



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

OFFICE OF ANALYSIS, RESEARCH, AND TECHNOLOGY

CVISN: Encouraging Motor Carrier Participation and Outreach by States

November 25, 2008

Webinar Transcript

Presenters

- Julie Lane, Transportation Specialist, FMCSA Office of Analysis, Research, and Technology (ART)

Speakers (optional)

- Kirse Kelly, Webinar Host, FMCSA ART

Description:

FMCSA has carefully tracked the deployment of the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems & Networks (CVISN) program in all States and has learned about the benefits of CVISN e-credentialing and state-based e-screening for both States and motor carriers. This webinar will address how States can reach out to and encourage motor carriers to use CVISN-related systems. Julie Lane of the ART Technology Division will highlight the benefits of CVISN for States and motor carriers and illustrate the successes some States have experienced. Suggested messages and delivery mechanisms that have proven successful for States in the past will be presented as examples of communications tools other States can use to expand their own programs.

PRESENTATION—ENCOURAGING MOTOR CARRIER PARTICIPATION IN STATE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS (CVISN) PROGRAMS

PRESENTATION TITLE SLIDE: ENCOURAGING MOTOR CARRIER PARTICIPATION IN STATE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS (CVISN) PROGRAMS

Dawn (Operator):

Welcome and thank you for standing by, all participants in a listen only mode. As a reminder, today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections you can disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn over your web conference to your web conference host, Kirse Kelly. Ma'am you may begin.

Kirse Kelly:

Thanks Dawn, and thanks to everyone who is participating in our webinar on the FMCSA CVISN which is Encouraging Motor Carrier Participation and Outreach by the States. This is part of a series put on by the FMCSA Office of Research, Analysis, and Technology and also put on by CVISN specifically.

Time permitting; all questions will be answered at the end of the call. So you can actually submit questions in the **Q&A Box** throughout and that's on the lower left side and we will answer those questions at the end of the call—at the end of the presentation. At the end you'll also be able to ask questions over the phone. Please note that you're going to be given the opportunity to download a copy of the presentation at the end of the webinar. That's a favorite question of everyone, and it will be available at the end. If you have to leave early, you can actually return to this site at a later time and the slides will still be available for you to download. We've also been asked to tell you that members of the trade or local media that our participating in today's call are being asked to contact our Office of Communications at 202-366-9999, at the webinar's conclusion—so once again, 202-366-9999.

Finally, I just want to mention that if you have a smaller screen and the virtual meeting room we have here is kind of stuck in the upper left corner of your screen, you may want to try—there's a couple of things you could try—**F11**, or if that doesn't work, you could also go to **Meeting** at the very top left side of your screen and you could choose **Management Settings** in that list and click on **Full Screen** and that should make it at least a little bigger. Let me turn you over now to Julie Lane of the FMCSA Technology Division. Julie?

Julie Lane:

Thank you very much. Thank you, everybody for joining as today. This is actually the third in an ongoing series of webinars about the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks

program. As Kirse mentioned, I'm Julie Lane with FMCSA's Technology Division and I'm the program manager for the national CVISN program.

Today's presentation is going to highlight some of the best practices that states have employed to encourage motor carriers to use the electronic credentialing and the electronic screening services that have been deployed as part of the CVISN program.

Marketing and outreach is often an under-looked portion of the state CVISN program. Too often we work under the assumption that if we—the government—build the product, the carriers will come. When in reality, CVISN services are like any other product—they need to be marketed to a targeted audience in order to increase market awareness and improve usage.

SLIDE 2: AGENDA

As part of today's presentation, I will provide a very short overview of the CVISN program for those of you who aren't aware of what is and what it does. Then, I will discuss the importance of motor carrier's participation as well as some best practices for encouraging motor carriers' use of the CVISN services. As always, I will then provide the contact information in case anyone would like to follow up with me off-line. And I will take time for questions and then wrap up today's session.

[15 second pause]

SLIDE 3: CVISN OVERVIEW

The CVISN program provides a framework or architecture that enables government agencies, the motor carrier industry and other parties engaged in commercial vehicle safety assurance and regulation, to exchange and use information, to improve safety and to conduct business transactions electronically. The program is designed to do several things: designed to improve safety and productivity of motor carriers, commercial vehicles and their drivers; it's designed to improve efficiency and effectiveness of commercial vehicle safety programs through targeted enforcement; designed to improve commercial vehicle data sharing within states and between states and FMCSA; and it's designed to reduce federal, state and industry regulatory administrative costs.

SLIDE 4: CVISN OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)—*CORE CVISN FUNCTIONALITY*

CVISN is not a single system but rather a series of federal and state systems linked together by a national architecture and set of standards. The CVISN program relies on a strong organizational structure within a state because many of the CVISN systems are operated by multiple agencies. In some states, as many as six different agencies are responsible for some portion of CVISN.

CVISN functionality or what we would call core CVISN functionality falls into 3 main program areas:

- Credentials Administration,

- Safety Information Exchange, and
- Electronic Screening

This slide here shows some proponents that fall under each one of those areas. For instance, for Credentials Administration, they would be required to provide automated processing of IRP and IFTA credentialing; as well as interstate data exchange and funds transfer via IRP and IFTA clearinghouses. Those are the International Registration Plan and International Field Tax Agreement, for those of you who are not familiar with the acronyms. Safety Information Exchange, sharing of safety data and supporting credentials data among state agencies; interstate data exchange and use of the ASPEN software; and for Electronic Screening, automated weight and credential screening at fixed and mobile inspection sites. States are required to deploy this set of core CVISN functionality in each program area, but they also have a flexibility to deploy additional functionality that meets their needs, as well as the needs of their motor carriers. The core functionality within each program area is, again, is shown here.

SLIDE 5: CVISN OVERVIEW—*CVISN BENEFITS*

CVISN has been deployed in some states for more than 10 years. This is a quick summary of the most commonly cited benefits of CVISN—which stakeholders, state and motor carriers, realize the benefits and from which portions of the program the benefits are generated. You will notice that the program generates a mix of safety benefits, such as targeted enforcement, improved use of commercial vehicle resources and real time access to safety and credentialing data, as well as productivity and customer service improvements, such as improved turnaround time for permits and improved accuracy on credentials. These benefits accrue to both motor carriers and the states. You'll also notice that all three of CVISN's program areas, SAFETY Information Exchange, which is shown here as "SIE," Electronic Screening (ES) and Electronic Credentialing, shown here as "ECA," are delivering benefits.

SLIDE 6: IMPORTANCE OF MOTOR CARRIER PARTICIPATION

Encouraging motor carriers to use CVISN services is particularly important to the electronic credentialing and electronic screening portions of the CVISN program. States derive benefits from these services only when motor carriers make use of them. Obviously, the carriers only realize the full range of CVISN benefits from the services that they utilize. An electronic screening system with low enrollment will not be able to deliver its full range of potential. Without a sufficient number of enrolled motor carriers or commercial vehicles in the screening program, roadside enforcement personnel will continue to manually screen large numbers of compliant vehicles and will not be able to focus their resources on vehicles known to be operated by motor carriers with a higher safety risk. Similarly, less trucks will be able to bypass, creating time delays and congestion both leaving and arriving at the station. Likewise, if motor carriers do not use the state's electronic credentialing system, the state will not reduce its credentialing cost because a large portion of applications will need to be mailed to carriers and processed manually. States also will not be able to focus their staff on more complex activities because routine transactions will still require a search, review and processing.

On the flip side, carriers will also be burdened with the inefficiencies of manual and the hard-copy processing, such as time delays and typos. This is why a state should make marketing their CVISN program a priority. It truly is the final piece of the puzzle of a successful CVISN implementation.

SLIDE 7: BEST PRACTICE #1: *MAKE MOTOR CARRIER COMMUNITY A CVISN PARTNER*

The first strategy that has proven successful in encouraging motor carriers using CVISN services is to actively engage the motor carrier community in the CVISN planning process from the outset. States should actively seek their industry's community input on what functionality should be included in the state CVISN program. While the International Registration Plan and International Fuel Tax Agreement credentialing must be included in the state CVISN program, what other credentialing services would appeal to motor carriers? Beyond just credentials, what other services are the carriers interested in—electronic payments? Having a Web portal or storefront through which they conduct all their credentialing transactions within the state? What other credentials such as oversize/over-weight?

Similar to market research, understanding the needs of the target audience, in this case the motor carriers, is essential to any successful product launch. In the state of Connecticut, it was the inclusion of an oversize/over-weight permitting in the state's electronic credentialing system that energized the motor carrier community that had long been dissatisfied with the state's previous oversize/overweight system. Improving the processing of this credential, which many carriers apply for on a daily or weekly process, demonstrated that CVISN would benefit the motor carriers and make other aspects of the program more acceptable to the industry.

SLIDE 8: BEST PRACTICE #1: *MAKE MOTOR CARRIER COMMUNITY A CVISN PARTNER*
(CONTINUED)

This is a screen shot—and hopefully you guys can see it better than I can on my screen—but this is a screen shot of the Connecticut web-based credentialing portal, and the motor carrier's input can be seen throughout the screen. Motor carriers requested in Connecticut—they had asked for a single portal through which they could conduct all their electronic business with the state. This portal allows motor carriers to log in once and to conduct their business with three different state commercial vehicle agencies: the Department of Transportation, the Department of Motor Vehicles as well as the Department of Revenue.

The portal also includes three pieces of functionality that were developed at the request of the motor carrier community. The oversized/overweight permitting system and a web based query mechanism that allows carriers to view its credentialing, permitting and safety data that is stored in federal and state information systems.

The inclusion of this functionality, all of which is eligible for Federal CVISN funding, makes the system more appealing to the carriers and increases the likelihood that they use it and its more traditional IRP and IFTA elements.

[15 second pause]

SLIDE 9: BEST PRACTICE #1: *MAKE MOTOR CARRIER COMMUNITY A CVISN PARTNER*
(CONTINUED)

The next slide here—in the same vein, motor carriers should be actively involved in the design process for all systems that they are expected to use. Motor carriers may have specific features that will make a credentialing system more user-friendly or effective and therefore more attractive to use. For instance, a motor carrier may request that credentialing forms be pre-populated with previous years' information, or that changes made in one credentialing system be carried over to other systems.

Similarly, motor carriers may request the ability to upload or download data directly to or from a state credentialing system. Without this functionality, a web-based system may prove ineffective or burdensome to a carrier that is renewing hundreds of vehicles at once. If the system does not meet the needs of a motor carrier, they will not use it.

The motor carrier industry also should be aware of the criteria that will be used at the electronic screening sites. If appropriate, motor carriers may recommend changes to the state's approach. For instance, motor carriers should understand that the state's screening program is designed as an incentive to the very best carriers and therefore is restrictive in its screening algorithm.

SLIDE 10: BEST PRACTICE#1: *MAKE MOTOR CARRIER COMMUNITY A CVISN PARTNER*
(CONTINUED)

This screen shot—again, it's kind of microscopic on my computer, so hopefully you guys can see it—again, it's from the Connecticut credentialing portal. It highlights a feature that was only identified through the direct involvement of the motor carrier community in the system design process.

Carriers requested that they be able to manage which credentialing systems their staff could access through the portal. In response to this request, the state developed an account structure that allows carriers to manage the access rights of all users created under its master account. Now employees are able to access only the portions of the portal that they need to perform for their jobs.

For instance, a company employee with responsibility for IRP only sees a link to the IRP system when they enter the credentialing system and none of the other links. This functionality makes the system more user-friendly for the carriers and increases the likelihood that they will use it. In order to identify these features, a formal requirement-gathering session with the motor carrier community should be held. These sessions will allow the state and its development resources to identify the unique needs of the state's carriers.

SLIDE 11: BEST PRACTICE #1: *MAKE MOTOR CARRIER COMMUNITY A CVISN PARTNER (CONTINUED)*

Motor Carrier participation should be an ongoing process; not isolated to the planning and design phases of your CVISN program. It is recommended that the motor carrier community be equal and active members of your CVISN team and that they participate in regularly scheduled CVISN meetings. This will ensure the industry representatives are informed about the program's progress and can provide ongoing feedback about the industry's needs, preferences and concerns. At a minimum, a representative from a state trucking association or other industry group should be invited to attend the CVISN meeting. If possible, representatives from a diverse group of motor carriers also should be invited to participate. It is important to remember that a motor carrier industry is very diverse, and is comprised of many segments.

When trying to identify participants, try to find representatives from different-sized carriers as well as representatives from carriers with different operational profiles, such as interstate versus intrastate. The different carriers may have very different opinions and needs related to CVISN systems.

SLIDE 12: BEST PRACTICE #1: *MAKE MOTOR CARRIER COMMUNITY A CVISN PARTNER (CONTINUED)*

Here's an example of a state—Florida in this instance—that actively included its motor carrier community in a CVISN task team. As you can see, the Florida Trucking Association was a member of its team, as were four individual motor carriers. The motor carrier representatives included a cross section of the state's trucking industry and provided valuable insight to the state's agencies on the team.

SLIDE 13: BEST PRACTICE #2: *MARKET CVISN*

As I mentioned earlier, CVISN must be marketed to motor carriers just as any other product or service is marketed. Experience tells us you cannot simply turn on a new system and expect carriers to know that it is online and then begin to use it. It is important to develop a formal marketing plan that will guide your roll out and outreach strategy. Make this part of your CVISN program plan and include milestones related to outreach on your CVISN program schedule. Your CVISN agencies, public information and/or outreach offices should be useful in determining how to best market new services for the industry.

SLIDE 14: BEST PRACTICE #2: *MARKET CVISN (CONTINUED)*

Like any good marketing campaign, it's vital to use resources that reach your targeted audience, and in this case the motor carrier industry. Many states provide ongoing CVISN updates to industry sponsored events, such as the meetings of their state trucking associations. This is a great first step in keeping your carriers informed. You also may want to consider partnering with your state's trucking association to include an article about a new CVISN service in the association's newsletter periodical. This will provide a great mechanism to reach out to the

carrier community. Another option is to insert an informational flyer into a direct mailing that is going out to the motor carrier industry. For instance, if you are sending a paper renewal form to a carrier, you could insert a flyer letting them know about on-line services that would eliminate the need for a paper transaction and expedite the processing of their application. Satellite radio is another inventive means reach out to motor carriers where they are most likely to be—in their vehicles. Finally, given the online nature of electronic credentialing, you may want to work with your IT offices or vendors to identify strategies to increase the likelihood that your credentialing system is at the top of an internet search result for a basic search—such as Florida CVO credentialing or IRP in Connecticut. Federal CVISN grant money can help support these types of activities.

SLIDE15: BEST PRACTICE #2: *MARKET CVISN (CONTINUED)*

Again, illegible on my computer—hoping you guys can see it, but this is the article that is included in the Florida’s state trucking association magazine called, *Florida Truck News*. It documents the CVISN program and new services that are being offered to the carriers. It also summarizes the CVISN program and highlights what each component offers to the carriers.

SLIDE 16: BEST PRACTICE #2: *MARKET CVISN (CONTINUED)*

This is an example of the front sheet of a flyer that the state of Connecticut developed to advertise its electronic screening program. As you may be able to tell from its shape, it was designed to be inserted into a standard business sized envelope that were mailed out with credential renewal forms to all motor carriers. The back of the flyer highlighted the cost and time-savings offered by participation in the electronic screening program—which takes us to our third best practice.

SLIDE 17: BEST PRACTICE #3: *FOCUS MARKETING ON OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS*

It is important to emphasize in all motor carrier-targeted marketing the operational benefits that are offered to the carrier by participating in the CVISN program. Carriers are for-profit operations and, therefore, will decide whether they want to make use of CVISN service based on the cost, benefits and return on investment offered. Making the benefits clear to the carriers is crucial. You may also want to emphasize that elements of CVISN are designed to level the playing field and target those motor carriers that get an unfair competitive advantage by ignoring the safety rules.

SLIDE 18: BENEFITS OF CVISN—*ELECTRONIC CREDENTIALING PROGRAM AREA*

As this chart from the National CVISN Evaluation illustrates, the two most commonly cited benefits of electronic credentialing systems are convenience and reduced carrier staff time required to complete credentialing transactions. Other benefits from electronic credentialing include getting trucks into service quicker, improved accuracy of their registration information and dollar savings. These types of operational enhancements are likely to be the most persuasive

arguments for why a motor carrier would want to participate in CVISN and should be the focus of a state's marketing campaign.

SLIDE 19: BENEFITS OF CVISN—*ELECTRONIC SCREENING PROGRAM AREA*

Similarly, when marketing electronic screening services, the following benefits should be highlighted:

- Reduce delays and improved turnaround time,
- Improved convenience and efficiency, and
- Improved working conditions for their drivers, as well as
- Labor cost savings.

The vast majority of all motor carriers that participate in electronic screening programs all reported that they realize these benefits, and other carriers may be encouraged to participate if they understand what is to be gained. Some carriers even use this type of service as a marketing approach to attract new drivers, so that also may be an effective element of a marketing campaign.

These last two slides were actually based on 848 motor carriers that responded to a survey and it was a diverse group of respondents.

SLIDE 20: BEST PRACTICE #4: *OFFER INCENTIVES*

Finally, you may wish to consider offering incentives to motor carriers. These incentives may tip the Return on Investment (ROI) calculation in favor of a motor carrier participating in a program. For instance, the BestPass program allows motor carriers to pool their vehicles into a single account and thereby qualify for volume discounts for electronic tolls. A similar approach could be pursued for electronic screening. States could work with their state trucking associations to identify unique CVISN services that could be offered as a benefit to the association's membership. This could encourage additional members to participate in CVISN services and overcome any concerns that a carrier has about the new program. An Association's endorsement could go a long way in easing a carrier's fears about CVISN. Finally, work to see if your state is able to pay the electronic payment fees associated with electronic credentialing transactions. I know this may not be possible in some states—especially with the current budget situation—but covering these costs may encourage a carrier, or at least not discourage the carrier from using an online system.

SLIDE 22: SUMMARY

In summary, I wanted to highlight the best practices that we discussed today.

- Making the motor carrier community a partner in the CVISN program is an essential activity: active participants in setting scope and priorities of program, providing input regarding the design of CVISN systems, and actively participating in CVISN Team meetings.

- Actively marketing CVISN services to motor carriers: developing a formal marketing plan and set platforms that reach targeted audience.
- Focus marketing materials on operational enhancements offered to motor carriers through CVISN participation, and
- Consider offering incentives to participating motor carriers

SLIDE 21: CONTACT INFORMATION

Finally, this is my contact information. If you have any questions, I know Kirse is going to open the line for that, or you can contact me directly for any questions or additional information on today's webinar. This is my contact information above. And Kirse do you want to take it over?

[25:00]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Kirse Kelly: We are now open for questions, so if you would like to ask a question, once again, you can type it in that box at the left or you can ask questions over the phone by dialing *1. Right now we don't have actually any questions that have been typed in. Are there any questions on the line Dawn?

Operator: There are no questions as of yet.

Kirse Kelly: Alright, let's go ahead and switch over—if people want to take this time they can download the presentation here. On the right side of your screen, if you click on **Encouraging Motor Carrier Participation** in the download presentation pod, you can just click **Save to My Computer** and that will let you download that. Okay—we do have a question here.

Barbara Hague: *Do you have any data as to states that have given money incentives to carriers for CVISN participation?*

Julie Lane: This is Julie. Hi Barbara. The data we have—again, we did 848 surveys that went out to carriers, and that was basically a recommendation that came out of some of those surveys that would help to benefit a carrier's participation. We haven't done any research to what states have done it and to the extent that it has helped encourage their participation, but it has been included from our carrier outreach and from our state outreach for states that actively involved their carriers as a good incentive to get them involved.

Kirse Kelly: Are there any questions on the lines, Dawn?

Operator: I show no questions at this time.

Kirse Kelly: Okay. Julie would you like to wrap it up now or do you want to wait for a few more questions?

Julie Lane: I think there is another question that just popped up.

Kirse Kelly: Oh, I see that. It's from Ricky Abell and it's:

Ricky Abell: How do we find out if our state is in the program?

Julie Lane: Ricky, best bet is probably just to email me, and I'd be happy to let you know if your state is involved—or if you have a Division Administrator point of contact in your state that you know, with FMCSA, you could contact them as well. But feel free to email me directly and I'd be happy to let you know where your state is with the program.

[10 second pause]

Kirse Kelly: As a reminder to people who are still on the line, members of the trade or local media who are participating in today's call should go ahead and contact our office of communications and that's 202-366-9999. Our next webinar sessions are going to begin in late January, so please go ahead and keep an eye on our website for upcoming webinars. We will be also be sending out announcements of these webinars, so if you are not yet on our email list, you can contact me. It is Kirse.Kelly@dot.gov. I'll write that out for you—just real quick here. It doesn't look like we have any questions right now. Do we have any on the line Dawn?

Operator: There are no questions from the phones.

Kirse Kelly: Okay. I'm going to—we'll leave it open for questions a little bit longer and then I'll go ahead and open up a section for you to fill out an evaluation of today's webinar. Julie, did you have anything else that you wanted to mention?

Julie Lane: No, I just thank everybody for participating, and like I said, if you think of anything offline, feel free to email me and I hope everybody has a Happy Holiday coming up.

Kirse Kelly: Thank you very, very much. This will conclude the webinar and Dawn, thank you very much for being our phone operator. If you could me and Julie on the line—and, like Julie said, have a great Holiday. Bye.

Operator: Thank you participating in today's conference, you may disconnect at this time.

[30:16]