COMPLY

Paperless logging is now the law of the land.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Electronic Logging Device rule requires the use of ELDs in certain commercial vehicles to log data on drivers' hours of service. The new mandate affects more than 3 million U.S. vehicles and drivers.

WHAT IS THE ELD MANDATE?

Simply put, an ELD electronically syncs with a vehicle's engine to collect the driver's hours of service. Doing so eliminates the need for paper log books.

Starting in December 2017, the use of ELDs will be required in certain commercial vehicles to log drivers' hours of service, which are limited by the number of consecutive hours and days in which drivers of commercial vehicles may be on the road. The FMCSA estimates ELDs will prevent up to 1,844 crashes annually, including 26 fatalities and 562 injuries.

WHO MUST COMPLY?

Commercial fleets of all sizes and industries must comply if they currently log record of duty status (RODS) data nine or more days out of 30. More specifically, the mandate applies to commercial vehicles that:

- Weigh more than 10,000 pounds
- Have a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight rating more than 10,000 pounds
- Transport more than 15 passengers (including driver) without driver compensation
- Transport more than 8 passengers (including driver) with driver compensation
- Transport hazardous materials requiring a placard.

WHAT FEATURES MUST IT INCLUDE?

ELDs must automatically and electronically connect to an engine's control module and record date; time in Coordinated Universal Time (UTC); vehicle location and motion status; vehicle mileage; engine hours and power status; and driver, vehicle and motor carrier ID numbers.

This data must be recorded every 60 minutes while the vehicle is in motion, and any time the driver turns the vehicle on or off, switches duty status or begins or ends personal use and yard moves.

Other ELDs requirements include:

- **Data displays:** A driver's RODS data must be displayed graphically, so drivers can see their hours at a glance.

- **Data standardization:** Data must be stored in a standardized format to make it easier for sharing.

- **Transmission of data:** RODs data must be easily transmittable to law enforcement via wireless services, email, Bluetooth, USB 2.0, or printouts.

- **Tamper resistance:** Though records may be edited or updated at a later date, ELDs cannot allow the data they collect to be altered or erased in any way.

- **Self-check systems:** ELDs must be able to recognize when sensors have failed or malfunctioned.

- **FMCSA Certification:** ELD providers must be FMCSA-certified and registered.

BEYOND SAFETY

Beyond helping reduce accidents, ELD units can help streamline driver dispatch, cut operational costs and boost day-to-day productivity. Some benefits include efficient logging with less paperwork, proactive alerts of HOS violations that allow action before fines, and tamper-resistant data to ensure driver compliance.

According to the FMCSA, the average fleet's annual recordkeeping expenses will drop by as much as $805 per driver, including $558 spent completing paper logs, $144 in clerical time, $65 in driver fax costs and $38 on blank log books. Fewer HOS violations would help cut fines as high as $16,000 per violation, for a combined annual savings for the industry exceeding $3 billion.