

Kelly Frey ■ Contributing Editor

Minimizing risk

Security within the transportation industry continues to be a concern. Fleet management or fleet diagnostics technology can be an important first line of defense for fleet owners in enhancing fleet-wide security and in minimizing risk to company, drivers and vehicles, in addition to loss prevention.

Securing vehicle and cargo

With the cost of trucking equipment rising and valuable cargo traveling the roads, thieves have turned their attention to the transportation industry, targeting trucks, cargo and drivers. A telematics solution, typically used to monitor vehicle and driver behavior, coupled with sensors and engine diagnostic capabilities can be an instrumental tool in the protection of vehicles and cargo. Here are a few ways a telematics solution can heighten vehicle and cargo security for your fleet:

Starter disablement: In the event of a vehicle theft, a simple communication from a key fob attachment carried by a driver can trigger a critical and immediate alarm, alerting headquarters to the theft, and allowing dispatch to use GPS to track the vehicle's movements and alert police. Some telematics solutions also offer dispatch the ability to remotely disable the ignition so the vehicle will not start, or slow the vehicle down automatically through a graduated shut down.

Sensors: Drivers carrying hazardous or high-value cargo can rely on a telematics solution's sensor technology attached to driver and cargo doors, cash drawers and ignition. Sensors are then connected to a prescribed set of procedures, and can be monitored remotely by dispatch to ensure proper protocol is followed at all times. Sensors can also identify out of the norm vehicle behaviors. Sensor technology automatically and discreetly communicates vehicle activity to dispatch, letting them know if a door is open or closed, etc.—revealing potential unusual patterns of behavior for a specific driver. In the case of temperature-controlled food supply chain security, telematics sensors can monitor climate controlled cargo and deliveries to ensure sensitive food cargo remains uncontami-

nated and in accordance with the HACCP standard—a food safety certification measure widely used in Europe today and likely to see adoption in North America.

Dallas Key: Where hazardous material or high value cargo is in question, a Dallas Key may be recommended. This magnetic swipe identifies drivers and authorizes access to the vehicle, and could also be combined with biometric devices and fingerprint analysis.

Geozones: Fleets that haul hazardous materials and are prohibited from traveling through metropolitan areas, tunnels or near key gov-

ernment areas may use Geozones. These are established and controlled by fleet telematics solutions to erect a perimeter around various locations, and monitor vehicle behaviors surrounding these areas. Geozones can also be useful for transportation in high risk areas, allowing dispatch to be immediately alerted when a vehicle enters the Geozone and upon its safe exit from the risk area.

To leverage Geozones, make sure they are stored in the telematics black box installed on the vehicle, which ensures that Geozone violations force a GPS update in real-time so the violation is noted immediately by dispatch and other precautions can be taken.

RFID tags and cargo tracking devices: To track specific cargo, fleet managers can connect a telematics solution to RFID tags and cargo sensors, placed on a palette, or within a box—providing detailed information on the cargo

under transport and real-time tracking of safe passage.

Integrated panic button: An integrated panic button device is a critical telematics feature particularly for fleets operating in remote areas such as oil and gas exploration, or in high risk construction zones. Within a defined perimeter of the vehicle, a driver in trouble can activate a panic message by pressing a key fob attachment—triggering an immediate “911” alert back to dispatch, who can in turn coordinate position with the vehicle's satellite or cellular GPS capability and call for emergency response and aid.

Engine diagnostics: Engine diagnostic data delivered through a telematics solution can monitor vehicle speeding, hard braking and prolonged road speed violations, minimizing the risk of accidents, ensuring public safety, and protecting the driver's commercial vehicle license. These security measures also lower liability risk, possibly lowering insurance premiums. They also allow fleets to take swift corrective action when a violation occurs. When a violation is triggered in a vehicle, engine diagnostics will not only record the incident, such as a speeding violation, it will also update the position via GPS, and alert a driver manager.

Verification of hour of service (HOS): Fleet operators seeking to prevent phantom loads—where trucks operate outside of approved HOS, potentially voiding a company's insurance—can look to the telematics solution to verify HOS, PTO engagement and other vehicle behaviors in order to verify authorized and unauthorized use vehicles outside company hours.

A telematics solution also ensures compliance to legislation and regulations protecting the company from penalty and fines. Violation of HOS can potentially reduce a carrier's safety rating and this may restrict the operator from working for certain shippers, damaging income and revenue potential. ¹³

Kelly Frey is executive vice president, BSM Wireless.



Intelligent Fleet Management from BSM Wireless

- Increase your operating margin
- Boost efficiency
- Deliver better customer service

For more information or to request a live demo visit: www.bsmwireless.com/t3demo

bsmwireless

Toll Free Sales: 1-866-768-4771 Email: sales@bsmwireless.com
www.bsmwireless.com

Telematics can minimize security risk by protecting drivers, vehicles, cargo and the company