormous challenge. The MCE will allow industry, universities and research organisations to explore together how evolving technology can be safely introduced on Australian roads.

"We'll be able to replicate real-world environments like city intersections, highways and rural towns, allowing connected and autonomous technology to be tested in local conditions.

"At RACQ we've always provided well-researched and credible advice to motorists on driving and buying the right vehicle for them. Queenslanders rely on us for that advice and this leading facility will enable us, and global vehicle manufacturers and researchers, to test everything from autonomous vehicle technology, to intelligent transport systems."

Transport and Main Roads Minister Mark Bailey said it was an exciting step for Queenslanders who would now have world class facilities right at their doorstep.

"Major changes are on the horizon in terms of how we travel and how we plan and build roads and other transport infrastructure that connect our communities," Mr Bailey said.

"Our government rolled out Australia's first state-wide network of electric vehicle charging stations and earlier this year started trialling autonomous vehicles on Queensland roads.

"Some of those tests have been performed at the Mount Cotton facility.

"It's the perfect location to test and assess advanced vehicle technologies away from public roads."

RACQ is Queensland's largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State's first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of the 1.7 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, banking, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.

Dr Michael said the MCE would also host driver safety programs for the wider community.

“While planning for future mobility, we also need to tackle our current safety issues – we’re losing hundreds of Queensland lives on our roads each year and that has to change. At the MCE, we’ll offer leading driver instruction and training to help educate a wide range of users and high-risk groups,” she said.

“We’ll host school students from across the south east for our award-winning Docudrama and Streets Ahead programs.

“It’s difficult to predict how we’ll use transport in the future, but we’ll lead its evolution.”

**Media inquiries: RACQ Head of Public Policy Rebecca Michael 0418 201 179; Manager Corporate Affairs Lucinda Ross 0447 196 258.**

RACQ is Queensland’s largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State’s first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of the 1.7 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, banking, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.