

# move

## NEW TESTS FOR NEW TECH

New technology safety features on commercial vehicles have prompted upgrades to the CDL testing model



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Safe vehicles  
Secure identities  
Saving lives!



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We are excited to announce the 2022 Annual International Conference (AIC) will be held in person in Baltimore, MD! On behalf of Chair of the Board, Chrissy Nizer, we are looking forward to bringing everyone together for AAMVA's premier event to share experiences and learn in Baltimore, a charming city filled with rich cultural attractions, an active downtown, and legendary seafood. The AIC showcases the latest trends in the motor vehicle and law enforcement community, and provides a forum for chief administrators to learn and grow with fellow colleagues. This year's sessions will cover a wide variety of topics tailored to the AAMVA community. Don't miss this opportunity to see old faces, meet new friends, and learn from our community's most innovative leaders.

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# 14

## CDL TESTING GETS A REFRESH

New technology safety features on commercial vehicles have prompted upgrades to the CDL testing model

BY REGINA LUDES

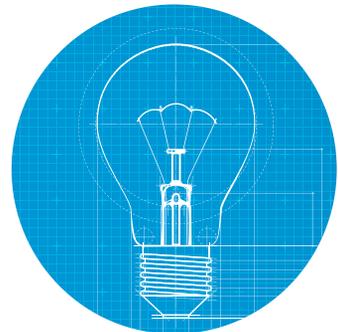


# 20

## BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

How innovations in new driver testing are challenging old programs

BY STEVE HENDERSHOT



## IN THE HEADLIGHTS



FROM THE  
PRESIDENT

**05** Connecting great policies with actualized outcomes

**06**

**RESOURCES**  
Best practices for detecting and deterring dyed fuel fraud

**09**

**DASHBOARD**  
See what the data tells us about non-commercial driver testing

**12**

**MUSINGS**  
Tutorial for the new AAMVA website

**08**

**INDUSTRY INSIGHT**  
How Illinois worked with MV Solutions to digitize its insurance verification system

**10**

**JURISDICTION SPOTLIGHT**  
How a bus driver shortage led to a new virtual training program

**13**

**AAMVA CROSSWORD**  
Test your wits and motor vehicle knowledge



BEHIND THE WHEEL

**24** A discussion with Tammi Popp, Chair of the International Registration Plan



CROSSROADS

**26** CDL testing is set to receive its first updates in about two decades. What is behind these changes, and how will they impact the industry?

TAILLIGHTS

**28** Technology allows motor vehicle agencies to rethink core services

## ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

Don't forget to visit [MOVEmag.org](http://MOVEmag.org) to read the latest web exclusives.

Catch up with Chair of the International Board, Chrissy Nizer, in our web-exclusive content.

[MOVEmag.org/checking-in-with-the-chair-5](http://MOVEmag.org/checking-in-with-the-chair-5)





# Closing the Gap

CONNECTING GREAT POLICIES WITH ACTUALIZED OUTCOMES

**A**AMVA's vision of Safe drivers, Safe vehicles, Secure identities, Saving lives, does not rest on a single solution. Instead, it is a continuous effort built upon strategies and resources developed and implemented over time by a community of stakeholders. When it comes to reducing highway fatalities and serious injury crashes it takes all of us, using new ideas and resources to achieve tangible results in lives saved.

Recently, AAMVA's Board of Directors took action to leverage new tools and resources in furtherance of reaching that vision. Through strengthened partnerships and the use of new driver history capability to help identify unsafe drivers sooner, AAMVA is working to close the gaps between great policies and actualized outcomes.

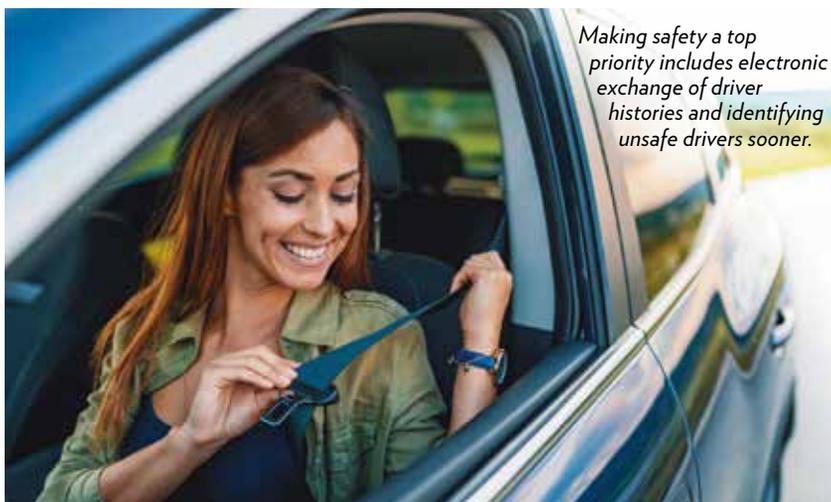
First, the Board is recommending to all AAMVA jurisdictions the approval of a new safety policy that calls on members to establish strong connections with their jurisdiction's Governor's Highway Safety Office (GHSO) or equivalent provincial highway safety initiative. In their furtherance of jurisdictional safety goals, the specific strategies outlined

in the policy will help DMVs and traffic enforcement leaders realize their involvement in developing and implementing effective highway safety behavioral countermeasures. Steps include:

- Assign a senior representative or liaison to the highway safety office.
- Sit on the executive committee tasked with developing the jurisdiction's strategic safety resources, including development of the State Highway Safety Plan or equivalent.
- Participate in the Traffic Records Coordinating Council.
- Identify ways GHSOs, MVAs, and law enforcement can work together to achieve their highway safety goals.

In addition, the Board and the State-to-State (S2S) Governance Committee approved moving ahead with steps that will pave the way to operationalize the interstate Driver License Compact through state use of the S2S Driver History Record (S2S DHR) capability. State DMVs that are implementing S2S DHR commit to electronic exchange of driver histories, suspensions and withdrawals for non-commercial drivers. In effect, this capability operationalizes a commitment states made decades ago in the Driver License Compact to achieve one driver, one license, one driver history record. While it will take time to implement, its effect will enable DMVs, law enforcement, prosecutors, judges and employers to gain timely, accurate information on high-risk drivers at the time of their encounter. It is a significant improvement over the paper process.

These two strategies are among the many that are needed to approach the visionary goal of zero deaths. I encourage you to take a first step toward strengthening your own involvement with your jurisdiction's highway safety efforts by looking at the countermeasures compiled and analyzed by the Centers for Disease Control on behalf of NHTSA. It analyzes where countermeasures like ignition interlocks, graduated licensing, camera enforcement, automated driver systems and license convictions/withdrawals can or are making a difference. These are programs you directly influence and control, making the report a great place to start your conversation with your jurisdiction's safety counterparts: *Countermeasures That Work. m*

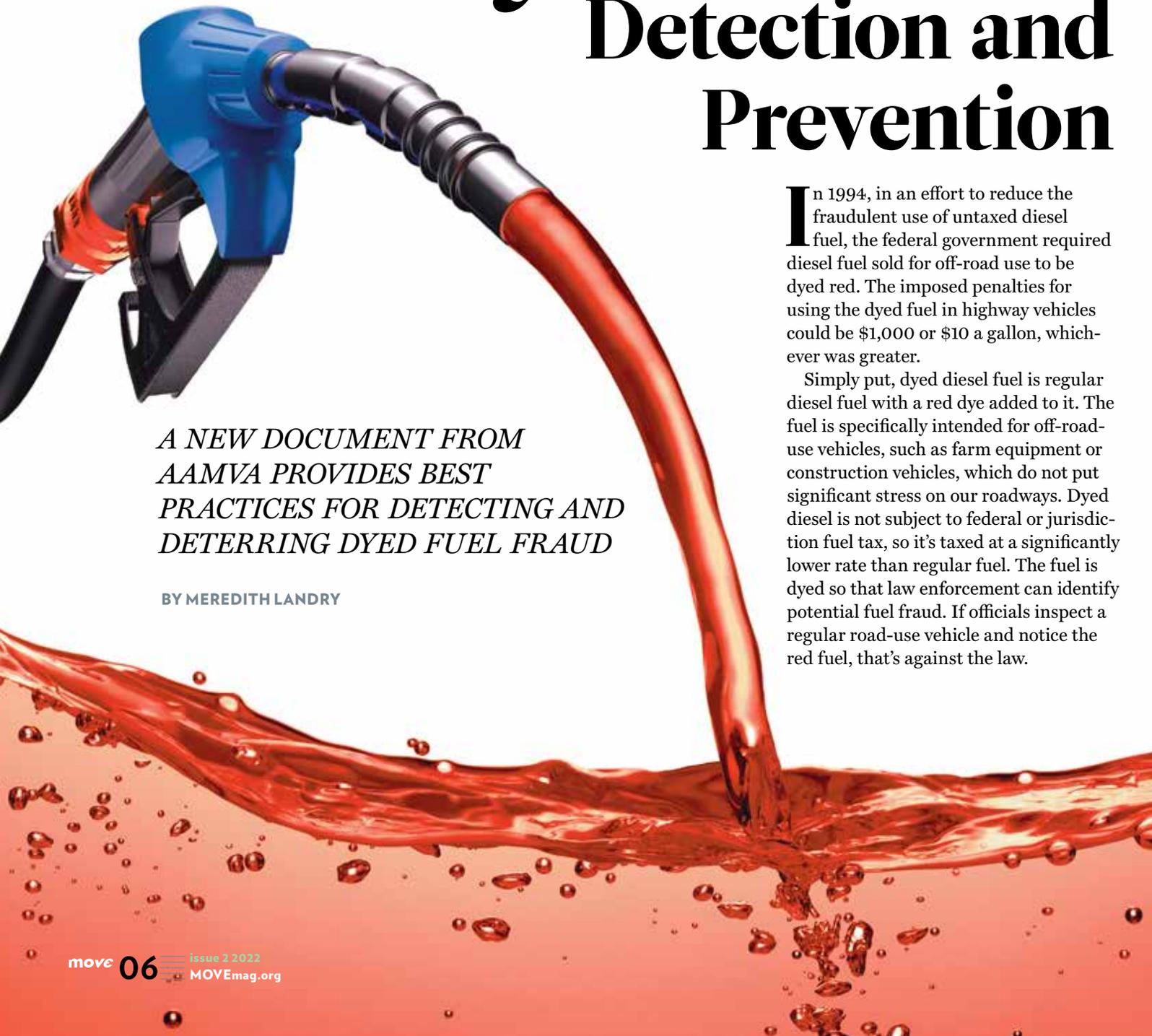


Making safety a top priority includes electronic exchange of driver histories and identifying unsafe drivers sooner.

Anne Ferro  
AAMVA President and CEO

For more detail on  
*Countermeasures  
That Work*, see  
the full report  
at [tinyurl.com/  
Countermeasures  
ThatWork](https://tinyurl.com/CountermeasuresThatWork).

# Dyed Fuel Detection and Prevention



*A NEW DOCUMENT FROM  
AAMVA PROVIDES BEST  
PRACTICES FOR DETECTING AND  
DETECTING DYED FUEL FRAUD*

BY MEREDITH LANDRY

In 1994, in an effort to reduce the fraudulent use of untaxed diesel fuel, the federal government required diesel fuel sold for off-road use to be dyed red. The imposed penalties for using the dyed fuel in highway vehicles could be \$1,000 or \$10 a gallon, whichever was greater.

Simply put, dyed diesel fuel is regular diesel fuel with a red dye added to it. The fuel is specifically intended for off-road-use vehicles, such as farm equipment or construction vehicles, which do not put significant stress on our roadways. Dyed diesel is not subject to federal or jurisdiction fuel tax, so it's taxed at a significantly lower rate than regular fuel. The fuel is dyed so that law enforcement can identify potential fuel fraud. If officials inspect a regular road-use vehicle and notice the red fuel, that's against the law.

“We’re talking about hundreds of millions of dollars basically taken from our road use tax funds because people misuse that dyed fuel,” says Paul Steier, director of vehicle programs for AAMVA.

Fuel tax is generally deposited into state and federal highway accounts to build, repair and maintain roadway infrastructure. So when dyed diesel is fraudulently used in vehicles for highway use, jurisdictions lose revenue and highways become more degraded.

To address this issue directly, AAMVA recently established a Fuel Tax Fraud Enforcement Working Group of jurisdiction members with expertise in the field who researched, developed and compiled pertinent information from a variety of resources.

The result? The “Dyed Diesel Fuel Fraud Detection and Enforcement Best Practices,” published in March.

The 44-page document is intended to equip jurisdictions with information related to program development, education, compliance, enforcement and administration. Jurisdictions looking to develop or enhance a dyed diesel enforcement program can find value in utilizing this document for optimal program efficiency and effectiveness.

“The No. 1 thing this document does is provide administrators with the knowledge and tools to develop their own dyed fuel detection program,” Steier says. “Dyed diesel inspection programs are the single most effective deterrent of illegal dyed diesel use and have resulted in millions of dollars of reclaimed revenue.”

So what else does the document cover?

In its six chapters, the document delves into how to build a case to create or enhance a dyed diesel program, what legal and enforcement authority

*“Dyed diesel inspection programs are the single most effective deterrent of illegal dyed diesel use and have resulted in millions of dollars of reclaimed revenue.”*

**PAUL STEIER,**

Director of Vehicle Programs for AAMVA

considerations are important to factor in, as well as how to address staffing, training and equipment.

“Training your staff to do the physical inspection is one thing, but you also have to be trained on the equipment,” Steier says. “So we provide examples of various tools and technology you can use to detect dyed fuel during your inspection.”

For instance, one newer form of technology to detect dyed fuel is the use of smart devices and the Internet of Things (IoT). Enforcement officers can use handheld mobile devices that use LEDs, which use light absorption to determine the type of fuel, to detect dyed fuel in the tank. The use of the IoT allows the device to communicate the results to the appropriate

server when necessary and automatically alert the officer of the results.

AAMVA’s best practices document then outlines what comes after fuel fraud is detected. How should officials preserve evidence? What is the chain of custody? Will there be civil or criminal penalties?

“There are so many situations where questions can arise,” Steier says. “We want to help you make sense of the different elements of a dyed fuel detection program and to keep drivers honest.” **m**

**go online** 

**DOWNLOAD THE DYED DIESEL FUEL FRAUD DETECTION AND ENFORCEMENT BEST PRACTICES AT [AAMVA.ORG/PUBLICATIONS-NEWS/BEST-PRACTICES-STANDARDS](https://www.aamva.org/publications-news/best-practices-standards).**

# Modernizing Insurance Verification

*HOW ILLINOIS WORKED WITH MV SOLUTIONS TO DIGITIZE ITS INSURANCE VERIFICATION SYSTEM* **BY STEVE HENDERSHOT**

**A**ccidents involving uninsured drivers have plagued Illinois for years. Yet when state lawmakers passed legislation about a decade ago requesting changes to the state’s insurance verification system, leaders at the Illinois Secretary of State’s Vehicle Services Department had to acknowledge an unpleasant fact: “We had absolutely no way of [complying],” recalls deputy director Carrie Leitner.

The Vehicle Services team instead received permission from the legislature to form a task force to investigate a path forward. The state’s old verification system consisted of a random, annual postcard-based survey of about 300,000 of the state’s 12.7 million residents. The process was manual and time-intensive, and was both too easily gamed by bad actors and also vulnerable to improper suspensions when insured motorists failed to return their postcards within 30 days.

The task force ultimately led to a request for bids from vendors who could modernize the state’s approach. Illinois leaders selected Blythewood, South Carolina-based MV Solutions, which worked with the company to develop the Illinois Insurance Verification System (ILIVS), replacing the postcard system with an

electronic one that interfaced with insurance providers to verify the insurance status of every registered vehicle in the state, utilizing weekly “book-of-business” submissions from the insurers using the Insurance Industry Committee on Motor Vehicle Administration’s established model. It helped that two of the country’s largest auto insurers, Allstate and State Farm, both are headquartered in Illinois.

Illinois’ Vehicle Services team spent six months in 2019 working with MV Solutions to implement the new technology. Then came COVID, which delayed the program’s statewide rollout until July 2021. But when the program finally launched, it quickly delivered on its promise: Within six months, the percentage of registered vehicles without verified insurance fell from 12.7% of Illinois vehicles to 8.4%. Over that same span,

Illinois officials are currently sending 2,500 suspension letters per day to uninsured drivers.



200,000 drivers have either obtained insurance or received suspensions.

The change means state officials are now tracking the insurance status of several million drivers rather than a sample of 300,000, yet the electronic system also has made the state's operation more efficient. The same staff of 40 remains able to handle all customer-service issues, even with an exponentially larger pool of drivers. In addition, the electronic system requires fewer in-person visits to the secretary of state's office because most issues can be resolved using an online portal.

"The portal keeps a great number of people out of our facilities and off the phones," Leitner says. "People have direct access to clear up an issue. They can tell us that a vehicle was in storage, or say, 'Hey, I have insurance, but there was a mixup because I switched policies'—and then provide proof."

Illinois officials are currently sending 2,500 suspension letters per day to uninsured drivers. Customers without insurance are required either to surrender their plates or obtain valid insurance prior to a specified date. Drivers with lapsed coverage must pay a fine prior to reinstatement.

MV Solutions President Shawn Goff credits the state of Illinois team with embracing a dramatically new verification model.

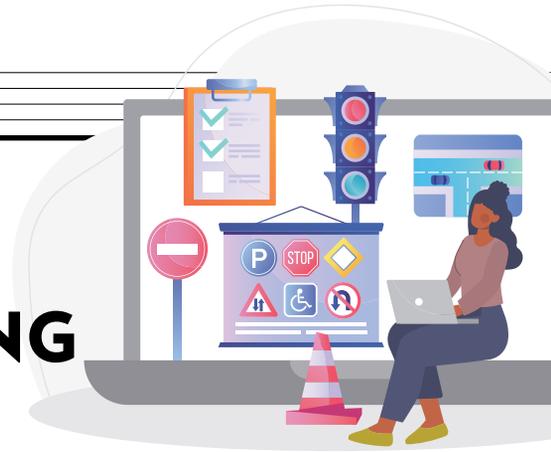
"It was a new process for the state of Illinois, and they had an open mind to new technology and to a different approach," Goff says.

For Leitner, the most meaningful sign that the program is working is that she's no longer fielding calls from colleagues and constituents about accidents involving uninsured drivers.

"Those were standard complaints for years, and I haven't had one in the last 18 months or so because now I can say, 'This is what we've done, and it's working—it's driving down the uninsured rate,'" Leitner says. **m**

# DRIVER TESTING

BY AAMVA'S DATA LADY, JANICE DLUZYNSKI



These surveys focus on non-commercial driver testing. All surveys have additional questions that provide more information. Full details can be found at: [AAMVA.ORG/SURVEYS/SURVEYUSER/SEARCHSURVEYRESPONSES](https://www.aamva.org/surveys/surveyuser/searchsurveyresponses).

## NON-COMMERCIAL DRIVER TESTING PRACTICES

32 RESPONSES

### DID YOUR JURISDICTION CHANGE ITS NON-COMMERCIAL TESTING PRACTICES DURING COVID?

Only the knowledge test: 0

Only the skills test: 

Both knowledge & skills test: 

Neither: 

## ONLINE KNOWLEDGE TESTING - PROCTOR

33 RESPONSES

### DOES YOUR JURISDICTION PROVIDE THE NON-COMMERCIAL DRIVER KNOWLEDGE TEST ONLINE?

Yes: 

No: 

### IS A PROCTOR REQUIRED TO ADMINISTER THE KNOWLEDGE TEST ONLINE?

Proctor required for applicants under the age of 18: 

Proctor required for all applicants: 

Proctor not required: 

### IF A PROCTOR IS REQUIRED, DO THEY NEED TO HOLD A VALID CREDENTIAL FROM YOUR JURISDICTION?

Yes: 

No: 

## TESTING & MATERIALS IN OTHER LANGUAGES

32 RESPONSES

### DOES YOUR JURISDICTION OFFER THE DRIVER KNOWLEDGE TEST IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH?

Yes: 

No: 

### DOES YOUR JURISDICTION OFFER THE KNOWLEDGE TEST IN DIFFERENT DIALECTS OF THE SAME LANGUAGE?

Yes: 

No: 

## ADVANCED DRIVER SYSTEMS AND EDUCATION

28 RESPONSES

### DOES YOUR STATE INCLUDE ADVANCED DRIVER ASSISTANCE SYSTEMS (ADAS) INFORMATION IN YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSING MANUAL?

Yes: 

No: 

### DOES YOUR STATE INCLUDE ADAS QUESTIONS ON THE KNOWLEDGE TEST?

Yes: 0

No: 

jurisdiction spotlight

# Drivers Wanted

*HOW A BUS DRIVER SHORTAGE AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC LED TO A NEW VIRTUAL TRAINING PROGRAM IN NORTH CAROLINA*

BY MEREDITH LANDRY



Today, school bus drivers are in high demand. According to a recent survey by the Rand Corp., 57% of school districts in the country had a considerable shortage of bus drivers this year. And in urban districts, that number went up to 69%.

In September 2020, in response to this shortage as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (NCDMV) launched a virtual school bus training pilot program in the Wake County public school district, one of the largest districts in the state.

“We needed to train more drivers, and at the same time, we needed to keep everyone safe and apart,” says Tim Hayworth, director of training and development for the

NCDMV. “We were dealing with parallel problems and had to come up with outside-of-the-box solutions.”

The Wake County pilot program ran from September through December, during which four classes graduated about 50 students. By March 2021, the training was ready to go statewide.

“As with anything new, there were some bugs in the system,” Hayworth says. “But as we got feedback from students and supervisors, we’ve been able to make adjustments along

the way and improve the experience for everyone.”

Prior to the driver shortage and pandemic, bus driver training at the NCDMV consisted of three eight-hour days in a classroom followed by four specific tests, all of which students had to pass in order to get their permit. After 14 days with a permit, students then went on to do behind-the-wheel training, where they were taught how to drive the bus as well as its mechanics. After passing those tests, students could then receive their official license to drive a school bus. Hayworth and his team say they’ve seen students as young as 18 and as old as 75 complete the training to become school bus drivers in North Carolina.

The new virtual training follows the same process, but the eight-hour classroom days are now virtual. Classes

are led by two trained instructors on an online platform similar to Zoom called WebEx.

“While one instructor is presenting the information, the second instructor is following the chat, answering questions and running tech support,” says Lithia Williams, lead program coordinator for the Virtual Training Section at the NCDMV.

The one part of the training that has not been replaced virtually is the behind-the-wheel portion where students physically drive and inspect the bus under direct supervision.

“Maybe one day we’ll be able to use video games or simulators like pilots or surgeons, but we’re not there yet,” Hayworth says.

  
The pass rate for the online classes is almost identical to the in-person classes: 83.5%.

The law, however, still states that a licensed driver must be present while a permitted driver is driving. Considering all the safety precautions instituted due to COVID-19, perhaps the law will one day allow for a remote supervisor, but until then, this section of the training isn’t going anywhere, he adds.

To date, the NCDMV has held 26 virtual school bus driver training classes. Going forward, the plan is to hold two classes a month with up to 200 students per class. But even as the success of the virtual classes continues to grow, Hayworth says they will still hold in-person classes as well for the foreseeable future.

So how have they measured their own success? Their pass rate is almost identical to the in-person classes: 83.5%.

“The bottom line is if people are taking the virtual class, but nobody can pass it, then it’s never going to be a success,” Hayworth says.

In only 14 months, the NCDMV virtual training has seen over 2,000 students. Clearly, the NCDMV is doing its part to fill the bus driver shortage.

“I really can’t say what date we’ll have the program perfected, but you don’t learn to swim until you get in the water,” Hayworth says. “We’re excited to dive deeper.” **m**



*“While one instructor is presenting the information, the second instructor is following the chat, answering questions and running tech support.”*

**LITHIA WILLIAMS**

Lead Program Coordinator for the Virtual Training Section at the NCDMV

 musings

{NEW AAMVA WEBSITE TUTORIAL}



## WELCOME TO THE NEW AAMVA WEBSITE

The newly redesigned AAMVA website is now available for you to explore. We have created a site that is clean, organized, easy to navigate, responsive and mobile-friendly. After culling through our numerous resources, we curated the most up-to-date, relevant items, organized into five program disciplines: drivers, vehicles, law enforcement

  
The new Search Explorer allows you to search for **MORE THAN 50** primary topics.

and two new disciplines, identity and operations. This website was designed to make finding content, making connections and getting support easier.

We identified more than 50 primary topics where we have the most information and content within five main program disciplines, with integrated content coming from all of our various platforms, including *MOVE* magazine, videos, newsletters and podcast episodes—so now you can

find everything we offer in one convenient place.

To make all of that content easier to find and digest, we created our brand-new Search Explorer.

This new feature is more than just a keyword search. You can now use filters to customize and refine your search using several facets, including resource type, topic, discipline, content category, application system and geography. Narrow your search by even more detailed sub-filters to get to

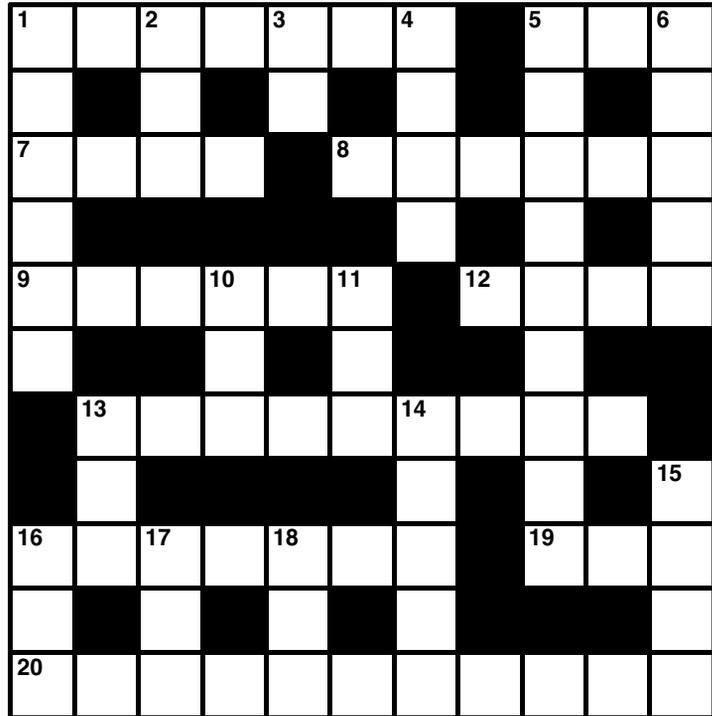
*This website was designed to make finding content, making connections and getting support easier.*



the exact information you are interested in. Providing our members with the most up-to-date, relevant information is critical to achieving our mission of Safe Drivers, Safe Vehicles, Secure Identities, Saving Lives. [m](#)

Watch the Search Explorer in action in our tutorial video available at [aamva.org/welcome-to-our-new-website](https://aamva.org/welcome-to-our-new-website) and on our YouTube Channel [tinyurl.com/SearchExplorer](https://tinyurl.com/SearchExplorer).

## crossword



### ACROSS

- 1 New alert system for commercial drivers that reduced crashes by 22% per a 2020 study, goes with 5 down
- 5 Diminish
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_-based system for scheduling drivers' road-test exams, abbr.
- 8 Big rig, for example
- 9 In a Wisconsin pilot, this type of testing was allowed for new drivers, with a parental attest, 2 words
- 12 Assists
- 13 System which reduced crashes by 12% in commercial vehicles in 2020, goes with 16 across

16 See 13 across

- 19 Innovative
- 20 Catchy name for an Iowa pilot project during the pandemic for a web-based test at schools

### DOWN

- 1 Noisy disturbance
- 2 Sales person, abbr.
- 3 Radio band
- 4 Having two uses
- 5 See 1 across
- 6 A driver is expected to inspect all 18 of these before driving a commercial vehicle
- 10 No longer used

- 11 Large spreading tree
- 13 Tire's need
- 14 Viewpoint
- 15 Exchange
- 16 School transport
- 17 Self-proclaimed "Greatest" boxer
- 18 Follower's suffix



# CDL TESTING GETS A REFRESH

*NEW TECHNOLOGY SAFETY FEATURES ON COMMERCIAL VEHICLES HAVE PROMPTED UPGRADES TO THE CDL TESTING MODEL ▶*

BY REGINA LUDES

**T**echnology has altered the commercial driving landscape. A 2020 study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) finds that trucks equipped with forward collision warning systems had 22% fewer crashes and those with automatic emergency braking systems lowered crashes by 12%.

As more commercial vehicles were equipped with these safety technologies, it became more challenging for examiners to use the existing CDL testing model to evaluate drivers' skills. Further, examiners lacked the resources and training to test drivers of newer vehicles. It was clear that the CDL testing model needed a makeover.

### **A DATA-DRIVEN PROCESS**

To address these issues, AAMVA launched the CDL Testing System Modernization Initiative in 2016 to explore updating the testing system for entry-level commercial drivers. AAMVA's Test Maintenance Subcommittee (TMS) and International Driver Examination Certification (IDEC) Board headed up the data-driven initiative. They began by evaluating years of data related to collisions, traffic citations and out-of-service orders to help better understand what was happening on the roads. The analysis phase took two years.

The committees then reviewed test items for pre-trip inspections, which numbered over 100. Additional components needed to be tested, but would have raised that



*Previously, drivers were required to inspect all 18 wheels of an 18-wheeler. Now, drivers only need to inspect one.*

total to 120, says Jeffrey Oberdank, administrator for New Hampshire's Driver Licensing Bureau and the TMS chair. A pre-inspection checklist is now included in the exam to reflect what drivers typically experience on the job.

Drivers will be allowed to use a memory aid, which is scripted in the same way for everyone, says Steven Ayers with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and a member of the Test Maintenance Subcommittee who also assists with AAMVA's train-the-trainer classes. However, "the memory aid only helps drivers understand what they need to check during an inspection, not how to check them," adds Ayers.

"The more we discussed the need to add other skills to the test, the more we realized it would become a test of memorization rather than the driver's knowledge," Oberdank says. "There is no way anyone could pass a test with 120 items, which goes beyond entry-level skills testing. We boiled it down to the most essential items to determine whether the vehicle is safe to drive."

The result is a more safety-focused test of the pre-inspection process. For example, the 2005 version of the test required drivers to inspect all 18 wheels of an 18-wheeler, while the new model requires drivers to check one wheel to show they know how to inspect it. The understanding is that trucking companies will require drivers to inspect all 18 wheels before they hit the road, he adds.

### WHAT'S NEW ON THE TEST?

Some examiners expressed concerns about the large footprint of the previous test version. Some sites simply don't have the space to accommodate the inspection, says Cynthia Delp, a driver licensing hearing officer for the Iowa Department of Transportation, who serves as vice-chair of IDEC. However, the new model requires less space for the inspection phase. "With the new testing model, sites only need 280x40 feet of space compared to 240x130 feet in a carousel-like layout," Delp says.

In addition to testing a driver's knowledge of safety features, the new model updates the basic control skills test, such as how to complete a forward stop to avoid front-end collisions, which occur frequently among commercial drivers, says Jimmy Gonzales, manager of commercial driving services for Maryland Department of Transportation. "The forward stop is important to make sure drivers can see vehicles in front of them to avoid collisions," he says. ▶

*"With the new testing model, sites only need 280x40 feet of space compared to 240x130 feet in a carousel-like layout."*

#### CYNTHIA DELP

*Driver Licensing Hearing Officer for the Iowa Department of Transportation*

#### NEW AMOUNT OF SPACE REQUIRED

40 feet

#### FORMER AMOUNT OF SPACE REQUIRED

130 feet

240 feet



280 feet



“It’s not about making the test easier or faster, but about making it adaptable to technology changes in the future,” Ayers says.

### FIELD TESTS

Once the new model test was created, it was time to try it out. The COVID-19 pandemic added some hurdles to choosing which states would participate in the field tests. The first field tests began in July 2021 in New Hampshire, followed by Maryland and Virginia. To ensure objectivity and transparency, the field tests were monitored by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation, an independent road safety research institute.

The CDL test is comprised of 7 knowledge tests.

New Hampshire was selected for the pilot program because of its certified train-the-trainer program. As a state examiner state, examiners were prepared to do the testing. It’s also Oberdank’s home state, so he was able to bring ideas from the committees to state examiners and get feedback on how they might work in the field.

Maryland is a hybrid state with both state examiners and third-party testers. Gonzales says examiners in his state found the system easy to understand and administer once they understood the new testing process.

If there are any potential challenges, it may be how some drivers adapt to the test changes.

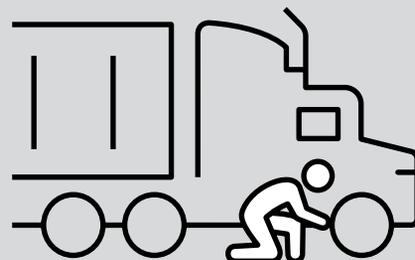
## KEY CHANGES TO THE CDL TESTING SYSTEM



Every applicant driver will perform the same vehicle inspection, no matter where they are located.



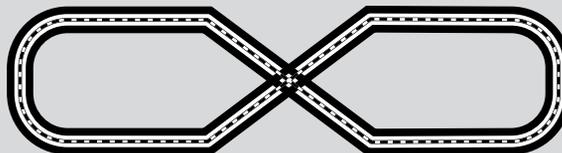
The vehicle inspection will have fewer items to be tested and will be focused on critical safety features.



A vehicle inspection checklist is added to reflect real-world practices.



The basic controls skills test uses a smaller footprint of 280’x40’ compared with the previous 240’x130’ carousel layout.



Many of the same maneuvers will be tested in a circuit arrangement.

*“It’s not about making the test easier or faster, but about making it adaptable to technology changes in the future.”*

**STEVEN AYERS**

Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles

Despite that, Gonzales believes most drivers will perform well on the exam. “Wherever they’re trained and no matter where they operate, prepared and safe drivers should be able to go to any state location and pass the test,” Gonzales says.

Likewise, Ayers believes the field tests in his state of Virginia went smoothly and he is confident that the results will show the model’s effectiveness. Both Ayers and Gonzales feel the new model addresses all the issues they set out to resolve and will be adaptable far into the future.

### LOOKING AHEAD

Delp believes examiners will experience few issues transitioning to the new testing model because they’re used to learning new processes and technologies on the job. “They won’t need to learn a whole new testing skill set. Instead, they will need only to modify existing test practices. Like everyone else, they want a test that is valid, reliable and promotes measurable highway safety,” Delp says.

Once reviewed and approved by TMS and IDEC, the field test results will be provided to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), which regulates the CDL program. Once approved by FMCSA, additional training materials will be developed for examiners for a full rollout to all jurisdictions this summer.

Oberdank feels confident the results will meet FMCSA’s requirements with few, if any, further changes or field tests needed. “Because we looked at various data and research before creating the final model, I feel safe in saying that the testing system is doing what we hoped it would.”

As more technologies are introduced, the updated CDL testing model ensures that entry-level commercial drivers have the knowledge and skills to practice safe driving on the roads. **m**

**find out more**

HEAR MORE ABOUT CDL TEST MODERNIZATION FROM JEFF OBERDANK IN THIS EPISODE OF OUR PODCAST: [TINYURL.COM/AAMVACAST62](https://tinyurl.com/aamvacast62).



As technology improves, so, too, will testing. The goal is to always arm commercial drivers with the latest knowledge and resources so they can stay safe.

The image shows two smartphones displaying the Veridos mobile application. The phone in the foreground shows a QR code and a warning message: "The following data will be displayed presenting this QR code". The phone in the background shows a user profile for "Anna Smith" with fields for DOB (04-20-1986), Sex (F), Height (5'7"), Eye (Brown), Age (38), and Age Restriction (18+). A prominent yellow button says "Show driver's license". Other options like "Connect", "Services", and "Dependents" are visible at the bottom.

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# BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

## *HOW INNOVATIONS IN NEW DRIVER TESTING ARE CHALLENGING OLD PROGRAMS*

BY STEVE HENDERSHOT

**T**he pandemic sent motor vehicle agencies scrambling. From office closures to frantic PPE orders, administrators were forced to reimagine their operations overnight. In Georgia, the commissioner of the state's Department of Driver Services unearthed a 15-year-old contingency plan created during the SARS threat, printed copies for his team and gathered everyone around a conference table to review the document.

The old blueprint was a bust: It just didn't seem relevant to the new threat. Instead, in Georgia and across the world, it quickly became clear that the way through COVID would be to look forward and innovate, rather than to rely on old strategies. Agency leaders turned their focus to

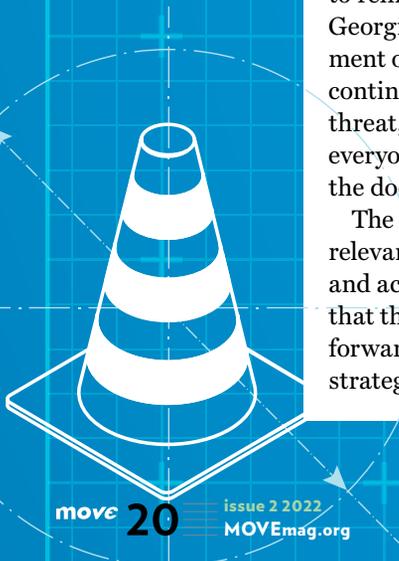
solutions ranging from new technologies to a fundamental reimagining of their approaches to core services such as new driver testing.

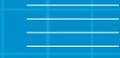
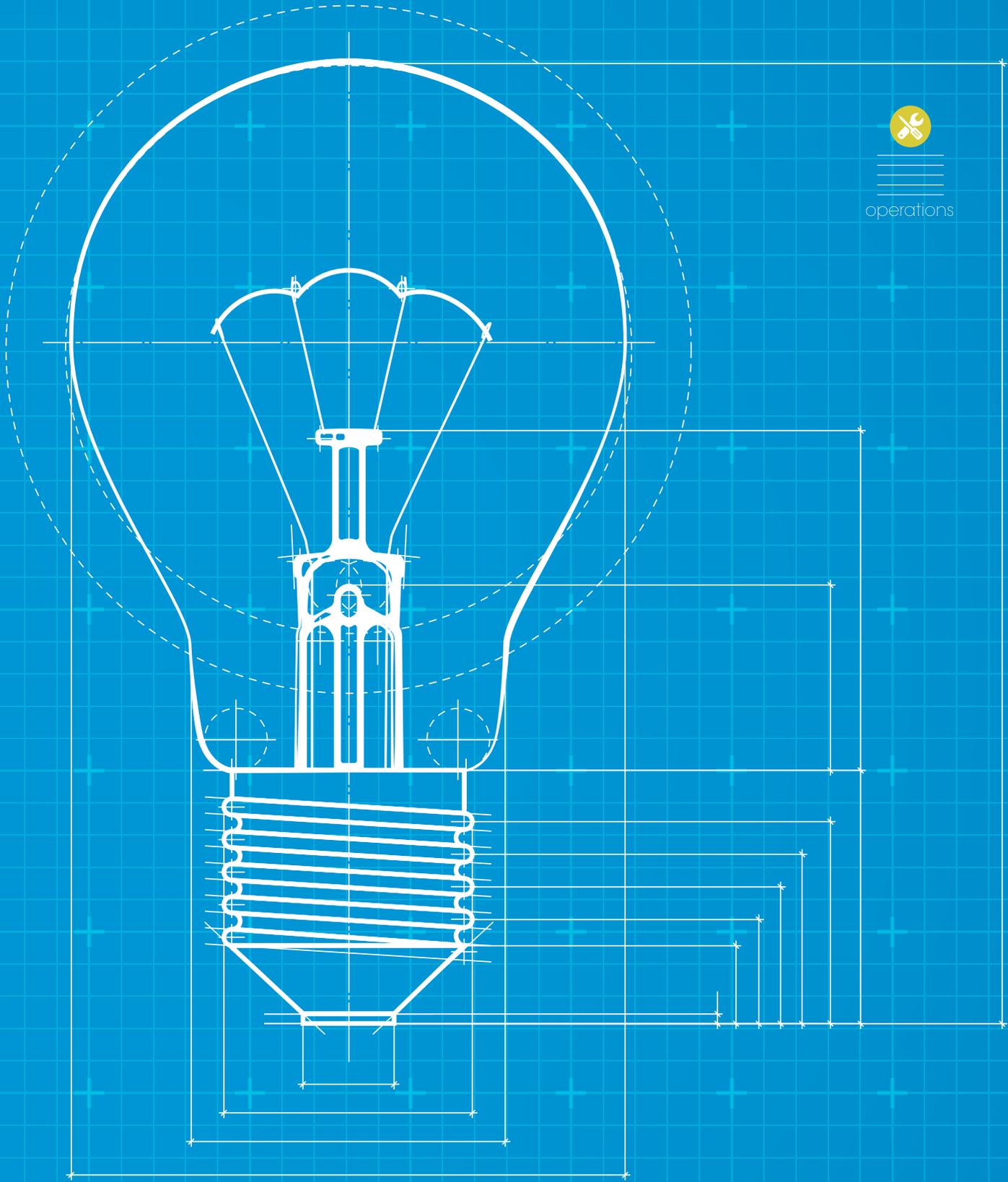
It didn't take long for agency leaders "to see this as an opportunity to exercise a pilot," says Kristina Boardman, DMV administrator at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Now, as emergency protocols related to the pandemic fade away, motor vehicle agencies are weighing which of those temporary solutions have performed well enough to be part of the new normal. The effect of those innovations is likely to transform new driver testing.

### **COVID: AN UNEXPECTED, LARGE-SCALE PILOT PROJECT**

Prior to the pandemic, Iowa officials already had shifted some of the burden of new driver knowledge testing away from state DOT sites by administering a web-based test at schools in a program called "Skip the Trip." During the pandemic, state agency leaders took the idea a step further, enabling parents to proctor the exam from home. ▶





operations



operations

The program was an instant hit and remains the state's most popular testing option. Three-quarters of Iowa knowledge tests are now conducted either at home or in schools, and the at-home option now outpaces the school-based one, according to Darcy Doty, director of customer service at the Iowa Department of Transportation. The state has not yet studied whether new drivers who pass the at-home test perform as well as those who take the test at a school or DOT site, but Doty says the testing venue is not affecting pass-fail rates.

"We're asking parents to monitor the ethics of [administering the test], because this is safety for their children," Doty says. "I think parents are taking it seriously."

In Wisconsin, state transportation leaders took an even more dramatic pandemic-era step toward entrusting parents during the credentialing process: exempting under-18 drivers from a state-agency road test if the parents of those drivers attest to their children's competence and practice. The waiver provision is likely to sunset later this year, but two years of data—including approximately 80,000 waivers granted, covering about 88% of eligible candidates during that time—have provided state leaders with a critical insight: Waiver-eligible drivers who opted to take the traditional road test had a greater likelihood both of crashes (3.9% to 3.2%) and violations (3.4% to 3.1%) than those in the waiver group.

"It shows that [driver's ed] training is working, and that all of that practice is working," says Wisconsin DMV Administrator Boardman. "The pilot is serving its purpose: We're collecting a lot of data, we're finding that people want this service, and that safety is not negatively impacted."

Another Iowa initiative that gained steam during the pandemic was a transition to appointment-based scheduling, aimed at reducing congestion and wait times in offices. Iowa launched a limited pilot test in early March of 2020—just prior to the pandemic—that was

limited to REAL ID applicants and conducted at a single site. It was immediately clear that the new system was effective, so when COVID hit in earnest just a couple of weeks later, agency leaders decided to lean into the appointment-based system. By July, it was the default model for the state's Motor Vehicle Division, including for road-test exams.

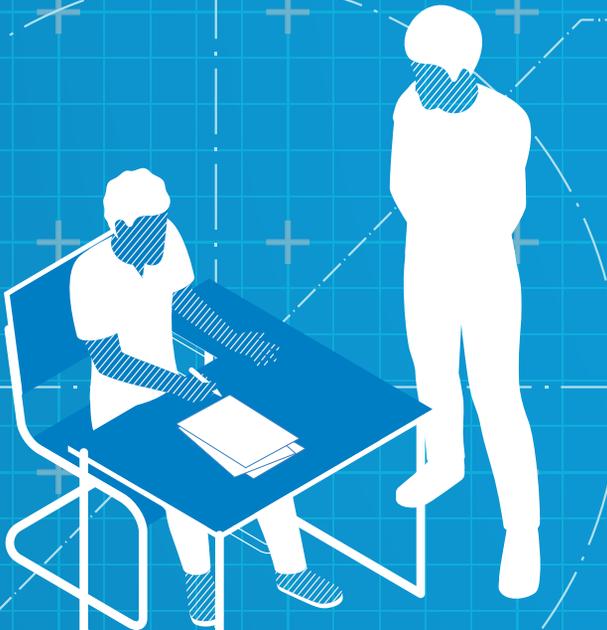
Under the new system, the average visit time plummeted from two hours in some locations to about 18 minutes. Ninety-eight percent of Iowans are now scheduling their appointments in advance, and 85% say they want the state to continue with the appointment-based model.

Some staff were initially "skeptical about how this would work and whether it would be more chaotic to manage," says IDOT's Doty. "Now, everybody's very confident that this is the right method for our customers. Our staff has bought into this, they know it's the best way to perform service, and our customers are reaping the benefits."

### HIGH TECH, LOW TOUCH

In the early days of the pandemic, Georgia adopted a road test waiver similar to Wisconsin's. That lasted about a month, and officials at Georgia's Department of Driver Services (DDS) soon began investigating ways to reimplement road tests while minimizing the risks to evaluators. The first solution was a closed-course test in which the evaluators remained outside the vehicle, limited to observing details such as whether drivers properly deployed their turn signals.

It was better than nothing, but far from a robust solution, so state officials turned to nearby Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta for assistance in identifying technology that could fill the gap. Georgia Tech faculty referred DDS to Zenduit, a Canadian company that offered to

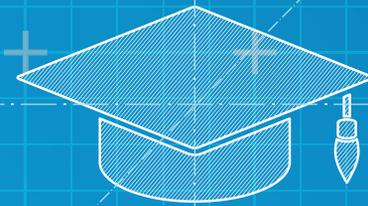


*"We're asking parents to monitor the ethics of [administering the test], because this is safety for their children."*

**DARCY DOTY**

Director of Customer Service at the Iowa Department of Transportation

The Georgia Department of Driver Services uses technology to monitor new driver tests on a closed course while evaluators remain outside the vehicle.



“It’s a diagnostic tool—a blood test, basically—for whether or not someone has the skills needed to drive safely in the most common serious crash scenarios,” Winston says.

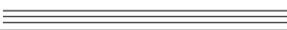
She has been developing the technology for several years, working in partnership with Ohio’s Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and has demonstrated a strong correlation between her test results and those of a traditional road test. Ohio officials are using the results to provide feedback within driver training programs, and considering ways to use insights derived from the simulations to inform future policy.

“There’s real value in the data, as far as what we can learn about these driving behaviors,” says Emily Davidson, state administrator at the Ohio Traffic Safety Office.

Winston is now studying whether a driver’s simulation results are predictive of their likelihood of a real-world crash or violation.

The standards and practices that will govern the next era of new driver testing are still being developed and refined. What’s clear is that COVID-19 accelerated the adoption timeline.

“It definitely changed the trajectory,” says Georgia’s DDS Commissioner Moore. “A lot of what we implemented during the pandemic were things that we had already given some forethought to. The pandemic just brought them about a little bit quicker.” **m**

**go online** 

**HEAR MORE ABOUT DRIVER TEST WAIVERS FROM KRISTINA BOARDMAN IN THIS EPISODE OF AAMVACAST: [TINYURL.COM/AAMVACAST20](https://www.aamvaca.org/episode/aamvacast20).**

reconfigure a product designed for commercial trucking so that it could be used for new driver testing. That technology now allows evaluators in Georgia to observe both driver behavior and vehicle performance on a closed course while remaining outside the vehicle.

“That’s technology that we probably wish we had years ago, because the road test is the biggest liability for our organization, when it comes to one of our examiners being involved in a crash,” says Georgia DDS Commissioner Spencer Moore.

Georgia implemented the program in mid-2021, and Moore says the state is still collecting efficacy data. One place the new program lags behind is efficiency, because it takes evaluators about 20 minutes to install the technology on

an applicant’s car prior to testing. Moore believes that process can be streamlined significantly.

Twelve hours northeast of Atlanta, a physician-engineer at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) is wondering whether tech-based road test tools need to involve a vehicle at all. Flaura Winston, founder and scientific director of the CHOP’s Center for Injury Research and Prevention, developed a driving-simulation program that uses off-the-shelf hardware such as a standard-issue computer and video game steering wheel and pedals. The simulation tests new drivers amidst the sort of challenging conditions that would be difficult and unsafe to replicate in real-world road tests, such as maneuvering around dangerous drivers.

## BEING INVOLVED WITH AAMVA GAVE ME THE CONFIDENCE TO TAKE ON THE ROLE OF IRP CHAIR.



### Q & A WITH

# Tammi Popp

*NEWLY RETIRED DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM MANAGEMENT, DRIVER AND VEHICLE SERVICES AT THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, AND CHAIR OF THE INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION PLAN*

#### Q WHAT HAS YOUR CAREER JOURNEY BEEN LIKE?

I started working for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (DOT) in 2000. Over the years, I've held various positions throughout the DMV space—from contract management to budgeting, working on both driver's licensing and the motor vehicle side of the business as well as the customer service operations and procurement. All these different steps have led me to my current position of overseeing projects and moving initiatives.

#### Q WHY HAVE YOU BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

There is a misconception that if you put systems around everything, you don't need people—"systems are going to solve the world." But it takes a team of smart people who understand the business and the inner workings of those systems to be able to communicate with both business and technical people. My team has been successful because there is such a need for these smart individuals in the DMV space, as there are so many systems and business procedures.

#### Q HOW HAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH AAMVA PREPARED YOU FOR YOUR ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION PLAN (IRP) LEADERSHIP?

I first became involved with AAMVA in 2012 as the ID management representative on the Vehicle Standing Committee. I learned quickly that if you raise your hand, ask questions and contribute, you get accepted into the community. I represented Pennsylvania on many AAMVA committees from 2012 through 2017.

Then, through the encouragement of the Pennsylvania DOT executive management, I got involved with the IRP in 2018 as a regional representative. I never planned to be on the board of directors, but I ran for vice chair in 2020 and got elected. Then I ran for chair of the board in 2021, and I am now serving my second (and final) term in 2022.

*"We've been working on a new system that offers flexibility for the future and new opportunities for IRP to be involved in the transportation industry."*

#### TAMMI POPP

*Director of Program Management, Driver and Vehicle Services, at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and Chair of the International Registration Plan*

## FAST FACTS

### Tammi Popp



**HOMETOWN**  
*Dover, Pennsylvania*



**FAVORITE BOOK**  
*Finding Freedom*  
*by Erin French*



**WHAT DO YOU DRIVE?**  
*Nissan Murano*



**LAST MEAL YOU COOKED?**  
*Fresh angel hair pasta and meatballs*



*Top: 30+ inch grouper caught in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Florida*



*Left: At the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation headquarters*

Working with IRP committees is similar to being part of the AAMVA community. It's not just about your jurisdiction; you're working for the collective good of everyone. Being involved with AAMVA gave me the confidence to take on the role of IRP chair. I knew I could be neutral in my decision-making, look at things at the highest level and have a perspective that would help move the country forward.

### **Q** WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS IRP CHAIR?

IRP needs to modernize its systems to have a more user-friendly platform for the jurisdictions. We've been working on a new system that offers flexibility for the future and new opportunities for IRP to be involved in the transportation industry.

IRP also needs a long-term financial plan that gives it the ability to grow. We analyzed what it will take to maintain the new systems, and we now have a new fee structure that puts IRP in the best financial situation for the future.

### **Q** WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE AAMVA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY LIKE?

I participated in the first year of the AAMVA Leadership Academy in 2014, and it was probably one of the best experiences of my career. It was refreshing to meet a group of people who were all focused on how to be better leaders in the DMV space instead of doing another generic leadership training at the state level. I appreciated the focus on teamwork and how to get the team underneath you to believe in the DMV space.

### **Q** WHERE DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION IN YOUR WORK?

Every day, people do their jobs and forget about the reason they are doing their jobs. They do things out of habit and just go through the motions. On our bad days, I say to my team: "When you drive home, look around at all those cars on the road. You help make it possible for all these people to drive their cars. From driver's licenses to registration, you've made it possible for them to get where they need to be."

This gives us a purpose for why we're doing what we're doing. It reminds us that we want safe drivers and safe vehicles on the road.

### **Q** WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO OUTSIDE OF WORK?

Cooking is one of my favorite things to do. I also enjoy saltwater fishing.

### **Q** WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THE NEXT 5 TO 10 YEARS?

I want to continue to be a leader and someone who people look up to, helping the next generation see the big picture. I am thankful for the many people who saw potential in me when I didn't see it in myself. I plan to continue to pay it forward. **m**

# The Road Ahead

*CDL TESTING IS SET TO RECEIVE ITS FIRST UPDATES IN ABOUT TWO DECADES. WHAT IS BEHIND THESE CHANGES AND HOW WILL THEY IMPACT THE INDUSTRY?*

## REMOVING BOTTLENECKS

**MARTIN GARSEE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PUBLICLY FUNDED TRUCK DRIVING SCHOOLS**

From our perspective, CDL testing modernization is a process that has been going on since at least 2014 when we went to a longer test for the hands-on pre-trip inspection. That test went from one to two hours, and while it ensured drivers are safer and more qualified, it also doubled the amount of time it takes to do a test and produced a large backlog of tests. When you add that to the driver shortage, it can be an issue.

For example, in Houston we have a lot of people working construction or at chemical plants or jobs like that, and if they're laid off, they may look to getting their truck driver's license. However, if the testing process ends up taking three or four months, what happens if they get called back to work in that timeframe? They're going to go back to work. So, I think we need to look at modernization from that perspective of making it more advantageous for a person wanting to go back to work.

During the pandemic, the waivers made by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to allow more driving schools to administer the written test was a step in the right direction. That allowed us to operate when we probably would not have been able to train as many people because of the lack of spots and available appointments for written tests at other locations. We were able to administer those tests ourselves and keep things rolling.

It allowed us to be that "one-stop shop" where we can schedule the different tests and be in control of the timing. This is very beneficial to the potential new drivers as well as to us as the driving school. When you can schedule something out, that works much better than when we have to wait for another location to administer a test so that we can fill in the blanks.

Streamlining the testing process further has been a goal of ours. In the 2021 legislative session, the Texas legislature passed a law that will affect testing and now we're just waiting for the rule to be published and put into action. The goal is to reduce the number of times a new driver has to go to the Department of Public Safety in person. Ideally, they would just have to go in once to pay the fee and take their picture, and the rest can be handled online or at a driving school.

# LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGIES

MARTHA THREATT, CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

I will never forget the day when my leadership and I were approached by AAMVA and the Test Maintenance Subcommittee about modernizing the skill sets for CDL tests. The current CDL testing system was conceptualized in the late 1980s as a result of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986. The first concept was produced and implemented in the 1990s and the first AAMVA skill testing models were introduced in 2005. So, it's been a while, and with the advances in commercial motor vehicle technologies and adding what we've learned from crash causation factors over the years, it was time to modernize the system.

The system needs to be flexible enough to leverage the current technologies. We have to incorporate new industry practices—for example, we are currently doing some maneuvers during the basic controls skills test that aren't even used today. We also wanted to look at our state partner needs. We really needed to take a step back and look at what's currently being done so we can move this model to the future. To make that happen, FMCSA funded this modernization project through the CDL program implementation grant program, and it's been a collective collaboration between the federal government, state governments, industry, AAMVA and the Test Maintenance Subcommittee.

There are three segments to the CDL test: the vehicle inspection segment, the basic controls skills and the road test. At this time, the road test is not changing. For the vehicle inspection segment, applicants can expect a test that better aligns the procedures they follow today

with the procedures they're being tested on. What applicants will be tested on in this segment will be the same pre-trip and post-trip inspection skills that they use in real life on the road.

And for the basic controls skills segment, there will be a smaller footprint. So, because the testing maneuvers are smaller, facilities will be able to use less real estate for testing and that is a great thing for testing sites. The maneuvers are mostly staying the same so we're still testing drivers on those skills they will be using daily.

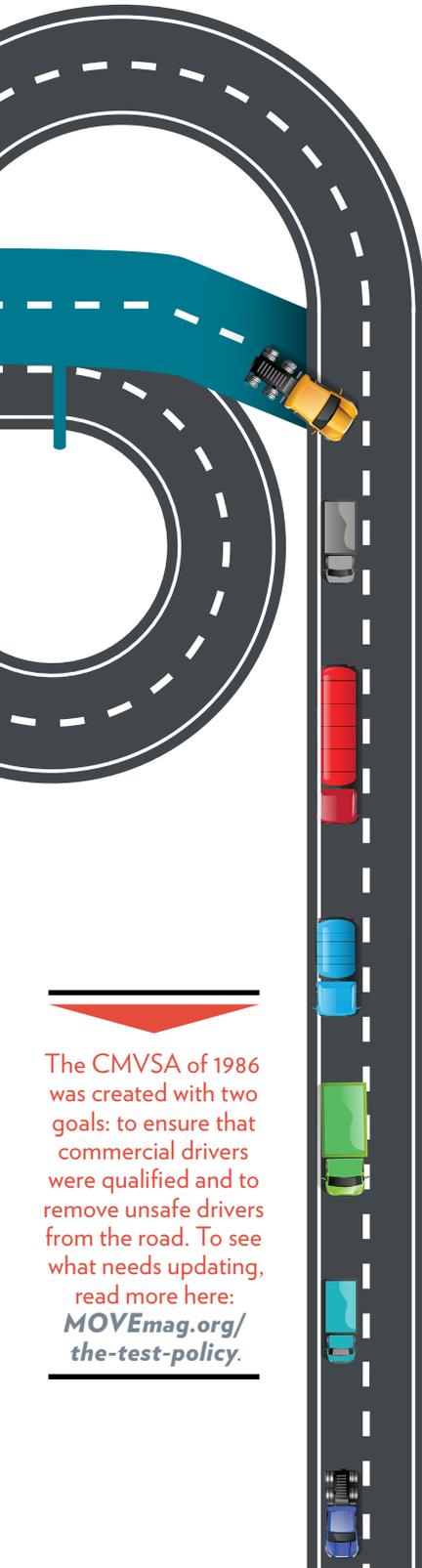
We're currently working on the final product regarding these improvements, and from there we will introduce it to states. Since the new test model will still meet all existing regulator requirements, we don't foresee a need to change any regulations or go through rulemaking.

As far as the future of CDL testing beyond these changes, I think we have to look at technology and make sure we are leveraging it correctly. Our experience during the COVID-19 emergencies showed that it's possible to use technology to improve efficiency. It put a halt to a lot of things but there were jurisdictions that could still test because of technology—for example, using cameras to observe tests rather than having the examiner ride in the vehicle. We also can't forget about how the progression of autonomous vehicles will impact CDL drivers. It will be exciting to see where things go, and I think what I've described here are the two issues that will be most important looking forward: being prepared for the next emergency and leveraging emergent technologies. **m**

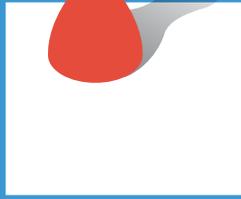
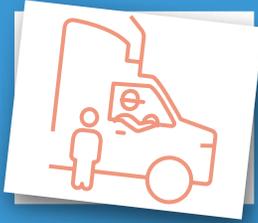
*“The COVID-19 emergencies showed that it's possible to use technology to improve efficiency.”*

**MARTHA THREATT**

Chief Public Affairs Officer, Office of Communications & External Affairs, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration



The CMVSA of 1986 was created with two goals: to ensure that commercial drivers were qualified and to remove unsafe drivers from the road. To see what needs updating, read more here: [MOVEmag.org/the-test-policy](https://MOVEmag.org/the-test-policy).



# Changing the Game

## TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS MOTOR VEHICLE AGENCIES TO RETHINK THEIR CORE SERVICES

Although we are all hopeful that the days of the COVID-19 pandemic are in the rear-view mirror, the lessons learned and opportunities provided continue to move us forward. Despite the challenges, motor vehicle agencies remained busy and operational—reacting to the pandemic and adjusting the implementation of already-scheduled initiatives.

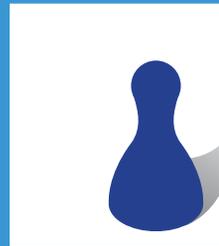
In this issue of *MOVE*, you heard about how the pandemic forced motor vehicle agencies to rethink what they traditionally require customers to do in person—in this case, new driver testing. Relying on the support and oversight of parents and guardians to administer the written test, as well as attest to a new driver’s competence and practice, many jurisdictions found themselves implementing new procedures—and reaping some benefits. Technology allows motor vehicle agencies to think differently about our core services, even allowing new drivers to take the knowledge test from the comfort and safety of a place of their choosing. We all continue to reevaluate where else within our agencies we can adjust policies and procedures to give our customers more options and I look forward to the creativity we have seen over the last few years continuing.

Having launched the CDL Testing System Modernization Initiative in 2016, AAMVA found itself having to pilot the new model in the middle of the pandemic. The three pilot states—New Hampshire, Maryland and Virginia—implemented a new model test focused on safety. Especially with more commercial vehicles being equipped with advanced safety features, it is time to rethink about how we provide this critical function. These field test results are being submitted to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for review. We are hopeful that the test will be expanded to other jurisdictions soon.

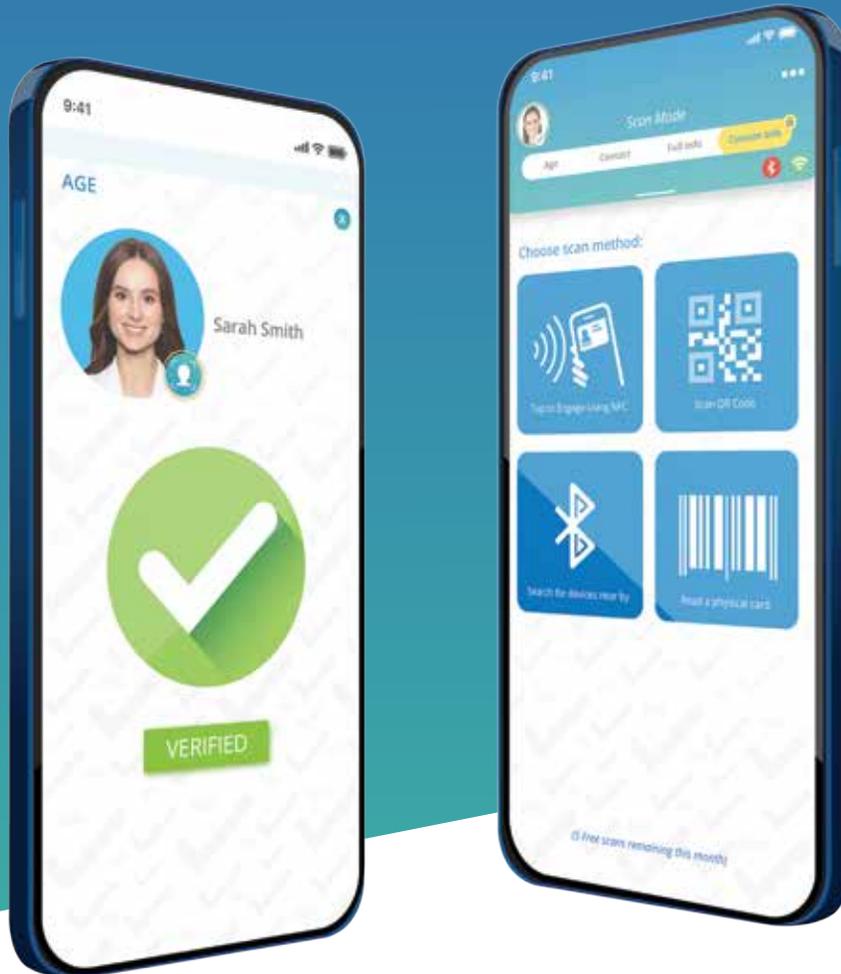
I am excited to see how all jurisdictions will use technology in ways that benefit their customers and know that improvements in technology will continue to affect the way we do business. While these enhancements are exciting, it is always important to remember that people are the ones who make things happen, especially in our business. Technology provides us a tool for delivering stellar customer service, but it is only with the great ideas, hard work and dedication of our teams that we can make it happen.

Stay safe. **m**

*Chrissy Nizer, 2021–2022 AAMVA Chair of the Board*



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