

# VigilVanguard takes another step

VigilManager evaluations improve risk management

By Matthew Brace

Transit authorities throughout the United States are adopting the VigilVanguard on-road driver training system. Vigil Systems has taken the technology one step further to introduce a complementary driver risk management system it calls VigilManager.

Vigil Systems says interest among transit authorities is already strong. LA Metro, Los Angeles, CA, the second-largest U.S. transit authority, is now implementing VigilManager.

Mark Anderson, director of operations training, believes once the system is fully operational it will help with fundamental changes to the way the authority conducts its business.

VigilManager is a highly intelligent system that collates, stores and manages information on individual bus operator performance to predict and prevent accidents from occurring.

Vigil Systems says its new product is different from other driver monitoring systems that report performance. Company officials say Vigil takes the next crucial step to use that information to produce detailed reports that can correct the behavior, cut the chances of accidents and reduce overall risk.

Powerful search capabilities enable users to know what is occurring with every driver at any given time. This gives an organization complete control over its driver fleet with the ability to spot problems before they arise and more carefully manage the risks.

As opposed to a training simulator, VigilManager gathers data from on-road and line-ride assessments. The system obtains real-time behind-the-wheel records with each driver training session and in-service evaluation.

The system and program documents unsafe events and transfers the data to the VigilManager database for later examination and evaluation. The details of the individual driver performance logged in closely managed personnel files receive an overall grade. It also



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stores information in ad hoc reports from observers not involved in training but authorized to use pocket PCs with the VigilPassenger system. If they observe operators committing unsafe acts, such as talking on cell phones while driving, they can call in such incidents for inclusion in the driver's record.

The driver receives feedback automatically on observations and evaluations and returns to the job with a record of any discussions, as well as a heightened awareness of how to manage risk on the road. Particular actions and incidents may require additional training.

"We see VigilManager as the missing link between factual information and human observation," says Ian Haynes, chief executive officer. "This technology can help identify the root causes of accidents—both the obvious and the not-so-obvious."

VigilManager works alongside VigilVanguard, which is an experiential adult learning tool that uncovers unconscious behavior. Haynes says it gives drivers an opportunity to see for themselves the errors they make in their on-road performance.

"Because managers no longer have to input information manually, VigilManager saves time and resources," says Haynes. "It produces detailed reports quickly and more accurately benchmarks driver performance. Organizations can produce a wider range

of reports that may include line audits and security assessments that assist in assessing and managing risk related to driving safety and accident reduction.”

The comprehensive mass of data processed and housed through VigilManager reveals every aspect of the driver's career behind the wheel, from training records through to in-service performance reports. The technology submits valuable conclusions on driver performance. It may suggest corrective action for individual drivers or direct the authority to develop new approaches to driver training.

Though Anderson says VigilManager is still a work in progress at LA Metro with results not yet available, he is convinced of its potential value.

“In the past we have waited and managed situations after accidents have happened. Even though we do not have any data to report yet as we have not fully implemented VigilManager, we are fairly confident it will be able to change our past ways of working and will allow us to adopt a very proactive approach by making safety observations before accidents happen.”

Anderson says insurance companies have determined that ‘x’ amount of unsafe acts lead to an accident, ‘x’ amount of accidents lead to a serious accident, and ‘x’ amount of serious accidents lead to a fatality.

“If we can cut these unsafe acts off at the bottom of that

chain, we can change the culture and prevent accidents,” says Anderson. “It’s not a matter of getting someone in trouble—that’s not the point—we need to know what these drivers are doing so we can change their behavior. We do not have any results because the system is not operational at LA Metro yet but we believe, when drivers are faced with the choice of being reprimanded after an accident when they are about to receive a warning letter, or being told ‘we are telling you now so you can avoid getting into an accident in the future’, we think they will prefer this proactive scenario.”

Using VigilManager supervisors can check the quality and consistency of all evaluations. Correlations that reveal negative results across the board could point to trends within their operations and training practices that may need their attention.

To speed up the risk management process the system can make automated recommendations and action plans, as well as automatic alerts to dangerous driving behavior.

“The attraction of VigilManager is the philosophy of proactively managing driver performance to predict and prevent collisions,” says Haynes. “It offers a great assist in improving safety standards, passenger comfort and operational excellence.”