

# move

## Even \* change

Navigating the complex world  
of foreign reciprocity

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Traffic incident management

Technical assistance for automated vehicles

COVID-19 social media outreach

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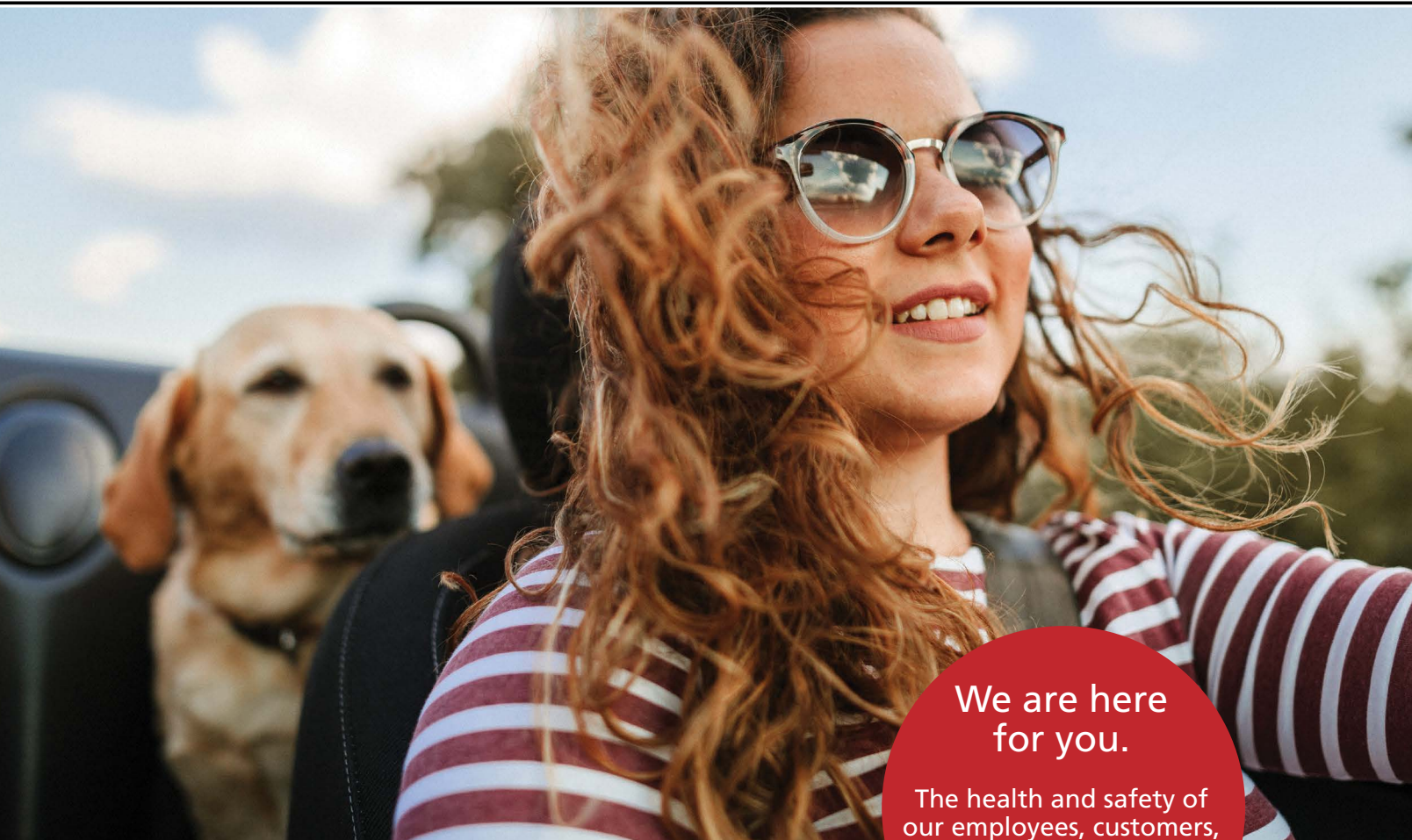
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- Jurisdiction Temporary Operational Changes

[aamva.org](http://aamva.org)

## JURISDICTION MEMBER-ONLY RESOURCES

- Business Restoration Procedures
- Customer Social Distancing Procedures & Protocol
- Virtual Office/Electronic Service Delivery
- Workforce Management

[aamva.org/COVID-19-Jurisdiction-Materials/](http://aamva.org/COVID-19-Jurisdiction-Materials/)

# move

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Don't forget to visit **MOVEmag.org** to read the latest web exclusives.

### FEATURE STORY VIDEOS

Learn more about AAMVA's guidance on traffic incident management and foreign reciprocity



### SALVAGE AND JUNK VEHICLE BEST PRACTICE VIDEO

Additional information and interviews to accompany AAMVA's new best practice guide



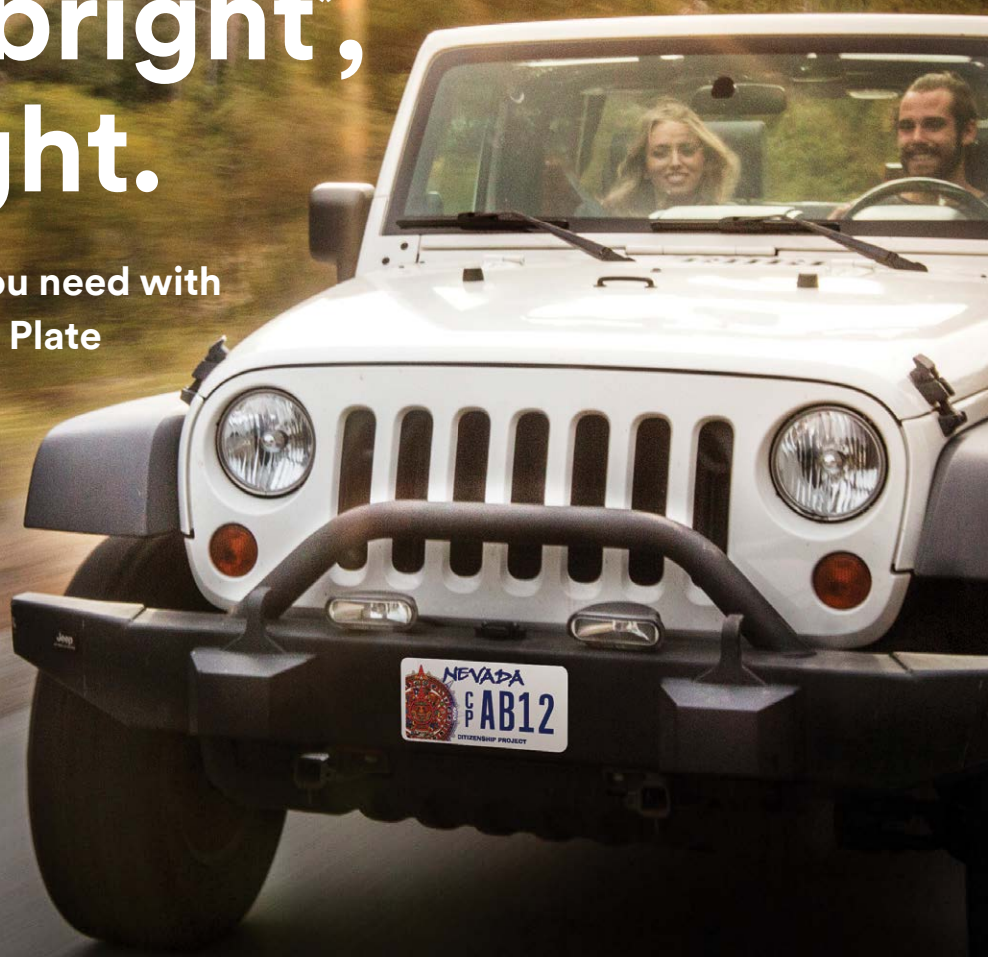
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# Closing the Gaps

## *PROCESS AND PROCEDURE ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE PUBLIC*

**A**AMVA members directly influence the safety and mobility of the communities they serve. Getting and keeping a driver's license, ensuring vehicle safety, holding vehicle dealers accountable, collecting taxes and fees that support highway construction, and enforcing traffic laws all are directly managed by motor vehicle and traffic safety enforcement agencies across the U.S. and Canada.

The importance of these services is evident right now, during the unprecedented agency shutdowns that have occurred during the global public health emergency of 2020. Each agency's shutdown was preceded by a review of its emergency preparedness

(COOP) process, developed to be used when events take an unexpected turn. In most cases, the agencies issued waivers and extensions to enable residents their mobility while protecting the public from the spread of COVID-19.

Shifting back to our highway safety mission and norms for just a moment, (although it's

hard to take our eyes off of the unfolding public health emergency) we are reminded that the motor vehicle and traffic safety roles in the AAMVA Community are derived from a significant body of law—state, provincial, territorial and federal. They're only as effective as the uniformity of enforcement and reliability of the data behind the records.

Once a law is adopted, the challenges of implementing and gaining compliance are overcome through interpretation, process, training, procedure and practice. Implementation and compliance also depend upon keeping the requirements current, which usually requires more process, training and practice.

Beyond agency process exists a much bigger world of procedure: the step-by-step instruction on how to carry out a process one has committed to completing. Procedural breakdowns lead to implementation gaps, and gaps create the risk that something or someone will fall through them. That's where bad actors and high-risk drivers slip through loopholes.

Process requires diligence. Keeping processes current is not simple, nor is it glamorous, but it is essential.

In this time of anxiety, uncertainty and, for some, illness, I wish all who are well continued support for the services you're delivering to others. And for those whose normal work has been curtailed, may you find joy in updating process and procedure. Both are essential to the continuity of operations depended upon for the health and welfare of the public. **m**

Anne Ferro  
AAMVA President and CEO





# RETHINKING THE ID. WHY NOT?

Secure identification documents require highly robust substrate materials, which is why more and more government organizations are turning to **polycarbonate films** for the manufacturing of citizen identification documents.

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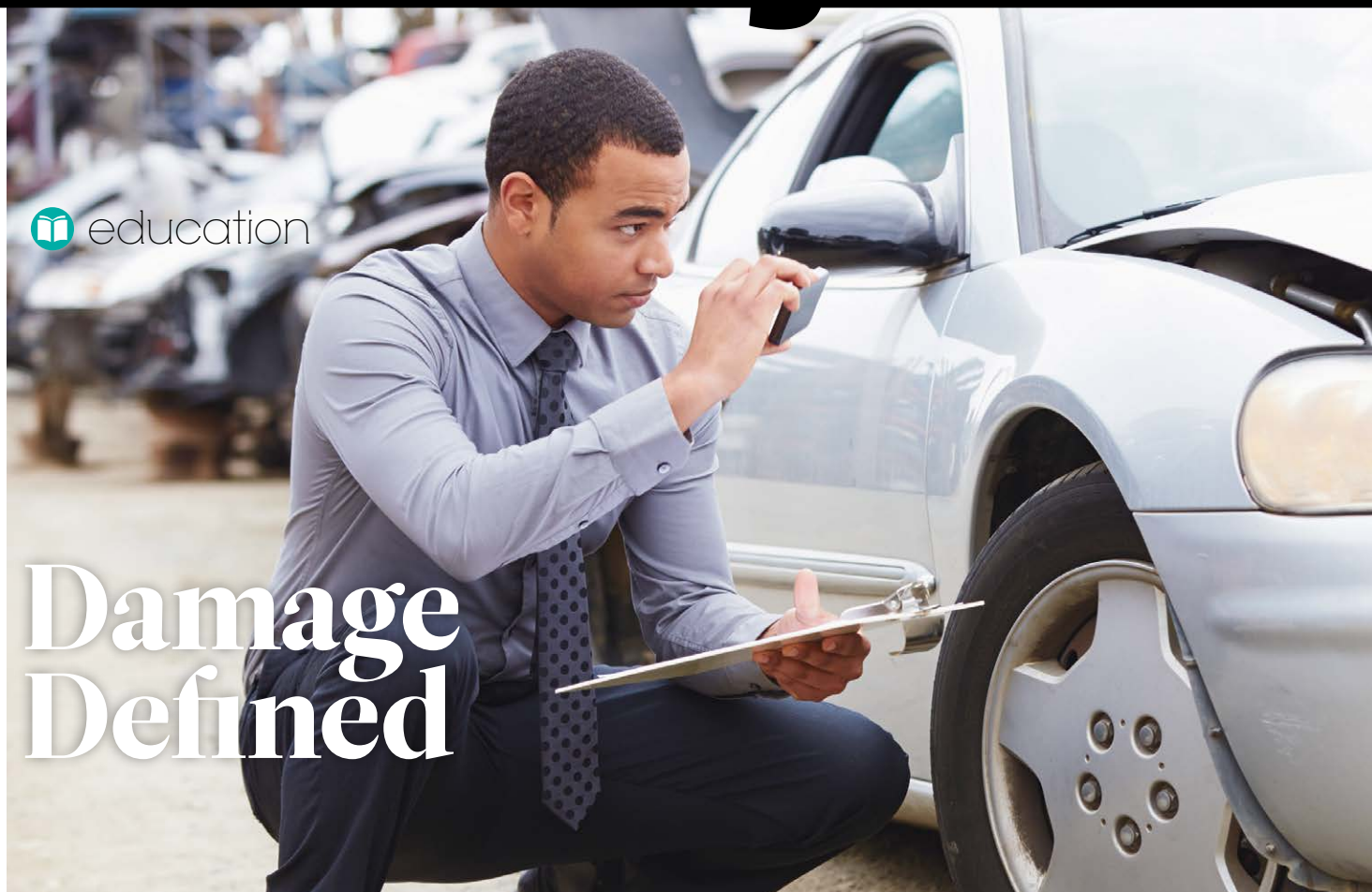
Covestro offers a broad portfolio of polycarbonate films designed for manufacturing ID documents and has worked closely with card manufacturers in the industry for many years.



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<https://www.lp.covestro.com/en/securitydocument>

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## Damage Defined

### AAMVA'S NEW BEST PRACTICE GUIDE AIMS TO ESTABLISH CONSISTENT DEFINITIONS FOR SALVAGE AND JUNK VEHICLES ACROSS JURISDICTIONS

BY KATHLEEN HAGAN

After three years of hard work, AAMVA's Vehicle Standing Committee released its *Salvage and Junk Vehicle Best Practice* guide in December 2019. By adopting the guide—which was developed to address inconsistencies in how salvage and junk vehicles are branded across jurisdictions—motor vehicle agencies can do their part to help make sure unsafe vehicles stay off the roads.

Today, many jurisdictions have slightly different definitions for what constitutes a salvage or junk

vehicle. Without consistent branding or definitions, a vehicle that is considered clean in one jurisdiction might receive a salvage brand in another. “For example, salvage might mean 75% damaged in one jurisdiction, and 80% in another,” says Casey Garber, manager, Vehicle Programs, AAMVA.

#### A SOLID FOUNDATION

AAMVA's *Salvage and Junk Vehicle Best Practice* guide establishes recommended definitions for the following types of vehicles:

- › Salvage
- › Flood- or water-damaged
- › Junk or non-repairable
- › Rebuilt or prior salvage
- › For export only

“The definitions are truly the foundation of this best practice,” Garber says. “We encourage all jurisdictions to modify their definitions to match the ones in the document.”



Garber also emphasizes that, unlike other guides from AAMVA, the *Salvage and Junk Vehicle Best Practice* guide was developed to be adopted as a whole. “All of the recommendations are based off of the definitions. If a jurisdiction were to go through the document and apply one of the recommendations without having adopted the definitions, there could be unintended consequences,” she says.

### WHY BE CONSISTENT?

Because it’s common for people to move across jurisdiction lines, being consistent in defining damaged vehicles across jurisdictions is key when it comes to preventing brand washing. For example, if a customer owns a vehicle with a flood brand in one jurisdiction and then moves to a jurisdiction that does not have flood brand, a new title could be issued without it. Then, if that customer sells the vehicle to a buyer who later gets it titled in a jurisdiction that has a flood brand, the motor vehicle agency would be able to look at the vehicle’s history and see that—so they may again brand it as a flood vehicle. This could have financial ramifications for that buyer, as it would lower the vehicle’s value.

To prevent this scenario, jurisdictions should adopt the new best practice guide in an effort to

be consistent with others. The first step in this path toward uniformity is for AAMVA members to review the best practice document and compare it to the current laws in their jurisdiction. Once inconsistencies are identified, they should work with lawmakers to make statutory changes to adopt the definitions in the document. An implementation checklist is included at the end of the best practice to help guide jurisdictions through the process. “Jurisdictions are also always able to call AAMVA staff to ask for information if they have any questions,” Garber adds.

Ultimately, the goal of the *Salvage and Junk Vehicle Best Practice* guide is to increase consistency in how damaged vehicles are defined. When jurisdictions are consistent in their branding, highway safety will be improved because unsafe vehicles will not be put back on the roads—which is a win-win-win for jurisdictions, industry and consumers. **m**

### find out more

DOWNLOAD THE SALVAGE AND JUNK VEHICLE BEST PRACTICE GUIDE TODAY AT [AAMVA.ORG/BEST-PRACTICES-AND-MODEL-LEGISLATION](https://www.aamva.org/best-practices-and-model-legislation).

## FLOOD = JUNK

According to AAMVA’s *Salvage and Junk Vehicle Best Practice* guide, all flood- or water-damaged vehicles should be considered junk vehicles and not allowed back on roadways.

“We make this recommendation because water damage can cause critical safety issues that might not be visible right away,” says Casey Garber, manager, Vehicle Programs, AAMVA. “But as time goes on, water damage can cause corrosion, result in rust buildup in the engine, and can affect the electrical components of the vehicle such as airbags and electrical harnesses.”

Because vehicles built today are highly computerized and have many electrical components, jurisdictions would be wise to follow this guidance in AAMVA’s effort to improve highway safety and keep unsafe vehicles off the road.



 industry insight

# Are They Covered?



*ARKANSAS CAN NOW  
EASILY VERIFY INSURANCE  
INFORMATION IN REAL TIME  
WITH HELP FROM MV SOLUTIONS*

BY JIM HODGES

**T**hree years ago, Arkansas estimated that nearly one in four of its 2.9 million registered vehicles was not insured. On January 1, 2020, identifying uninsured vehicles in real time during a traffic stop became possible with the new Arkansas Online Insurance Verification System (AOIVS).

On February 3, the system became proactive, sending letters to vehicle owners with lapsed coverage on insurance company databases. They were identified by MV Solutions, a Blythewood, South Carolina, company acting as agent for Arkansas.

The letters ask owners to respond electronically within 30 days or face suspension of the vehicle's registration. The reply involves a questionnaire requesting proof of state-minimum liability coverage or an explanation of why no coverage is necessary, such as a vehicle being sold or taken out of use.

The goal is to send 1,500 letters per day by March 31 and 450,000 total by year's end.

"I believe Arkansas is our most comprehensive, best-in-breed implementation," says Shawn Goff, president of MV Solutions, which

As of January 2020, the scope of those without insurance went from an estimated **696,000** to an actual **370,000**.

has systems or components in 12 of the 17 jurisdictions nationwide with online real-time verification.

MV Solutions offers à la carte menu of products. After reviewing bids from three vendors, Arkansas purchased the entire menu and set up AOIVS to provide:

- Real-time insurance verification during traffic stops.
- Verification at the time of vehicle registration, or renewal, whether over the counter or online.
- Notification letter program.

➤ A web portal for insurance companies and agents, customers and the state.

➤ A 25-seat call center where each operator can field up to 150 calls daily.

Goff says the system will be self-sustaining from \$100 insurance reinstatement fees. Wayne Hamric, driver services and motor vehicle administrator for the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration, hopes the system will eventually pay for itself. "But we didn't market it that way," he says. "This is new for us, and we don't know what to expect."

What he does know is what the jurisdiction sought after estimating 24% of Arkansas vehicles were not insured.

"We wanted an industry partner who was fully capable

*"I believe Arkansas is our most comprehensive, best-in-breed implementation."*

**SHAWN GOFF**

President of MV Solutions



of assisting us on the insurance verification process,” Hamric says. “We also wanted someone who would function in a manner our insurance companies and taxpayers would support.”

That wasn’t difficult to accomplish, says Goff. “With all of the implementations we already have, it’s not a heavy lift for insurance carriers. We’re already connected with 90% of the companies.”

The Department of Finance and Administration also wanted buy-in from the state legislature, state and local law enforcement, the courts, insurance companies and Arkansas’ 134 revenue agencies. Representatives formed an advisory committee to assist in due diligence. When an insurance lapse is discovered during a traffic stop, the motorist faces up to a \$250 fine, shared among courts and law enforcement.

Arkansas reached out to South Carolina, Alabama and Tennessee for advice, Hamric says. The state learned South Carolina’s uninsured motorists dropped from 20% to 7% over a decade with online insurance verification, Alabama’s dropped from 26% to 12% and Tennessee’s newer system increased insured motorists by nearly 7% in its first 18 months.

Integration with Arkansas’ information technology apparatus took two months with MV Solutions’ commercial off-the-shelf technology. Training was easy, Hamric says, and media stories eliminated surprises for motorists. The scope of those without insurance went from an estimated 696,000 to an actual 370,000 with MV Solutions’ scan in January.


“We weren’t getting reports before, but we are now,” Hamric says.


Now that uninsured individuals have been identified, the new system can generate letters to be mailed, putting Arkansas well on-pace to meet its end-of-year target. **m**


## musings


{THIS MONTH'S QUESTION}


# HOW ARE JURISDICTIONS COMMUNICATING ABOUT COVID-19 ON SOCIAL MEDIA?


**California DMV** @CA\_DMV  
Practice [#PhysicalDistancing](#) by using the DMV Virtual Office. Upload your documents and one of our DMV representatives will contact you to complete your transaction. Visit: [Virtual.dmv.ca.gov](#) [#DMVVirtualOffice](#) [#Covid19](#) [#CADMV](#) [#DMV](#)

**MD\_MVA** @MD\_MVA  
We are happy to partner with the @[MDHealthDept](#) to make [#COVID19](#) testing available for Marylanders by transforming some of our existing VEIP stations into drive-thru testing sites. For more information, please visit [phpa.health.maryland.gov/Documents/FAQ](#)

**TxDOT** @TxDOT  
Today, TxDOT donated 3,500 masks & 14,000 pairs of rubber gloves to be distributed in response to the [#COVID19](#) threat. The need for critical and protective equipment remains high and Texas is asking for your help. To volunteer supplies or your time visit [Texas.gov](#).

**Indiana BMV** @INBMV  
During this [#COVID19](#) emergency, our branches remain closed to the general public, with exceptions only for essential commercial transactions. Commissioner Peter Lacy explains these exceptions and how you can still do transactions while under @[GovHolcomb](#)'s stay-at-home order.

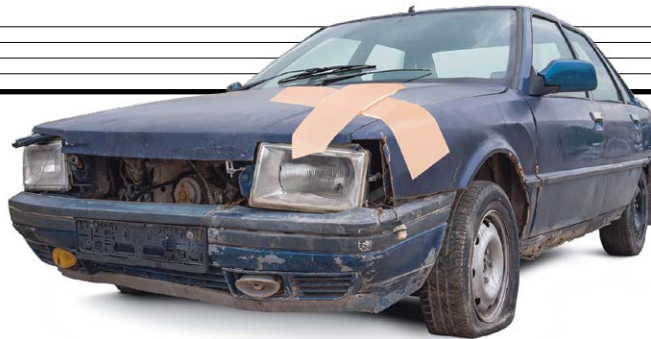
**Alberta Government** @YourAlberta  
We all must do our part to keep [#abseniors](#) safe. Help your loved ones by reducing visits, running essential errands for them & reaching out with a phone call. A quick check-in or lengthy chat over the phone can make a big impact. Call or text 211 for resources in the community.

**Virginia DMV** @VirginiaDMV  
We know our customers have lots of questions about their DMV needs. We want to help and have created a webpage that addresses many customer questions & concerns. Before messaging us, please visit [dmvNOW.com/COVID19](#). Need further assistance? We're just a message away!



## SALVAGE VEHICLES

BY AAMVA'S DATA LADY, JANICE DLUZYSKI



Here are the most recent jurisdiction surveys related to salvage vehicles. All of these surveys have additional questions that provide more information. Full details of these surveys can be found at: [AAMVA.ORG/SURVEY/USER/SEARCH.ASPX](http://AAMVA.ORG/SURVEY/USER/SEARCH.ASPX).

### VEHICLE INSPECTIONS & THE USE OF OEM PARTS

30 RESPONSES

**DO YOU REQUIRE REBUILT SALVAGE VEHICLES, RECONSTRUCTED VEHICLES OR SPECIALLY CONSTRUCTED VEHICLES TO BE INSPECTED PRIOR TO VEHICLE TITLING AND/OR REGISTERING?**

Yes: 

No: 

**DO YOU ALLOW THE USE OF COMPONENT PARTS (E.G., PICKUP TRUCK CAB, FRAME, MOTOR, TRANSMISSION) PRODUCED BY OEMS AS EXCESS PARTS THAT DO NOT HAVE A VIN OR COMPONENT PART NUMBER TO BE USED IN THESE VEHICLE REBUILDS?**

Yes: 


No: 

No response provided: 

**ON AVERAGE, HOW FREQUENTLY DOES YOUR AGENCY ENCOUNTER OEM COMPONENT PARTS THAT DO NOT CONTAIN A VIN OR COMPONENT PART NUMBER?**

Never or rarely: 

Infrequently, less than 10 times per year: 

Frequently, more than 10 times per year: 

No response provided: 

### SALVAGE EXEMPTION/EXAMS

32 RESPONSES

**DOES YOUR JURISDICTION EXEMPT ANY VEHICLES FROM THE SALVAGE PROCESS? IF YES, WHAT VEHICLES ARE EXEMPT? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.**

Late model: 

Antique: 

Other: 

No, we do not exempt any vehicles from the salvage process:



**IF YOUR JURISDICTION CONDUCTS AN ANTI-THEFT EXAM, IS IT CONDUCTED SEPARATELY FROM ANY SAFETY EXAM THAT IS PERFORMED ON REBUILT VEHICLES OR COMBINED WITH THE SAFETY EXAM?**

No anti-theft exam: 

No safety exam: 

Anti-theft exam and safety exam are conducted separately: 

Anti-theft exam and safety exam are conducted simultaneously: 

### SALVAGE

29 RESPONSES

**DOES SALVAGE HAVE ANY MODEL YEAR LIMITATIONS?**

Yes: 

No: 

**DOES YOUR JURISDICTION PERFORM SALVAGE INSPECTIONS/EXAMINATIONS FOR REBUILT VEHICLES?**

Yes: 

No: 

**DOES THE INSPECTION/EXAMINATION CERTIFY MECHANICAL OR STRUCTURAL ROADWORTHINESS?**

Yes: 

No: 

No response provided: 

Visit AAMVA's website to access the following resources:

Salvage and Junk Vehicle Best Practice  
[aamva.org/best-practices-and-model-legislation](http://aamva.org/best-practices-and-model-legislation)

Region 1 Conference Presentation 2019:  
Salvage, Junk and Auto Theft Trends  
[aamva.org/2019-region-1-conference-download](http://aamva.org/2019-region-1-conference-download)

# Automating Safety

*AAMVA AUTOMATED VEHICLES SUBCOMMITTEE PROVIDES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO NORTH CAROLINA TO HELP BRING A CLEARER FOCUS TO THE ROAD AHEAD*

BY JIM HODGES



A Tesla was traveling 70 miles per hour at 3:30 a.m. when a highway patrol cruiser came up behind it, flashed its lights and sounded the siren.

There was no response.

Though the officers could see a driver behind the wheel, they surmised he was asleep and the vehicle was being driven by Tesla's Autopilot.

They passed, moved in front and began slowing maneuvers, which the Tesla sensors detected as traffic ahead. The car was stopped without incident, the driver was awakened and charged with being impaired.

Cathie Curtis, AAMVA's Director of Vehicle Programs, used this anecdote to highlight the role of law enforcement in the coming automated vehicle revolution during a two-day seminar in Raleigh, North Carolina, in late February.

"I view input from law enforcement as critical for the implementation of autonomous vehicles," says Tim Peterson, 1st Sgt. of the North Carolina Highway Patrol, who attended the seminar with Lt. Joe Memory. "The AAMVA team did a great job of sharing information and educating the state."

That was the mission five members of the American Association of Motor Vehicles Administrators Automated Vehicles (AV) subcommittee and one representative from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) sought to accomplish at the NHTSA-funded event. North Carolina had applied for technical assistance from AAMVA on AV technology development, testing, permitting, registration, law enforcement and what drivers' license examinations and manuals can expect to address now and in the future. The jurisdiction was first in what AAMVA hopes will be a long line of those seeking the training.

"We addressed the issues identified on their application," says Curtis. "They were very interested in distinguishing between the federal government and state roles in regulating AVs. "It used to be that the federal government regulated the technology and the states regulated the driver. But when the equipment and technology becomes the driver, the lines are blurred."

"It was very valuable to learn the federal process and relate it to how North Carolina's processes are similar and different," says Chuck Church, legislative and operations officer of the ▶

North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles. “We both want the same outcome, a safe operating environment, but each takes different pathways to that end.”

To some extent, that’s because state laws regulating automobiles are based on human drivers.

“Until a few years ago, it was science fiction that there wasn’t going to be a human driver,” says Kevin Lacy, North Carolina’s traffic engineer and director of safety. Curtis calls him “the bridge” between the jurisdiction and AV subcommittee, which he recently joined. Lacy had a state role in the seminar, presenting the jurisdiction’s AV initiatives. In December, the state Department of Transportation gave \$1 million each to three state universities to study various aspects of AVs. Also, the jurisdiction is testing an AV at North Carolina State University’s Centennial Campus. And North Carolina’s Automated Vehicles Roadmap includes as a goal “benchmark against industry and current federal, state, local and international initiatives.”

The two-day seminar served well in addressing that goal. It included a delineation of AV levels, beginning at Levels 1 and 2, which are based on the degree of automation involved, and moving through Levels 3, 4 and 5, which is a fully automated vehicle.

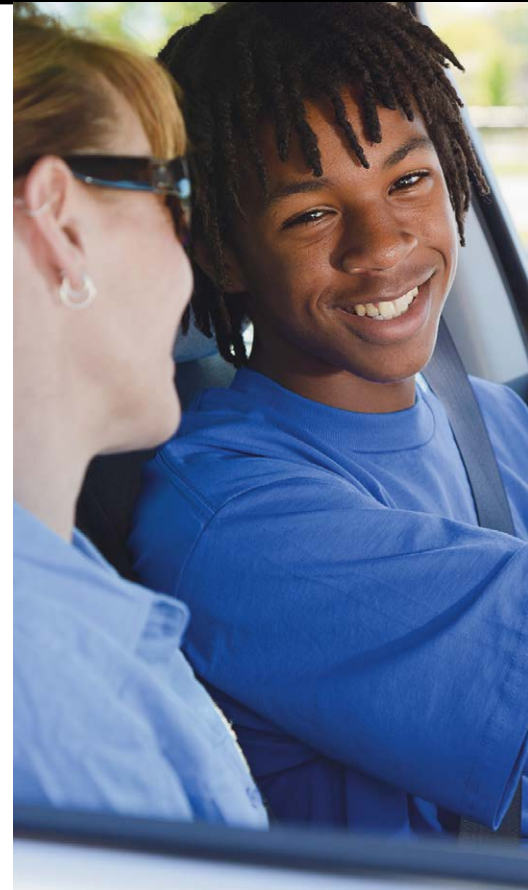
Levels 1 and 2 include Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), such as backup cameras and lane departure warnings. Curtis reminded the seminar attendees that drivers have been taught to use mirrors and look over their shoulder to back up the car. It’s on the test.

But now, Curtis asks, “If the car used in the license examination has a backup camera, should it be part of the test?”

As technology advances, should the test requirements move forward as well?

“This is not a quiz,” Lacy says. “This is game-changing technology for every aspect of our lives. Knowing what the questions are and working out the answers here are the best things we can do right now.”

The seminar was a give-and-take process. AAMVA representatives presented



## THE FIVE LEVELS OF DRIVING AUTOMATION

1

### DRIVER ASSISTANCE

The first level of automation includes adaptive cruise control and lane-keep assist. These systems still require the driver to be in control.

2

### PARTIAL AUTOMATION

Level 2 automation assists in controlling speed and steering. Sensors monitor the distance between the vehicle and traffic ahead, while also providing steering assist by centering the vehicle within the lane.

3

### CONDITIONAL AUTOMATION

Level 3 autonomous vehicles are capable of driving themselves, but only under ideal conditions and with limitations, such as limited-access divided highways at a certain speed. Although hands are off the wheel, drivers are still required behind the wheel.

4

### HIGH AUTOMATION

Level 4 autonomous vehicles can drive themselves in most environments and road conditions without human interactions but will be restricted to known use cases.

5

### FULL AUTOMATION

Level 5 autonomous vehicles should be able to monitor and maneuver through all road conditions and require no human interventions whatsoever, eliminating the need for a steering wheel and pedals.





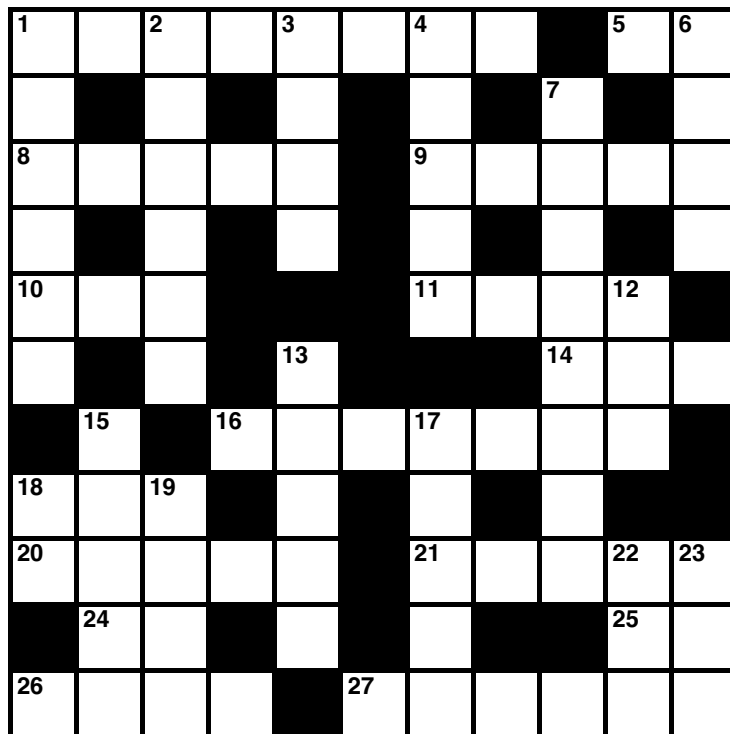
One of many questions raised by AV technology is how should driver's license testing be adapted when an ADAS-equipped vehicle is used?

information and went away with a better understanding of information to include in future seminars with other jurisdictions. Some of that came from the University of North Carolina's Highway Safety Research Center, via a presentation about human factors in relationship to AVs. "What do people actually perceive to be an automated vehicle?" Curtis says. "What do they expect of them? How will they interact with them?"

Another lesson came from the interaction by North Carolina DOT and DMV officials, university researchers, law enforcement and Department of Justice. They are trying to break down silos of information and regulation. Other jurisdictions face the same problem.

"There is a specific need for law enforcement to be engaged in whatever activities the DMV, DOT and universities are engaged in," Curtis says. "It helps them learn about the technology. And it helps them determine what law enforcement needs to interact with these vehicles or if something happens on the road." **m**

## crossword

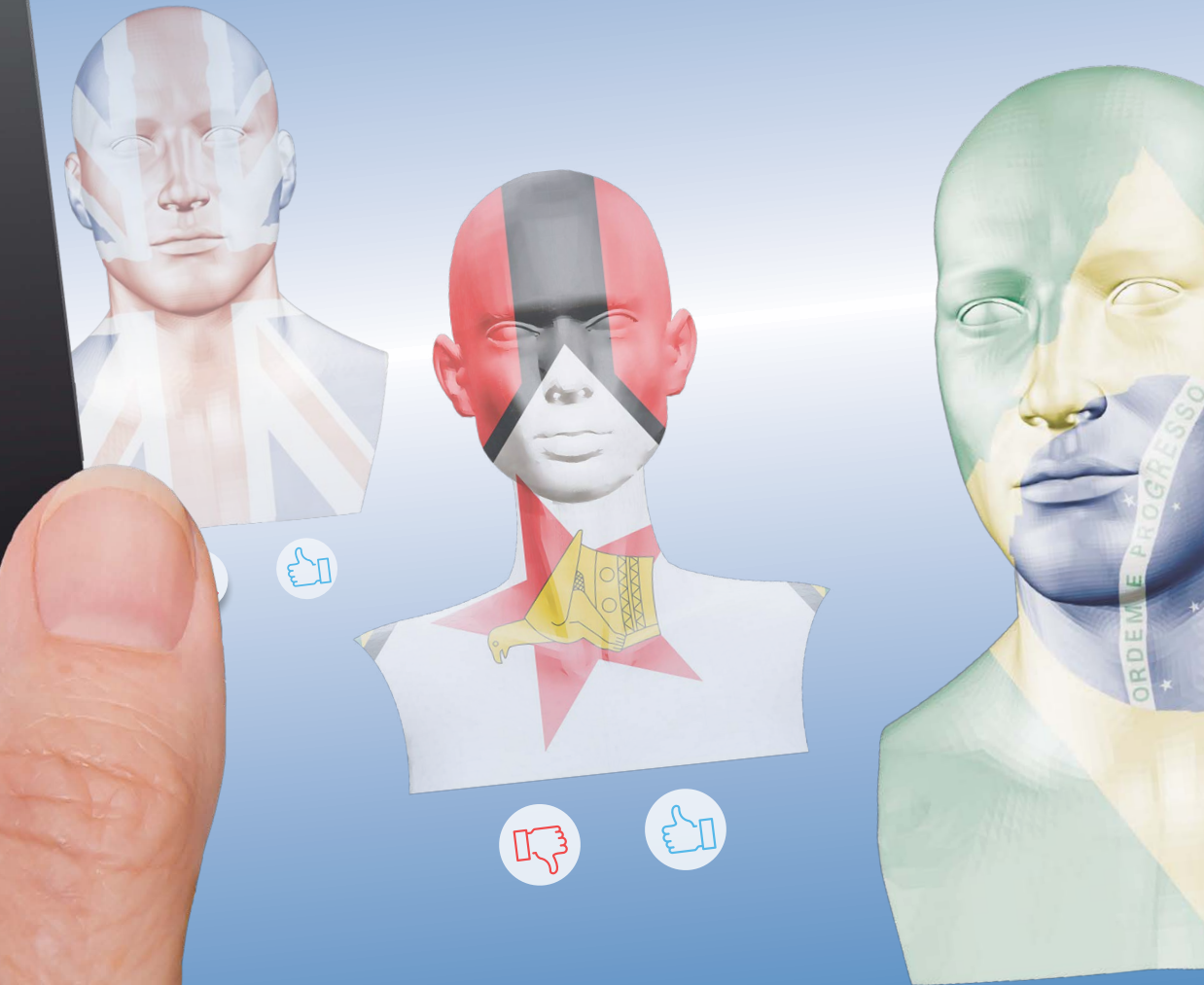


### ACROSS

- 1 Type of incident where a trooper is hit by another vehicle while actively involved in a traffic incident, 2 words
- 5 Real \_\_\_\_\_, program to upgrade verification of identity for drivers' licenses
- 8 Crash that involves a death
- 9 One with the pink slip
- 10 Weight measurement for semis
- 11 Start of many an accident (loss of control on the road)
- 14 Twenty-four hours
- 16 One of the 4 types of "D-drivers"
- 18 Alcoholic egg drink
- 20 No. 1 action in TIM: "Stop it from getting \_\_\_\_\_"
- 21 Vehicles
- 24 Word indicating direction
- 25 I-80 and I-76 pass through this state
- 26 Government department that started the TIM program
- 27 \_\_\_\_\_ thousand motorists are killed on the roads each year

### DOWN

- 1 A key focus of TIM
- 2 Ranking for Uber drivers
- 3 Using this when driving increases the risk of a crash
- 4 Records a charge in a police register
- 6 Agreement between countries with similar driving standards, abbr.
- 7 The I in TIM
- 12 Father
- 13 Give a rundown
- 15 Toll \_\_\_\_\_
- 17 It shows statistics
- 18 Compass point
- 19 Expand
- 22 Make a choice
- 23 Declare



PICK &  
CHOOSE



*NAVIGATING THE  
COMPLEX WORLD  
OF FOREIGN  
RECIPROCITY*

BY JAMIE FRIEDLANDER ▶





*In almost all cases, other countries proactively approach jurisdictions in the U.S. and Canada to establish driver's license reciprocity agreements.*

A driver from Italy walks into your DMV. She's visiting the country for a six-month work project, and is interested in obtaining a driver's license. What are the driving laws in her country? Are they similar enough to yours to do an even exchange of her license? Or do you need to provide additional testing?

Situations like this arise on a daily basis at DMVs across the U.S. and Canada. To help streamline and simplify the process, foreign reciprocity for driver's licensing was established nearly a century ago.

Foreign reciprocity involves jurisdictions entering into driver's license reciprocity agreements (DLRAs) with other countries that have similar driving standards. For example, if driving standards in Michigan are similar to those in Germany, the jurisdiction can engage in an agreement in which it will exchange driver's licenses issued in Germany without the need for additional testing.

Entering into foreign reciprocity agreements is a nuanced, intricate and time-consuming process that often requires collaboration between jurisdictions. In order to continue helping jurisdictions navigate this terrain and successfully enter into DLRAs, AAMVA created a working group that collaborated on a new, updated version of the *2009 Foreign Reciprocity Resource Guide*.

"Since 1926, the international community has attempted to standardize driver's licensing documents, policies and procedures throughout the world," says Jessi Ross, program director for Driver License Compacts and Reciprocity at AAMVA. "Because that is a huge undertaking, AAMVA has evolved to provide support to our member jurisdictions."

## A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Jurisdictions in the U.S. and Canada have entered into foreign reciprocity agreements with other countries such as Germany, France and Mexico since the Geneva Convention in 1949.

Foreign reciprocity grows more popular each year, with more countries like South Korea, Japan, Italy, Australia and Taiwan wanting to enter into

*"We found standards varied widely between different countries."*

### JOAN MORNINGSTAR

Assistant Director for the Diplomatic Motor Vehicles and Enforcement Office in the Office of Foreign Missions at the U.S. Department of State

agreements with jurisdictions in North America.

Joan Morningstar, assistant director for the Diplomatic Motor Vehicles and Enforcement Office in the Office of Foreign Missions at the U.S. Department of State, was a member of AAMVA's Foreign Reciprocity Resource Guide Working Group. Morningstar's department has done significant research into driving standards in other countries in order to effectively issue Department of State driver's licenses to diplomats working at their foreign missions in the U.S.

"The difference between driver's licenses in the United States and those in other countries is probably just as varied as the number of countries there are," Morningstar says. "We found standards varied widely between different countries. Some countries are very stringent. In other countries, if you can breathe, you can get a driver's license."

These variations touch every area of driver's licensing. In some countries, driver's education will not only be markedly different, but sometimes nonexistent. Identity verification can also vary, with some countries engaging in more thorough identity authentication when issuing driver's licenses. Traffic enforcement can also differ greatly between countries. ▶

**FOREIGN  
RECIPROCITY  
GROWS MORE  
POPULAR EACH  
YEAR, WITH MORE  
COUNTRIES WANTING  
TO ENTER INTO  
AGREEMENTS WITH  
JURISDICTIONS IN  
NORTH AMERICA.**

## UPDATES TO THE FOREIGN RECIPROCITY RESOURCE GUIDE

In 2009, AAMVA originally published the *Foreign Reciprocity Resource Guide*, a comprehensive, 163-page document that covered everything from legal considerations to the benefits of DLRAs.

"The 2009 guide is very helpful," says Jessi Ross, program director for Driver License Compacts and Reciprocity at AAMVA. "It has all of the information that folks needed at the time. But since 2009, reciprocity has evolved. Countries have emerged and now, more than ever, member jurisdictions are being faced with new countries wanting to enter into reciprocity."

In addition, Ross says more people retiring each year—plus increasing turnover rates—means many new employees are entering DMVs without any knowledge of foreign reciprocity or DLRAs.

"What we've really tried to focus on with this guide is making sure everyone, from the front-line employees to the high-level executives, can do their job and make informed decisions," Ross says. This means the guide covers everything from how to enter into an agreement to what front-counter DMV staff should be aware of when dealing with a customer.

The updated guide, which will be available this summer, will also include model memorandums of understanding (MOUs), model legislation, templates, worldwide survey data from the U.S. Department of State and trend analysis based on data AAMVA collected.



### go online

**AN UPDATED FOREIGN RECIPROCITY  
RESOURCE GUIDE IS COMING THIS  
SUMMER AND WILL BE AVAILABLE  
AT [AAMVA.ORG/BEST-PRACTICES](https://www.aamva.org/best-practices).**



“Just in the United States, we have 50 different jurisdictions that are doing their own thing,” says Joe Fewell, director of credentials for the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles and a member of AAMVA’s working group. “Add in however many countries there are around the world, and it gets very complex.”

### THE NUTS AND BOLTS

The process by which each jurisdiction enters into a DLRA varies. In almost all cases, other countries will proactively approach states and jurisdictions in the U.S. and Canada.

**SOME JURISDICTIONS HAVE STRICT REGULATIONS REGARDING FOREIGN RECIPROCITY. OTHERS GIVE THE DMV GENERAL AUTHORITY WITH RULES TO FOLLOW. AND THEN THERE ARE SOME JURISDICTIONS WHERE DECISION-MAKING IS ENTIRELY UP TO THE DMV.**

Each jurisdiction has its own unique challenges when navigating these agreements, says Rebecca Plomp, team lead for motor vehicles at Service Alberta and a member of AAMVA’s working group. “Different jurisdictions within Canada and the U.S. have very different legislative authorities—some are open-ended, others are more restrictive,” she says.

There are three broad approaches when entering into DLRA’s, which are driven by each jurisdiction’s laws and regulations, Fewell says.

Some states are very prescriptive, with regulations regarding what a DMV can do with foreign reciprocity. Other jurisdictions give the DMV general authority to engage in reciprocity as the agency sees fit, though they must abide by a handful of rules. And some jurisdictions have very broad authority when it comes to foreign reciprocity agreements—decision-making is entirely up to the DMV.

“It’s a procedure, and you have to start at the highest level,” Fewell says. “That would be with your laws. See what you can do. Can you even engage in reciprocity? There might be laws that prohibit that. Or, if you can, what are the areas where you have room to negotiate with another country?”

### CROSS-COUNTRY COLLABORATION

There are many benefits to entering into DLRA’s. Not only does it simplify processes and procedures for DMV professionals, but it can also boost a jurisdiction’s economy, as having these agreements can encourage foreign nationals to move to a particular jurisdiction for work.

“There are actually a lot of countries out there doing relatively the same thing we’re doing here in the United States and Canada,” Fewell says. “There’s an opportunity for us to take advantage of that to help stimulate some economic interest.”

Although there are upsides to entering into foreign reciprocity agreements, there are also countless challenges, from figuring out a jurisdiction’s specific laws regarding DLRA’s to comprehensively analyzing the driving standards in another country.







## A DIVERSE AND DEDICATED WORKING GROUP

AAMVA's Foreign Reciprocity Resource Guide Working Group was composed of eight jurisdictional members and two technical advisors who work for the U.S. Department of State. Jessi Ross, program director for Driver License Compacts and Reciprocity at AAMVA, says the U.S. Department of State served a vital role in the group.

"When our group gets together and discusses foreign reciprocity, we're speaking domestically among 69 jurisdictions," Ross says. "The Department of State was really able to wear the international hat. They're very familiar with testing standards in other countries—they conducted their own research and developed surveys when determining who they would have reciprocity with. They provided valuable insight."

Rebecca Plomp, team lead for motor vehicles at Service Alberta—a jurisdiction that has 13 DLRA's with other countries (not including the U.S.)—appreciated the collaborative, amicable atmosphere of the working group.

"It's been such a nice opportunity to come together and learn from other jurisdictions about what they're doing and what their processes are so that we could come up with best practices for this guide," she says.

When considering a DLRA, Fewell says jurisdictions should start by looking at the other country's driving laws, identity verification process, driving education standards and the offenses for motor vehicle infractions or crimes.

Morningstar emphasizes the importance of being thorough when considering a DLRA with another country. The U.S. Department of State has a sample survey jurisdictions can use when asking other countries about their driving standards. Morningstar says this document can be shared with jurisdictions upon request.

Because entering into DLRA's is complex, jurisdictions often bounce ideas and questions off of one another.

"We'll have members call other members and want some information—why did you enter into an agreement with this country? What are the details of that? Can you send

me a copy of your MOU?" Ross says. "That's the great thing about AAMVA as an organization—we're kind of like the middleman who bridges that gap."

### ON THE HORIZON

Foreign reciprocity is constantly evolving. Driving standards across the world are continually changing, not to mention more and more countries are looking to establish agreements with jurisdictions in the U.S. and Canada each year. Although foreign reciprocity will likely never be fully streamlined, guidance from experts like AAMVA can help make the process smoother and more efficient.

Plomp agrees. "There is so much movement of people internationally, I think we'll probably see more agreements in the future." **m**



safety





# Clearing a SAFE PATH

*HIGHWAY SAFETY PROFESSIONALS ARE CONTINUOUSLY TRYING TO IMPROVE PRACTICES FOR TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT*

BY MELANIE D.G. KAPLAN

The night of Nov. 18, 2016, Utah Highway Patrol trooper Eric Ellsworth responded to a call about low-hanging power lines on a rural two-lane highway about an hour north of Salt Lake City. At the site, Ellsworth, 32, parked on the side of the road, according to *The Salt Lake Tribune*, and shined his vehicle's spotlight onto the electrical cable so drivers could see it, knowing it could be problematic for high-profile vehicles. A semi approached, and Ellsworth stopped the truck to prevent it from catching the cable. As he approached the driver, an oncoming car struck and critically injured him.

Five days later, Utah Highway Patrol Colonel Michael Rapich typed an email to his colleagues about Ellsworth, a second-generation Utah trooper,

seven-year veteran of the force and the father of three young boys: "Late last night, after a long fight, he succumbed to his injuries surrounded by his family and fellow troopers."

In his 28-year career with the Utah Highway Patrol, Rapich has lost seven troopers in line-of-duty deaths. Three, including Ellsworth, occurred in what the force calls "struck-by" incidents, in which a trooper was struck by another vehicle while actively involved in a traffic incident.

"Probably the most frustrating part about this accident with Eric is that it was a low-risk traffic incident on a rural highway with a very low amount of traffic," Rapich says. "And then, just in an instant, it went from almost a non-issue to a tragic event." ▶





safety

After every incident, Rapich says, he takes a hard look at what the force and the individual could have done differently, and which hazards they could have mitigated to possibly change the outcome. In many cases, it's a matter of just inches that makes all the difference.

"Every single [traffic incident] has the potential for something really horrible happening if we're not taking every opportunity to mitigate the risk as much as we can," he says. "And even when we do, things happen. The big takeaway is that every traffic incident is still a high-risk environment."

### **TIM TO PREVENT SECONDARY CRASHES, SAVE LIVES**

Each year, an average of 6 million crashes kill more than 30,000 motorists and injure an additional 2 million, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). That number is growing, as is the number of related first responder deaths.

*"Every traffic incident is still a high-risk environment."*

**COLONEL MICHAEL RAPICH**  
Utah Highway Patrol

Since the FHWA first created a TIM-focused team nearly 20 years ago, more than **461,000** responders have been trained.

"Until we can get these figures to zero, there will be a profound need for traffic incident management (TIM) training," says Mark Kehrli, the director of transportation operations for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), a division of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

TIM focuses on detecting, responding to, and clearing traffic incidents so that traffic flow can be restored as safely and quickly as possible. Effective TIM reduces the duration and impacts of traffic incidents, and improves the safety of motorists, crash victims and emergency responders. Partners include law enforcement, emergency medical services, and fire and rescue.

The FHWA first created a TIM-focused team nearly 20 years ago and has since made TIM training a priority nationwide. The agency has held three Senior Executive Transportation and Public Safety Summits to discuss ways to improve traffic incident management and responder and motorist safety. As of March 23, 2020, nearly 470,000 responders have been trained; FHWA's goal is to reach one million.

Kehrli stresses the importance of using TIM to save lives and prevent secondary crashes, such as the incident in northern Utah. "First responders face an increased risk of being fatally struck or severely injured by what we call 'D-Drivers,'" Kehrli says.

## **TIM FOR EVERYONE**

Think only first responders need to learn TIM? Think again. Every driver plays a role in keeping motorists safe and roads operating smoothly, and to that end, NHTSA is expanding its public outreach and education on the importance of safer roadways through good TIM practices.

The Move Over campaign involves getting out the message that state driver removal laws allow drivers involved in minor crashes to move off of the freeway to the next exit before calling law enforcement and that moving the vehicle will not affect the determination of fault in the crash. The Utah Department of Transportation has signs that read, "Fender bender, move vehicles to next exit, call 911."

If you're involved in a traffic incident, your car is drivable and there are no injuries, move your vehicle to a shoulder or safe nearby road, out of traffic. Utah Highway Patrol Colonel Michael

“Drivers who are distracted, drunk, drugged or drowsy.”

In addition to helping decrease fatalities and injuries, TIM also fights the rising cost of these incidents, which has sharply increased, according to the American Automobile Association (AAA). The cost of a fatal crash is \$6 million, and an injury incident is \$126,000, both up by 85% over a four-year period. The costs include lost earnings, medical expenses, emergency services, property damage and travel delays. As good TIM practices are gradually being put into action, trainees across the country are reporting improvements in overall safety at traffic incidents.

### A TEAM APPROACH

Nearly three decades ago, when Rapich began his career in law enforcement, he learned a fundamental principal of traffic safety that he carries with him today in Utah: “Whatever is happening, whatever the incident, get there and put things in place immediately to stop it from getting worse,” Rapich says. “That’s the number one thing we do.”

The National TIM Responder Training program has been completed in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico by personnel including DOT employees, police, tow truck operators and fire

rescue/EMS teams. The first responders learn recommended practices for safe and efficient incident mitigation, such as best practices for towing and recovery; “authority removal” laws, which remove liability when taking wrecks off the road; and uses of helpful cutting-edge technology such as drones.

“We can’t stress enough the importance of first responders and agency leaders becoming educated on TIM, and requiring its training within their organizations,” Kehrl says. “It saves lives, and is one of the most important resources available to the first responder community.”

Colonel Dereck Stewart of the Tennessee Highway Patrol said since the state began implementing TIM initiatives in 2014, it has become a mainstay of their operations.

“The program addresses a number of goals,” Stewart says. “We’ve expanded TIM to go beyond law enforcement and include partners such as the towing industry. Every training opportunity we have now, they have a seat at the table.” Prior to TIM, Stewart says, all the first responders would show up to a crash scene, each with their own protocol. “Now that we’ve come together as one, it’s more of a team approach and an opportunity to improve the safety not only of our responders but the community and the customers we serve every day.”

Stewart says he would like to improve TIM education to other stakeholders, which will further increase safety and decrease the time spent at the scene of an accident. Various channels will reinforce the message—including social media, statewide outreach and visits to schools, where troopers occasionally talk to students, reminding them not to drive distracted and what steps to take if they’re involved in a crash.

“TIM is needed and necessary,” Stewart says. “It has changed the way we go about doing our business, and I think it’ll change and save lives going forward.”

In Utah, Rapich reminds troopers that as soon as a traffic incident occurs, it starts impacting traffic. “That creates congestion,” he says. “It’s going to back up far beyond what you can see at the scene, and that has the potential of causing devastating consequences behind you, as well as what you’re dealing with right there.” He says TIM training reinforces three priorities at a traffic incident: safety (of victims, motorists and first responders), time delays (even a small traffic incident in a high-volume area can create two-hour delays) and economic impacts (productivity loss can mean delayed workers, late deliveries, environmental effects or air quality impact). ▶

Rapich says the force has been working with state lawmakers to develop legislation that makes it clear a person involved in a crash can move out of traffic to a safe location. “People were under the perception that if they’re in a crash, they need to stay where they are and wait until a police officer arrives,” Rapich explains. “We’re trying to defeat that mindset. You need to get yourself to safety and get out of a hazardous environment.”

Move Over laws can also help protect first responders. If you’re passing an incident scene, slow down and move over a lane to provide a protective buffer for responders and the motorists behind you (you can get a ticket if you don’t).

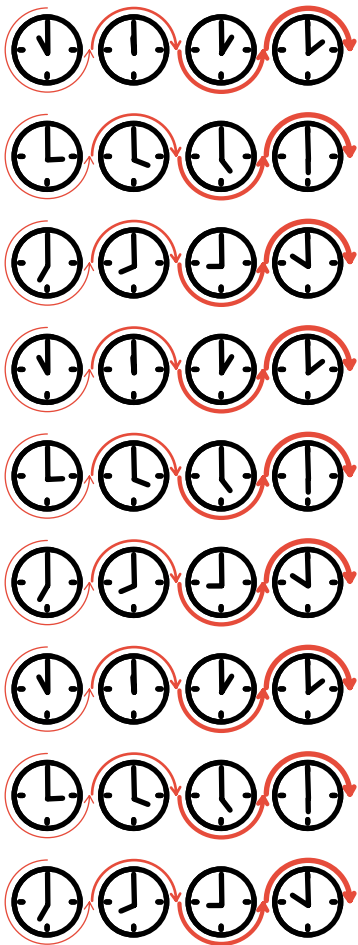
**go online**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE MOVE OVER INITIATIVE, VISIT [TRAFFICSAFETYMARKETING.GOV/MOVEOVER](http://TRAFFICSAFETYMARKETING.GOV/MOVEOVER).

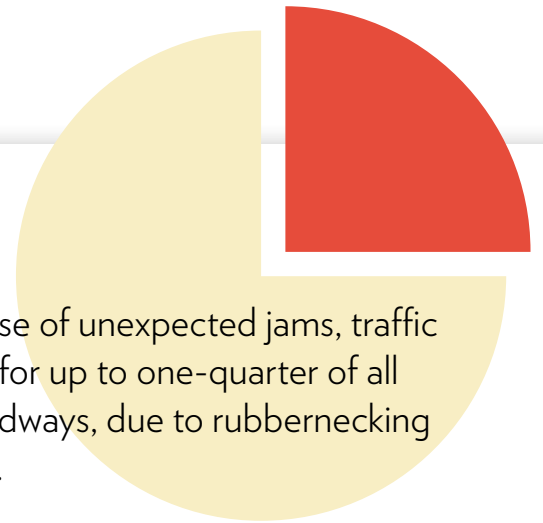


# TRAFFIC INCIDENT STATS

Every year the average motorist loses nearly a full workweek (36 hours) sitting in traffic due to traffic incidents.



As the largest cause of unexpected jams, traffic incidents account for up to one-quarter of all congestion on roadways, due to rubbernecking and blocked lanes.



Traffic incidents are among the leading causes of death for EMS responders and law enforcement officers. According to the Emergency Responder Safety Institute, the 44 fatalities of emergency responders in 2019 include:

law enforcement officers



tow truck operators and mobile mechanics



fire/EMS personnel



Americans burn more than 2.8 billion gallons of gas every year stuck in incident-related traffic—that's nearly 24 gallons of gas per driver.





One of the prevailing philosophies within TIM is that if an incident can be moved from a high-traffic environment, move it. Whether it's a broken-down motorist or a crash, Rapich asks his troopers: "Do you need to be there?" Getting first responders and victims out of the high-risk environment, he says, alleviates concerns about the three priorities almost immediately.

"From the minute dispatchers get the call about a crash, they will ask if the drivers have the ability to get off the freeway," Rapich says. If so, the motorists drive to a safer, predetermined location, where a trooper meets them. "We don't have our officers or first responders in that hazardous environment. We don't have the victim in that environment anymore. We're not impacting traffic. And we're not creating delays or situations for something else to happen."

*"TIM has changed the way we go about doing our business, and I think it'll change and save lives going forward."*

**COLONEL DERECK STEWART**

*Tennessee Highway Patrol*

If responders can't avoid being in a high-risk environment, they use TIM procedures to quickly evaluate the scene and do whatever necessary to make it safe. That includes ensuring the right responders arrive at the right location, taking an extra lane, slowing traffic, setting up an early warning for oncoming drivers, providing emergency medical aid until help arrives and clearing the crash path, especially in icy conditions (if one car slid on an icy spot, another vehicle may follow the same path).

Rapich says all the components of TIM—including training first responders, pushing out the message internally, and educating the public through mainstream and social media—have been "absolutely effective" and that increasingly, responders and the public understand the risks of associated traffic incidents. Rapich says although they've made progress, they'll never be able to "check the box" and stop worrying about TIM. "It's an infinite [challenge]," he says. "If you're involved in traffic management, it's something you're engaging in every single day." **m**

## NEW PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to its longstanding relationships with national law enforcement, fire and rescue, EMS, transportation, public works and towing associations, the FHWA is developing partnership opportunities with organizations such as AAA, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, the Institute of Transportation Engineers, the National League of Cities, the National Governors Association, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and the National Safety Council. Dozens of TIM committees meet routinely to advance a variety of efficient TIM practices specific to their region of the country. If you're interested in getting involved with initiatives to improve TIM, connect with your jurisdiction's DOT and public safety leaders to help spread the word.



**LET'S PUT THE RESOURCES AND POLICIES IN PLACE THAT WOULD ALLOW US TO HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT AND SAVE LIVES.**



*Editor's note: In the time that has passed since we interviewed Dr. Grondel, he has taken a new position as the Vice President of Traffic Safety and Government Relations at the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility. AAMVA thanks him for his years of public service and offers congratulations on this new role.*

**Q & A WITH**

## Dr. Darrin Grondel

**HIGHWAY SAFETY LEADER SHARES A ROADMAP FOR A SAFER FUTURE**

**Q YOU'VE HAD MANY EXPERIENCES IN YOUR NEARLY THREE-DECADE CAREER, FROM GETTING YOUR START WITH THE WASHINGTON STATE PATROL IN 1992 TO DOING CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS TO INTERNAL AFFAIRS TO YOUR CURRENT ROLE. NOW THAT YOU HAVE A BROADER VIEW OF THE INDUSTRY, WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU SEE HAPPENING THAT YOU DIDN'T WHEN YOU STARTED OUT?**

How national and local policies can either work together or against each other. When you're working as an officer or agent, you may not have access to some of this bigger picture. As a director, all of a sudden you realize, 'Oh my gosh, the politics that are involved.'

*"What I think about is how we actually address the root cause of why [people] drink and drive."*

**DR. DARRIN GRONDEL**

*Chair of the Governors Highway Safety Association*

**Q HOW DOES THAT PLAY OUT?**

Let's say we're talking about reducing drinking and driving. As a trooper, I viewed it from a jail or punishment mindset—scarlet letter kind of stuff. Now, what I think about is how we actually address the root cause of why they drink and drive, instead of just throwing people to the court and letting the court figure it out.

For years, we've been talking and educating about not drinking and driving, not taking drugs and driving. That doesn't change peoples' minds. If we truly value safe

driving, then why do we have an \$8.3 billion cost in fatal crashes to Washington state, yet we only put \$50 million towards prevention? With sobriety checkpoints, for instance, some countries have reported a 30% reduction in fatal crashes. It's not about making arrests. It's about deterrence. But checkpoints are illegal in Washington.

So, if you truly value safe driving, let's put the resources and policies in place that would allow us to have the greatest impact and save lives. It's about what can we do to make a positive difference every day.

## FAST FACTS

### Dr. Darrin Grondel



#### EDUCATION

Doctoral degree, Brandman University; Master's degree, The Evergreen State College; Bachelor's degree, Brigham Young University



#### VEHICLE

2018 Toyota Camry



#### FAVORITE BANDS

Simple Minds, U2, Iron Maiden



(Left) Dr. Grondel speaks at the GHSA Chair Opening Session.

(Right) Dr. Grondel and Chief John Batiste, Washington State Police, pose for a photo at the GHSA Conference.



#### **Q** WHAT WAS IT LIKE BECOMING THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNORS HIGHWAY SAFETY ASSOCIATION (GHSA)?

People have the trust and confidence in you to help lead them because you're leading every state in the U.S. But I see things from a very different perspective than I did when I was just secretary. Looking at the fiduciary responsibilities that you have, the influence that you can have with your federal agency partners and being able to affect change, it was a very different role.

#### **Q** IF YOU COULD ONLY ACCOMPLISH ONE THING IN YOUR TENURE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

For me, it's to really get us back to the basics and to help us to build a very strong culture around safety.

#### **Q** WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING SAFETY RIGHT NOW?

Impaired driving. It's not just the legalization efforts related to cannabis, but more of the social acceptance of taking any drug. We need more resources and officers to effectively address that. We have to help the states and the courts realize that this is important.

#### **Q** AFTER YEARS OF PATROL WORK, DO YOU STILL LIKE TO DRIVE?

I love driving. I love that kind of freedom. Some people say thoughts and ideas come together for them in the shower. That happens for me when I'm driving. There's this element in patrol, too, where you learn some key defensive driving, fun stuff like that. And I like to continue to practice some of those skills.

#### **Q** DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER HOBBIES?

Watching college football. I played a little in junior college in Idaho, and I always had dreams of playing at a Division 1 level. Although I think my eligibility has dried up now.

But it's fun to watch these young players. To see the athletic things they pull off, see their aspirations and hopes. And it brings all my kids together. I even joke with my daughter, who knows so much about football, that we're going to get her a headset so she can start giving advice to these head coaches. **m**



# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

## AAMVA'S SALVAGE AND JUNK VEHICLES BEST PRACTICE AIMS TO REDUCE VARIANCES IN TITLE BRANDING ACROSS JURISDICTIONS

**KARYN WRYE**, SENIOR DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AT MANHEIM, AND CO-CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL AUTO AUCTION ASSOCIATION

Every jurisdiction has its own way of branding vehicles, which can lead to confusion. Depending on the jurisdiction and the amount of damage to a vehicle, that vehicle could receive a junk or salvage brand, or even no brand at all.

For instance, in Iowa, a salvage vehicle is one that has repair costs exceeding 50% of the vehicle's fair market value before it was damaged. In Louisiana, that percentage goes up to 75%. And in Utah, that number goes up to 100%. So, clearly, it varies widely.

It's important for these regulations to be consistent for several reasons. First, a damaged vehicle's ownership documents need to be appropriately noted, thereby providing valuable information to future owners.

Secondly, consistent regulations prevent fraud. For example, having consistent branding practices across jurisdictions could eliminate the fraudulent practice of using stolen parts to rebuild a salvage vehicle.

And lastly, consistent regulations need to be in place to protect consumers. If a vehicle is branded as "junk," it should not be rebuilt, according to AAMVA. But not every jurisdiction follows that practice.

AAMVA encourages uniformity and consistency across jurisdictions because without it, there is an impediment on interstate commerce. Cars are being sold across state lines today more than they ever have before, so it's critical that every jurisdiction is on the same page.

On that note, jurisdictions should honor a prior jurisdiction's titling brand. If a vehicle was issued a flood brand in one jurisdiction and resold in another that does not have a flood brand, for instance, it's entirely possible that the original brand could be lost or the vehicle could be rebranded entirely. We want everything to be consistent so that brands don't get lost or changed. We want a complete history of jurisdiction branding information. Currently, we can see that kind of information on the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS), but even there it's confusing because of the nonuniformity across jurisdictions.

I think change is coming, but jurisdictions have to re-assess their processes and work to get it right, so it will likely take some time. Implementing the recommendations in the AAMVA Best Practices in their entirety will help jurisdictions uniformly brand vehicles, achieving a comprehensive vehicle history and, ultimately, improving consumer protection.

**ALLAN SHINNEY, DIRECTOR, MOTOR VEHICLE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION, UTAH STATE TAX COMMISSION**

Here in Utah, branding a car as “junk” means that only its parts can be used or the vehicle will be destroyed. “Salvage,” on the other hand, means the vehicle sustained damage but it is safe to go back on the road if it is rebuilt properly. The terms often get lumped together, but they’re completely different.

That said, these terms mean different things in different jurisdictions. AAMVA is doing an excellent job trying to create standardization across all jurisdictions, but we have a long way to go.

In our region, we work well with all the surrounding jurisdictions, but even then, when vehicles come in from other regions overnight on transport, it can be difficult to keep up. It should be mandatory that all jurisdictions follow the same guidelines.

Because a vehicle is the second biggest asset most people will acquire—next to a house—we need to be able to guarantee the value of that vehicle. Otherwise, innocent people will get burned, and their vehicles could unknowingly pose a threat to the motoring public.

Jurisdictions should not be allowed to “debrand” or rebrand a vehicle. I fought for that here in Utah, and now that’s the rule. If a vehicle has a junk title when it comes into our state, it stays that way. It’s not my responsibility to clean the title and have someone else get burned. Putting that car back on the road would be helping the insurance companies make more money, and I don’t want any part of that. Hopefully other jurisdictions feel the same way.

Far too often, it’s all about making money. Dealers, of course, want to make money, but they know when they’re buying a junk car at an auction. And because of all the confusion and inconsistencies, insurance companies can continue to hike up prices. It’s a total nightmare.

Safety should be our top priority, not profits. AAMVA and its *Salvage and Junk Vehicle Best Practice* guide are truly the light at the end of the tunnel.

*“AAMVA is doing an excellent job trying to create standardization across all jurisdictions, but we have a long way to go.”*

**ALLAN SHINNEY**

Director, Motor Vehicle Enforcement Division, Utah State Tax Commission

**TONY HALL, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF REGIONAL SERVICES, TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES, VEHICLE TITLES AND REGISTRATION DIVISION**

There are 51 jurisdictions in the U.S., and every single one of them has a different way in which they establish what is junk and what is repairable. This causes countless inconsistencies.

These inconsistencies pose a major threat to consumer protection. Really, it all boils down to that. The vast majority of the motoring public doesn’t understand the ins and outs of vehicle safety, so they rely on the jurisdiction to brand these vehicles appropriately. Consumers need to have at least some awareness of what, if any, incidents happened to that vehicle.

Without uniform regulations in place, people can still sell unsafe vehicles. This could impact that vehicle’s operator, of course, but also all the vehicle operators around them.

Consumers should be able to rely on the jurisdiction to keep them safe, but even at the agency level, we can become confused by all the different requirements. When a car is considered “salvage” in one jurisdiction, why is it different in another? It just doesn’t make sense. Here in Texas, we at least honor a prior jurisdiction’s branding of a vehicle, even if our definitions aren’t an exact match. All other jurisdictions should do the same.

The terminology needs to be consistent as well. For instance, in Texas, we don’t call a vehicle “junk,” we call it “non-repairable.” And once a vehicle is repaired, we call it a “rebuilt salvage vehicle” while others might call it a “prior salvage” or just “rebuilt.” They all mean the same thing. When that’s confusing to us as motor vehicle professionals, you know it’s even more confusing to the general public. In turn, this can lead to problems with insurance companies. It just needs to be spelled out clearly in black and white.

Anytime you can create consistencies so everyone is communicating and on the same page, it makes everyone’s job easier in the long run. You don’t have to waste time asking what things mean. And I know I’d rather not waste time explaining things.

The AAMVA best practice guide lays out a number of good recommendations for how titling and branding should be handled, and what kind of inspections vehicles should go through so all repairs will be consistent across jurisdictions. If every jurisdiction fully adopted the entire document and implemented it, we could keep the motoring public safe, and people would be aware of what they’re buying and operating. **m**







# Pulling Together

## *AMID THE CHALLENGES AND UNCERTAINTY OF COVID-19, THE AAMVA FAMILY WILL WEATHER THE STORM TOGETHER*

Spring is always a season I look forward to. It's an especially exciting time for the AAMVA family. We shake off the cold weather and get ready to head into AAMVA conference season. Starting in March with the Workshop & Law Institute, where our frontline managers get to network and learn from their colleagues, to the Leadership Academy, where our future leaders grow and focus on the next steps in their careers, right up to the start of our Regional Conference season in May, spring brings more and more opportunities for us to connect with one another, learn from one another, and delve into how to best serve our customers.

But these are strange days we're living through, and this spring, rather than coming together, we're being forced to adapt and work separately from one another. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a game-changer across the board, in our personal lives as well as our professional lives. We've had to change tack to respond to this crisis and figure out how best to serve our communities while keeping each other safe and healthy. And while this is usually a season of us traveling from all over North America to meet with our colleagues in person, we've had to forgo those conferences and meetings to deal with unprecedented circumstances.

While the pandemic has made it necessary to keep our distance from one another, I am continually heartened by how it has brought us together in so many other ways. I've seen administrators checking in with one another, pooling our resources and ideas to discuss how we can all collectively overcome this crisis. That's what the AAMVA family is to me—people coming together to work toward a common goal: Safe Drivers, Safe Vehicles, Secure Identities, and top of mind these days, Saving Lives.

This isn't the first time we've had to come together in trying times. From the days following 9/11, to dealing with severe weather, hurricanes and floods, we have been and always will be there for each other, ready to be a lending hand or a listening ear, sharing what is working for us, and asking for help in dealing with our challenges.

I don't know what lies ahead for us—no one does—but I do know that this community will continue to forge strong bonds and unbreakable ties. We will weather this storm, as we have in the past, together. **m**

*Whitney Brewster  
2019-2020 AAMVA  
Chair of the Board*



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