ALLIANCE FOR AUTOMOTIVE INNOVATION

AUTOMATED VEHICLES & THE WORKFORCE

AVs are bringing new jobs.
AVs are already bringing new jobs to the U.S. economy. AV companies are hiring maintenance and repair technicians, fleet operators, logistics support specialists, facilities managers, customer service representatives, safety drivers, software developers, data scientists, security experts, engineers, and many others. In fact, a recent report estimated that the AV industry was responsible for nearly 15,000 jobs in the Pittsburgh region alone. These good-paying jobs – including low- and middle-skill jobs – will continue to emerge as the AV industry grows and expands.

AVs can increase access to jobs.
Once reaching scale, AVs have a unique opportunity to increase access to jobs to those who are currently unemployed or underemployed because of lack of access to transportation. This includes individuals with disabilities who cannot currently drive and people who live in communities without extensive or reliable public transit options. For example, a white paper concluded that widespread AV deployment could open up as many as 2 million job opportunities for Americans with disabilities.

AVs may bolster existing manufacturing jobs.
The U.S. auto industry currently employs more than 10 million people, including those who build vehicle and vehicle components at manufacturing plants throughout the country. These U.S.-based manufacturing facilities are well-positioned to lead in the manufacturing of AVs and benefit from the growth and employment opportunities that this manufacturing may bring. A report noted that automakers are posed to improve existing manufacturing facilities to produce AVs, keeping these critical U.S. automotive production clusters in place.

AVs can assist in alleviating labor shortages.
Over time, AVs can help mitigate labor shortages that contribute to supply chain backlogs and hamper the transport of people and goods. The American Trucking Associations estimates that there is currently a shortage of over 80,000 truck drivers and that the shortage is worsening. Professional driver shortages are also increasingly prevalent in transit, rideshare, and taxi services.

AVs may help improve productivity.
AV technology may enable operators of commercial and transit vehicles to prioritize other strategic non-driving aspects of the job. This could include performing safety checks, planning routes, coordinating delivery logistics, or carrying out customer service functions.

The AV transition will be incremental.
The transition to an AV future will be incremental. For the foreseeable future, there will likely be a significant and important role for humans in commercial AV fleet operations. This lead time allows us to plan and prepare the workforce for the future.

Automation is not unique to AVs.
For hundreds of years, automated technologies have been introduced into the economy. As higher levels of automation are integrated into the transportation sector, we can learn from and leverage these past experiences to better understand the potential impacts and successfully prepare the workforce.

We can prepare the workforce.
Government, industry, and other stakeholders should prioritize K-12 educational curriculums and higher education programs, including those at community colleges, that are focused on teaching the skills that are necessary for future job opportunities. Education and training programs should prepare workers for job opportunities in the emerging AV industry at all skill levels. Resources – including access to meaningful and targeted training programs – should also be provided to help people whose jobs may be impacted in the future take advantage of existing and near-term job opportunities, including those in the AV sector and in the skilled trades that will support an AV future.