

**Remarks by Bill Bronrott
FMCSA Deputy Administrator
Navigation Systems Webinar
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Introduction

Good afternoon, everyone. I am Bill Bronrott, Deputy Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration at the U.S. Department of Transportation.

I am very pleased to be part of this webinar because, at FMCSA, bus and truck safety our mission and our top priority.

The crossroads of technology and education is the focus of much of our efforts. Unfortunately, we are seeing too many instances of trucks and buses operating without the right navigation systems crashing into bridge overpasses, causing deaths, injuries, and serious infrastructure and property damage.

FMCSA is eager to work with you and all of our stakeholders to put the bright spotlight on preventing this problem – especially because it's largely preventable.

That is why our message today for commercial motor vehicle drivers is to never use non-commercial GPS devices. It is critically important that every carrier and every driver knows that not every navigation system is the

same. We have seen too many times when the use of non-commercial devices have led to large trucks and buses being routed right into collisions with low-clearance overpasses and bridges.

A typical system that a consumer might buy at an electronics or auto parts store might not have critical software programming to show low bridges, hazmat-restricted or weight-restricted routes, and other information relevant to commercial vehicle operators.

I encourage you to visit FMCSA's webpage **[Cue to show FMCSA home page]** -- fmcsa.dot.gov -- to check out our education and outreach section where you can find valuable information on how to choose the right navigation system for your commercial vehicle operation.

As you can see on our web page, we have also created a quick-and-easy read visor card that provides carriers and drivers with tips for choosing the right navigation system and on the safe use of these systems. **[Cue to show visor card page]**

If you use a navigation system that does not provide this important information, the shortcut you thought would save you time and fuel may end up costing you more than you bargained for.

As we know, we've all seen too many crashes due to trucks and buses striking low overpasses. In New York State alone, trucks and buses struck bridges 255 times last year.

According to local police agencies, as many as 80 percent of these bridge hits were caused by drivers who rely on basic consumer-grade navigation systems that are not programmed to alert them to bridge heights, roadway weight limits, and hazmat restricted routes.

When planning routes for truck and bus trips, we urge all commercial drivers to choose a navigation system that allows you to consider:

- First, your vehicle's length, width and height;
- Second, your axle weight; and
- Third, any hazardous materials being hauled.

It comes down to using the right device, following the recommended route, and obeying traffic directional signs. It's also about avoiding typing or entering addresses or other information into a GPS device while driving.

And above all, don't drive while texting or using a cell phone. We know that drivers who take their eyes off the road for 4.6 seconds while traveling at 55mph cover the equivalent of the length of a football field – again without even looking at the roadway!

By using commercial grade GPS systems AND avoiding all forms of distracted driving, we can prevent a lot of needless and costly crashes and property damage, preserve our infrastructure, and save lives.

FMCSA will continue to raise awareness among CMV drivers and carriers about the critical importance of using the right navigation systems. We

want commercial drivers to know exactly how to operate safely from their first day behind the wheel. That is why we will consider including information about navigation systems in the entry-level driver training rulemaking that is part of MAP-21.

I want to thank DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, ATRI, ATA, and each of you participating in this forum for your partnership in putting safety first and using the right navigational system for the safest possible route.

Thank you.

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