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NHTSA Investigates Tesla Again...

In a letter made public this week, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is seeking answers from Tesla on the company's "Autopilot" system. The letter sent on July 26th states, *"Recently, NHTSA became aware that Tesla has introduced an Autopilot configuration that, when enabled, allows drivers using Autopilot to operate their vehicles for extended periods without Autopilot prompting the driver to apply torque to the steering wheel."*

As the letter notes, the ramifications of this feature are worrisome. *"Relaxation of controls designed to ensure that the driver remains engaged in the dynamic driving task could lead to greater driver inattention and failure of the driver to properly supervise Autopilot."*

It is unclear whether Tesla responded by the August 25th deadline noted in the correspondence. However, this action by NHTSA comes on the heels of several other investigations of Tesla. Most important for motorcyclists is the investigation, started nearly a year ago, concerning the deaths of three bikers in crashes involving Teslas believed to be in autopilot mode.

Stories like this one are why the Motorcycle Riders Foundation continues to press federal officials for safety standards on self-driving cars and how they interact with motorcyclists. As the summer riding season comes to a close, don't forget the words of former NHTSA senior safety adviser, Missy Cummings, *"It's very dangerous for motorcycles to be around Teslas."*