



Roadside inspections

And how they are changing
in the digital age

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Overview

Technology is changing how law enforcement officers and inspectors are conducting roadside inspections, making it easier than ever for them to access current trip data, as well as past driver and vehicle information.

Electronic logging devices (ELDs) are already in wide use as the mandated enforcement date of December 18, 2017, is now behind us. Other

digital tools including the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) inclusion of crash history in its DataQs are already in use, while speed limiters and automatic transmission of inspection information are under consideration. More digital tools will be added to the consideration list as technology continues to advance.

Technology is improving the availability of data at the point of inspection.

Digital tools are making it easier for roadside inspectors to access both near real-time and historical data at the point of inspection, including commercial driver's license (CDL), driver medical cards, and past inspection and crash data.

A new inspection level, where the vehicle automatically transmits inspection information while on the road, is in the initial planning stages.



New and upcoming digital tools

Electronic filing of medical cards*

Beginning in June 2018, states began to phase in requirements that medical providers electronically file CDL drivers' medical records with the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Automatic transmission of inspection information

Wireless transmission of vehicle inspection information is in the planning stages. Vehicle and ELD information will be transmitted automatically for electronic inspection, and a report will be generated and sent to the carrier.

Driver and vehicle inspection history

Starting June 1, 2017, the FMCSA began the inclusion of crash information in DataQs. Carriers have been able to view this information and challenge it if the carrier can show compelling evidence the crash was not preventable and if the commercial vehicle:

- Was struck by a motorist considered driving under the influence.
- Was struck by a vehicle driving in the wrong direction.
- Was rear-ended.
- Was struck while legally stopped or parked, even if the truck was unattended.
- Was struck by someone committing or attempting to commit suicide by driving or stepping in front of the vehicle.
- Sustained disabling damage after striking an animal in the road.
- Was damaged as a result of failing infrastructure, including fallen rocks, trees and debris in the road.

ELD enforcement began December 18, 2017.

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) began ELD enforcement on December 18, 2017, and carriers need to ensure they have an approved ELD or automatic onboard recording device (AOBRD).

Some drivers and vehicles are exempt from the ELD mandate. Those that are exempt should have proper documentation with them showing why they are exempt.

ELD exemptions are:

- **Short haul:** Drivers who are currently exempt from maintaining record of duty status (RODS) forms are also exempt from the ELD mandate.
- **8/rolling 30-day rule:** During any 30-day time period, drivers who have eight days or fewer of logs can remain on paper; they do not have to use ELDs.
- **Vehicle model year is 1999 or older:** Exemptions are based on model year, not year of

manufacture; a truck manufactured in 1999 but that is model year 2000 would not be exempt.

- **Engine year is 1999 or older:** In newer trucks, if the powertrain is from 1999 or before, the vehicle is exempt from the ELD mandate.
- **Drive-away/tow-away business vehicles:** When the vehicle is the commodity, such as in tow-away and drive-away operations, it is exempt from the ELD mandate.
- **Hours of service (HOS) exempt carriers:** Those carriers already exempt from hours of service, such as utility service providers, are not impacted by the ELD requirement.

If you are going to take advantage of ELD exemptions, think of what your drivers should have with them to get past the inquiring officer who wants to know exactly what the truck is that's being driven.

Key ELD enforcement dates

December 18, 2017

- ELD enforcement began
- Trucks without approved ELD or AOBRD systems are found in violation
- Violations are documented, and citations issued

April 1, 2018

- OOS (out-of-service) criteria associated with the ELD mandate are implemented

December 17, 2019

- ELDs are required for all nonexempt drivers and trucks
- AOBRDs are no longer supported as part of the ELD mandate.



Hours of service violations are decreasing with ELD adoption.

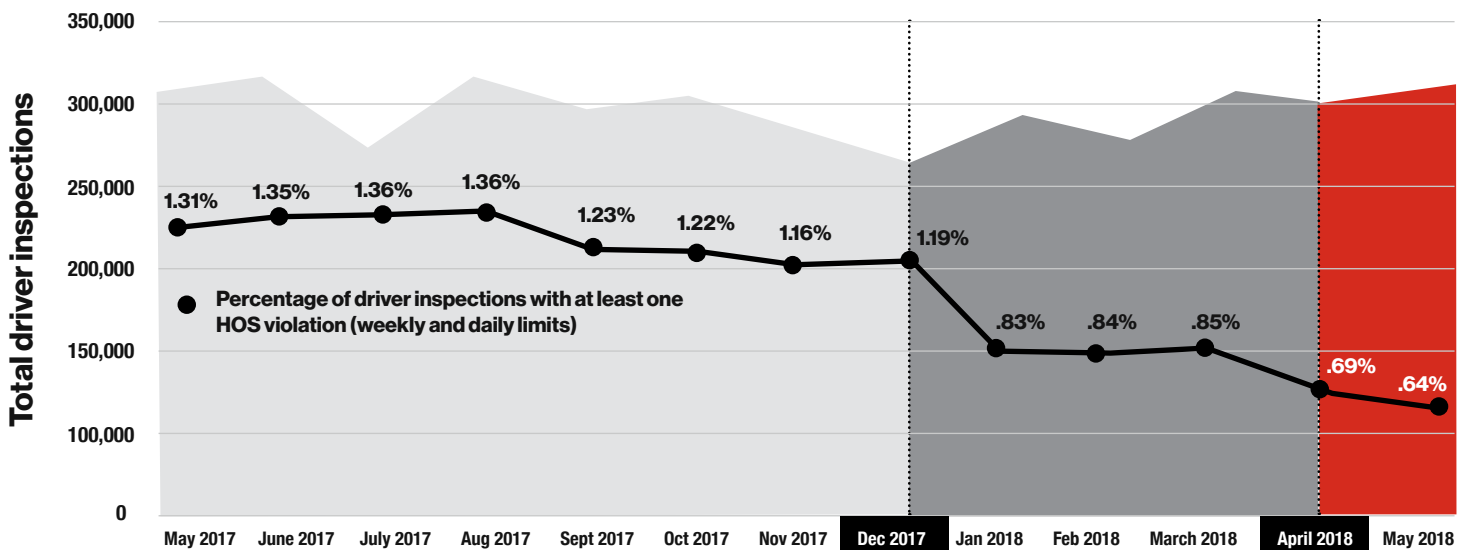
HOS violations have been on a steady decline since 2015, which correlates with when early adopters—especially large fleets—began using ELDs in their vehicles.* ELDs take the human-error factor out of reporting. They automatically and accurately monitor the driver’s duty status, which makes it easier to spot when drivers are nearing violation zones.

The chart below from the FMCSA shows that hours of service citations as a percentage of inspections dropped significantly with the launch of the ELD mandate and continued to decrease with the rollout. Since CVSA Out-of-Service criteria went into effect, less than 1% (4,720) of all driver inspections (559,940) have resulted in the driver being cited for operating without a required ELD or grandfathered AOBDR.**

As the industry continues its transition to ELDs, the year-over-year decrease in HOS violations is expected to continue.



Hours of service compliance improves with ELD rollout



*Source: FMCSA's Analysis and Information **Source: FMCSA's Electronic Logging Devices: Improving Safety Through Technology, 6/2018



Vehicles will be subject to more scrutiny as ELDs simplify gathering driver information.

Since a compliant ELD must be tamper-proof and will virtually eliminate human error, the time needed to audit a record of duty status for compliance will decrease, and the inspection focus will shift to the vehicles themselves.

Fleets should begin considering how to adjust for increased scrutiny of vehicles as HOS violations continue to decrease. For example, emphasize brakes, lights and tires (BLTs) when providing pre- and post-trip inspection training, as approximately 70% of the top vehicle violations leading to OOS violations during the 2016 and 2017 International Roadchecks related to those components.*

ELDs are just the beginning; expect the FMCSA to explore new technologies.

The FMCSA is likely to continue to explore how technology beyond ELDs can increase motor carrier safety and compliance.

Embracing technology can help fleets prepare for potential future changes, but can also provide standards that enable carriers to manage consistent quality across the fleet and push accountability down to the drivers. Carriers should develop a documented, stepped inspection process, customized to unique operations and vehicles, that ensures compliance and actual desired behavior. Driver accountability can be established by measuring deviations and responding to them.

Roadside inspection: Possible future technologies

Vehicle diagnostics:

Seat belt usage, tire air pressure, fluid levels, sensor failures, light failures and other pertinent diagnostic information could be shared with inspectors to ensure the vehicle is functioning within specification.

Speed limiters:

Technology that regulates the speed of vehicles is available today, but regulations around it were put on the back burner under the Trump administration.

Autonomous vehicles:

Within the next decade, some percentage of the industry will be using driverless vehicles, which the FMCSA will need to regulate.



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