Tesla's 'Full Self-Driving' beta has an 'assertive' driving mode that 'may perform rolling stops'

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January 10 -- ***Tesla***'s ***Full Self-Driving*** (FSD) beta lets you choose from three driving "profiles" that dictate how the car will react to certain situations on the road. Each mode, "Chill," "Average," and "***Assertive***," varies in terms of aggressiveness (and potentially safety).

The feature was included in the October 2021 version 10.3 update, which was pulled two days after it started rolling out due to an issue with left turns at traffic lights. ***Tesla*** issued version 10.3.1 one day later, which still includes FSD profiles, as shown on the release notes posted on Not a ***Tesla*** App. Based on these notes, FSD profiles are described as a way "to control behaviors like rolling stops, speed-based lane changes, following distance and yellow light headway."

A separate image posted to Twitter gives us a more detailed glimpse at what this actually means. In the description beneath the "***Assertive***" option, ***Tesla*** notes the vehicle will "have a smaller follow distance" and "perform more frequent speed lane changes." The vehicle will also "not exit passing lanes" and "may perform rolling stops," and it's not entirely clear whether this means cars won't come to a full stop at stop signs.

A YouTube video shows all three modes in action, and towards the end, it shows how ***Tesla*** describes each FSD profile. In "Chill" mode, the vehicle will "have a larger follow distance and perform fewer speed lane changes," while "Average" mode means the car "will have a medium follow distance and may perform rolling stops." That said, it's a bit hard to distinguish the difference between these modes from this video alone, as it doesn't test out the vehicle's behavior in heavy traffic or harsh weather conditions.

It's hard to tell just how much these FSD profiles change the way the vehicle drives, and if they push the limits of safety, especially when traveling in the rain or snow. If the descriptions of these profiles are accurate, this means that a ***Tesla*** in "***Assertive***" mode may follow cars more closely, come to rolling stops, and swap lanes more frequently - behaviors that tend to be more dangerous no matter the car you're in.

It's important to note that ***Tesla***'s FSD feature doesn't make the car completely autonomous - a "feature complete" version would ideally let users drive to and from work without intervention. ***Tesla***'s controversial FSD beta was rolled out to more users last September based on a "Safety Score" system that prioritizes drivers with safer driving habits, something that the National Transportation Safety Board cautioned against. In November, what appears to be the first-ever crash involving ***Tesla***'s FSD mode left a ***Tesla*** severely damaged.

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