



ELECTRONIC LOGGING DEVICES

What You Need to Know:

The US Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announced on December 10, 2015 the adoption of the Final Rule that will improve roadway safety by employing technology to strengthen commercial truck and bus drivers' compliance with the hours of service regulations that prevent fatigue.

An Electronic Logging Device (ELD) automatically records driving time. It monitors engine hours, vehicle movement, miles driven and location information.

Federal safety regulations limit the number of hours commercial drivers can be on duty and still drive, as well as the number of hours spent driving. These limitations are designed to prevent truck and bus drivers from becoming fatigued while driving and require that drivers take a break and have a sufficient off-duty rest period before returning to on-duty status.

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Electronic Logging Devices

Risk Management

The four main elements of the ELD Final Rule:

- 1** Require commercial truck and bus drivers who currently use paper logs to maintain hours of service records to adopt ELD's no later than December 18, 2017. This will impact approximately three million drivers.
- 2** Strictly prohibit commercial driver harassment. A separate FMCSA rule provides the agency with the authority to take enforcement action against any motor carrier, shipper, receiver or transportation intermediary if the force a driver to violate the regulations.
- 3** Set technology specifications detailing performance and design requirements for ELD's so manufacturers are able to produce compliant devices and systems.
- 4** Establish new hours of service supporting document requirements that will result in additional paperwork reductions (shipping documents, fuel purchase receipts, etc.). In most cases, a motor carrier would not be required to retain supporting documents verifying on-duty driving time.

The ELD Final Rule permits the use of smart phones and other wireless devices, so long as they satisfy the technical specifications and are listed on the FMCSA website. Motor carriers that have previously installed Automatic On-Board Recording Devices may continue to use the devices for an additional two years beyond the compliance date (December 2019 instead of December 2017).

There are a few exemptions to this rule. In general, this rule applies to all interstate drivers of commercial motor vehicles (as defined in 49 CFR 390.5) who are currently required to keep a record of duty status. The following are not required to use ELD's (though carriers may still choose to use them):

- Drivers who use paper logs no more than 8 days during any 30-day period.
- Driveaway-towaway drivers (transporting a vehicle for sale, lease or repair).
- Drivers of vehicles manufactured before model year 2000.

What are the benefits of ELD's?

- ELD's make it easier, simpler and quicker to keep driver logs.
- ELD's limit mistakes and reduce form and manner errors.
- ELD's provide information to better manage fatigue and schedule issues.
- ELD's correctly record location information and other data to track duty status.
- ELD's improve productivity and require less paperwork.

Electronic Logging Devices

Risk Management

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What is next for carriers and drivers?

The two year phase-in time frame allows carriers and drivers to start preparing for the compliance date - December 18, 2017. There is much to be done in that period of time.

The FMCSA is suggesting the following to help with your implementation plan:

- Review and understand key ELD rule requirements affecting your drivers.
- Develop an implementation plan and timeline to ensure compliance.
- Evaluate and select ELD's.
- Develop tailored ELD processes and guidance for drivers and administrative staff.
- Develop training tailored for compliance managers, drivers, administrative personnel and other authenticated users (including data retention requirements).
- Install and test ELD's and establish user accounts for each driver.
- Conduct training.
- Ensure drivers have required user documentation in vehicles.
- Retain supporting documents and retain ELD backup data and backup on separate systems.
- Understand harassment and the penalties for it.

Starting the process sooner rather than later will make the transition smooth and organized. There is a break in period for drivers to learn how to use the devices. In some cases, there may be a transition period for dispatchers, which may in turn require some operational changes. Waiting until the last minute could lead to a much tougher transition.

More resources are available at:

Information for carriers:

<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/hours-service/elds/eld-checklist-carriers>

Information for drivers:

<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/hours-service/elds/eld-checklist-drivers>

Electronic Logging Devices

Risk Management

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