

# move

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Newfound pressure  
on the Non-Resident  
Violator Compact

Supporting online  
identity verification

Q&A with Simone Davis

# BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

How jurisdictions in  
the U.S. and Canada  
are working with tribal  
authorities to improve  
road safety

# FDR

## FRAUD DETECTION & REMEDIATION E-LEARNING PROGRAM

AAMVA's Fraud Detection & Remediation (FDR) program helps you tackle fraud head-on with training used by DMVs, law enforcement, federal agencies, and corporations worldwide. FDR is a comprehensive anti-fraud toolbox for anyone handling secure documents or sensitive transactions, including all agency staff. Training modules are updated yearly with new and enhanced content. The updated courseware package (January 2025 version) is now available to member jurisdictions!



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- New CAN Emergency Passport
- New CAN Temporary Passport
- New MEX CDL Information
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- Updated Job Aids, contact lists, reference guides
- 2025 Update Only module

### FDR is now available in Spanish!

The Spanish version includes FDR's 16 core Level 1 and 2 modules and Job Aids. Text, narration, player controls, and knowledge assessments have been translated to provide additional tools for effective and relevant document authentication training. Language versions are selected on the download page!



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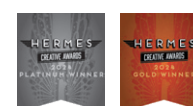
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Safe drivers  
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Saving lives!



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SEPTEMBER 9-11

The Annual International Conference (AIC) is AAMVA's premier event for jurisdictions, industry, and federal partners to come together to share experiences and learn. The 2025 AIC will be in Phoenix, Arizona. Get a taste of Phoenix's year-round sunshine, desert landscape, vibrant culture, and thriving tech industry. Join Chair of the Board, Eric Jorgensen, and experience a unique networking and educational event. 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 from 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 innovative leaders.

Registration Now Open  
at [aamva.org](https://www.aamva.org)





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## BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

Jurisdictions in the U.S. and Canada are working with tribal authorities to improve road safety

BY MEREDITH LANDRY

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Growing policy and technology gaps are putting pressure on the long-standing Non-Resident Violator Compact

BY STEVE HENDERSHOT



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**FROM THE PRESIDENT**  
**03** Collaboration is at the heart of two road safety efforts

# A Commitment to Safety

COLLABORATION IS AT THE HEART OF TWO ROAD SAFETY EFFORTS

AAMVA's mission is to serve our members, supporting them as they strive to keep their communities and the traveling public safe on the roads. By fostering collaboration among a broad array of stakeholders, AAMVA promotes uniform standards, enhances data sharing and advances policies that ensure safer, more secure communities. All of this work is based on connections.

At its core, road safety is not about singular campaigns or isolated enforcement efforts. It is the sum of relationships, partnerships and shared responsibilities. To reach our destination on the "Road Toward Zero," we must not only collaborate but also share our knowledge, data and resources. The focus areas in this issue of *MOVE* reinforce this proven approach: the evolving partnership between transportation organizations and tribal nations to improve traffic safety on tribal lands, and the enduring relevance of the Non-Resident Violator Compact (NRVC), which has long exemplified interstate cooperation.

Native American communities, spread across 574 federally recognized tribes and numerous sovereign lands in the United States and 630 First Nations communities in Canada, face disproportionate rates of traffic fatalities. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of unintentional injury and death among Native Americans in the U.S. Despite the historical barriers of jurisdictional complexities, limited infrastructure investment and gaps in data sharing, tribal leaders continue to work with safety partners to identify the most pressing concerns. This work is built on trust, respect for sovereignty and genuine partnership. Each partner, whether tribal authority or technical assistance provider, actively shapes safety strategies that work for their communities. Such progress reinforces our shared vision to save lives across the entirety of our transportation network for all users, no matter where they live.

The NRVC, first adopted in 1977, also demonstrates collaboration and cooperation. It is a testament to what states can achieve when they collaborate to share data. Before the NRVC, local authorities often detained drivers who committed traffic violations outside their home states until a ticket could be adjudicated. In other cases, drivers evaded penalties simply

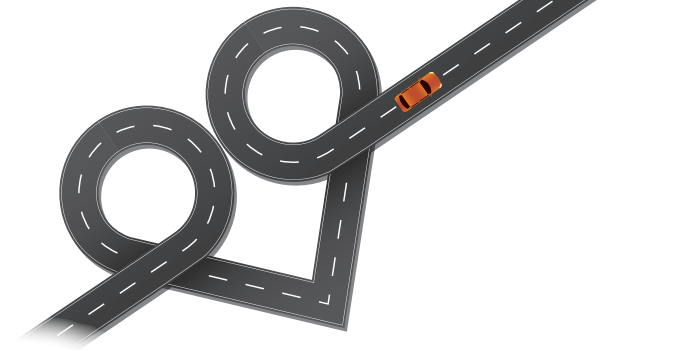
by crossing jurisdictional lines. For example, a speeding ticket ignored in a neighboring state could go unpunished, undermining both enforcement and safety.

The NRVC established a standardized system wherein member states agreed to suspend the licenses of drivers who failed to resolve citations received in other states. Today, most states are members of this compact, and its impact is clear: Drivers know that the responsibilities they carry behind the wheel extend beyond state lines. The NRVC also exemplifies how data sharing, through notification of violations and reciprocal enforcement, protects all road users by holding drivers accountable regardless of geography.

Today, however, new challenges relating to technological and policy shifts mean undertaking changes to the NRVC. As the Compact Secretariat, AAMVA is supporting the NRVC Executive Board through this modernization process. While nuances of the NRVC must shift to accommodate current thinking related to paying fines on traffic citations and technological capacities, the foundation of the NRVC, cooperative data sharing and a collaborative commitment to road safety will remain.

This *MOVE* issue, with two seemingly unrelated feature stories about engagement with tribal communities and the enduring legacy of the NRVC, actually underscores the same truth: Road safety is communal safety. Reflecting on AAMVA's role, one of our best strengths is supporting those connections among our members and other key stakeholders. New policy changes and technological advancements present opportunities for progress. Collaboration is not merely a strategy—it is a necessity. Like the roads that connect the United States, Canada and all the tribal lands, our mutual safety work ties us together. Only together can we ensure that every mile traveled is a mile traveled safely. **m**

*Ian M. Grossman*  
Ian Grossman  
AAMVA President and CEO



## ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

Read an extended article and see the video on how the NMVTIS Law Enforcement Access Tool is helping jurisdictions fight fraud on **MOVEmag.org**



Check out at **MOVEmag.org**.



# Supporting Online Identity Verification

*THE LATEST MDL GUIDELINES INTRODUCE INTERNET-BASED IDENTITY AUTHENTICATION, OFFERING A SAFER ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL ID UPLOADS*

BY MAGGIE CALLAHAN

As online privacy and safety threats continue to grow, so do the measures to safeguard online users. AAMVA is committed to ensuring the safety and security of mobile driver's license (mDL) holders by continuously refining guidelines that enhance digital identity protection.

In May of 2025, AAMVA released version 1.5 of the mDL Implementation Guidelines, further refining guidance for online identity verification. Previously, the guidelines only referenced the international standard of ISO/IEC 18013-5, which outlined how mDLs could be validated in person, such as at a counter or kiosk. The latest update introduces ISO/IEC 18013-7, which extends mDL verification to internet-based transactions.

"Rather than a full standard, 18013-7 is a technical specification that allows for more rapid evolution than a standard would, and it provides the framework for interoperability when verifying ISO/IEC 18013-compliant digital credentials over the internet," says Tim Roufa, manager of Identity Management for AAMVA. This update is particularly relevant for industries including online banking, e-commerce, car rentals and ride-sharing services, where secure identity verification is critical. Major online retailers, for example, are exploring mDL integration for account recovery, providing a more secure alternative to traditional identity verification methods.



The implementation guidelines included two major updates:

- The over-the-internet appendix was revised to align with the published ISO 18013-7 specification, ensuring consistency with the latest technical developments.
- A new section describes an application programming interface (API) currently being tested by the Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C). The W3C Digital Credential (DC) API is a proposed method for online mDL authentication. While the W3C DC API is not yet included in ISO standards, it is currently under consideration.

Historically, online identity verification has relied on users uploading images of their physical IDs—an approach that poses security and privacy concerns. The 18013-7 update allows for a more secure and privacy-respecting method, reducing identity fraud risks and enhancing the security within the mDL ecosystem.

"This standard was built to ensure privacy and security while ensuring interoperability across state and international borders," says Michael McCaskill, AAMVA vice president of Identity Management. "These are crucial components for ensuring trust not only among mDL holders but also the relying parties."

The mDL rollout is being handled on a jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction basis, with each one determining its own approach. Jurisdictions collaborate with vendors to develop and deploy mDL solutions for residents.

While mDLs are still relatively new, their implementation is evolving alongside technology and security requirements. The complexity of ensuring privacy, data security and interoperability over the internet necessitates periodic

updates to the specifications to ensure they incorporate the evolving technology in this space. The potential of the W3C DC API represents a forward-looking approach to address

*"This standard was built to ensure privacy and security while ensuring interoperability across state and international borders."*

**MICHAEL McCASKILL**  
AAMVA Vice President of  
Identity Management

some of the limitations of the current protocols.

By incorporating the credential API into the updated implementation guidelines, jurisdictions are able to explore this emerging technology with guidance for ensuring compatibility with the published specification.

"We built the standards and technical specifications from the ground up to respect privacy, secure user data and ensure interoperability between jurisdictions," says McCaskill. "We'll continue to update specifications as safer options become available. I like to say that we built it this way to protect my mother and my grandchildren—protecting their identities to make their lives safer." **m**

Learn more  
about mDL in  
AAMVAcast  
episode 195:  
[bit.ly/AAMVA-  
Cast195](https://bit.ly/AAMVA-Cast195)



# Plowing Through the Regulations

IOWA'S DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RELEASED A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND GUIDE FOR FARM VEHICLE REGULATIONS

BY NOVID PARSİ

Iowa is a big farm state, says Angela Pinegar, MBA, director of learning and development, Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) Motor Vehicle Division (MVD).

"Big" is something of an understatement. Iowa has about 86,800 farms and 30 million acres of farmland, accounting for over 85% of the state's land. Iowa is also the nation's leading producer of corn, eggs and pork.

That's a lot of farming—which requires a lot of farm vehicles. Every year, Iowa DOT's MVD registers almost 40,000 farm-related vehicles, according to Pinegar.

But the transportation regulations and requirements for all those vehicles are complex and, for many years, had been difficult to access. Farmers had to learn the regulations by hunting for them online or through word of mouth, leading to potential knowledge gaps and misinformation.

In early 2024, under the leadership of Melissa Gillett, then the Iowa MVD director and now the current Iowa DOT COO, the Iowa MVD set out to produce a clear, easy-to-follow guide for farm vehicle regulations. The guide would address a broad range of topics—including covered farm



## HOW IOWA FARMS RANK IN THE U.S.

- #1 corn production
- #2 oat, soybean production
- #3 average value of cropland, number of farms

vehicles and exemptions, size and weight regulations, safety regulations, operating rules, commercial driver's license requirements, and oversize and overweight permits. And it would be the state's first guide of its kind.

### LAY OF THE LAND

To start, the Iowa MVD team had to determine what the state's farmers knew—and what they needed to know. The team conducted a needs assessment that included a survey of farmers and a review of common online inquiries related to farming regulations.

The team also met with a wide range of agricultural organizations and stakeholders that interact with farmers, including the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Soybean Association, NEW Cooperative, Iowa State University, county treasurers across the state who serve farmers, and numerous others. The Iowa MVD team identified the transportation-related questions that these organizations commonly encounter and how they were educating farmers about transportation so that the guide would complement that education.

In addition, the team met with the Iowa Department of Public Safety's Commercial Motor Vehicle Unit to identify the kinds of issues law enforcement often saw when officers interacted with operators during traffic stops.

Armed with this wealth of input, the team decided to organize the guide into four main sections—starting with Iowa's definition of farm vehicles, followed by the state's requirements for permitting, licensing and registering.

The Iowa MVD team carefully considered not just the guide's content but its format as well. The team included graphic tables that break down the many regulations and details into easily digestible chunks. One table, for instance, lists the permitting requirements for hauling various items depending on the type of vehicle and where it's going. The team also chose to publish the guide as a 3.5-inch by 5-inch book with spiral binding so that it could fit easily into a farmer's pocket, overalls or glove box.

### THE GUIDE DEBUTS

In August 2024, the guide's soft launch debuted at the Iowa State Fair, where the team presented it to farmers and solicited their input. "We got a lot of really good feedback from our intended audience," Pinegar says.

While gathering feedback, Pinegar and her colleagues continually had to determine whether each piece of information they obtained was essential for the guide while ensuring it remained readable. For example, should the guide include specific regulations about transporting raw milk? "We went back and forth on whether that was helpful," Pinegar says.

That question was answered when the Iowa MVD team released the publication, "Plowing Through the Regulations: A Farmer's Guide to Iowa Transportation," at Iowa Ag Expo



in February 2025. At the Expo, Pinegar recalls, "a farmer asked, 'What about raw milk?' And we said, 'Yes, we have an answer for that.' That was very validating," she says. "All the other questions we were asked were also covered in the guide, and that was a good feeling."


Iowa DOT plans to promote and distribute the guide during the spring planting and fall harvesting seasons, as well as the annual Iowa State Fair.


### A WELCOME RECEPTION


Still, Pinegar says, there's much more information about farm transportation than the guide could include. So, Iowa MVD has been creating an interactive online tool that will go live in July. Users will be able to enter info—such as who is driving, what vehicle they are driving, where they are driving and what they are hauling—and the tool will provide clarification on any registration, licensing and permitting requirements.

Meanwhile, the guide, available in print and as a PDF, has been a welcome asset for the farming community. Since its publication, farmers and farmer associations have been praising the guide and asking for more copies. After the initial print of 5,000 copies, Pinegar had to order another 5,000 just a month later. "I can't keep up with the printing production," she says. **m**

## WHAT IS A FARM VEHICLE IN IOWA?

 Operated by the farm's owner, operator, employees or the owner/operator's family

 Transports agricultural commodities, livestock, machinery or supplies to or from a farm (but not large quantities of hazardous materials)

 Not used for hire, except for tenant operations under a crop share agreement



# The Road to Efficiency

BY PARTNERING WITH MV SOLUTIONS, THE IDAHO DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES DRAMATICALLY REDUCED THE WORK INVOLVED IN INSURANCE VERIFICATION

BY NOVID PARSI

An estimated 150,000 cars didn't have insurance in Idaho in 2019, according to the Idaho Transportation Department. The following year, a new state law took effect: Idaho drivers had to provide proof of insurance to the Idaho Transportation Department's Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)—or face mandatory suspension and reinstatement fees.

The law also established enforcement mechanisms. The DMV had to determine every month whether vehicle owners had insurance, and if they didn't, the DMV sent warning letters to those drivers before suspending their registration.

For the DMV, the resulting workload was overwhelming. "We were sending out 40,000 to 45,000 notices a month," says Lisa McClellan, administrator, Idaho DMV.

Adding to the problem: About half of those notices were being sent to vehicle owners who did, in fact, have insurance. That's because the Idaho DMV could access data only from insurance carriers within the state, not out of state.

To keep up with all the extra work, the Idaho DMV hired 12 to 16 temporary workers at a time just to answer phone calls from customers angry about warning letters they mistakenly received. "Our phone system broke multiple times because of the number of phone calls coming in," says Beverlie Edwards, portfolio program manager, Idaho DMV.

## VERIFYING INSURANCE IN REAL TIME

After building a portal for drivers to self-report their insurance information, the Idaho DMV got the number of monthly notices down to 30,000. Better, but still not ideal.

So, in 2023, the Idaho DMV partnered with MV Solutions, whose real-time verification system can instantly determine



*"We were sending out 40,000 to 45,000 notices a month."*

**LISA McCLELLAN**  
Administrator, Idaho DMV

whether a vehicle has an insurance policy in another state. In June of that year, the DMV launched MV Solutions' Idaho Insurance Verification System (IdahoIVS).

"We take a manual process and make it all electronic and a lot more efficient," says Tracy Laws Corson, implementation coordinator, MV Solutions. "Within seconds, a clerk at a DMV counter or an officer outside a car gets a 'yes' or 'no' on whether a vehicle is insured."

The volume of monthly warning letters plummeted from 30,000 to 10,000—and those 10,000 letters are now accurately going to drivers without insurance. Plus, the number of customer calls related to insurance verification fell from almost 1,000 a day to fewer than 100. As a result, the Idaho DMV was able to reduce the number of workers who field customers' calls from at least a dozen to just four—and those four don't work on this issue full-time.

## A SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH

"It's a great success story," McClellan says of the IdahoIVS. It was so successful, in fact, that the Idaho DMV and MV Solutions partnered again.

As of this year, the Idaho DMV leverages MV Solutions to determine whether drivers have SR-22 coverage—additional proof of insurance and financial responsibility typically

required of high-risk drivers convicted of serious driving offenses. MV Solutions also identifies drivers with SR-26—the cancellation form for drivers who no longer need SR-22 coverage.

Prior to MV Solutions, the DMV had to rely on multiple sources of information related to SR-22 and SR-26. Now, MV Solutions serves as a single, reliable source of truth: "We know that everything we have has come directly from the insurance companies," Edwards says.

MV Solutions has eliminated all of the Idaho DMV's manual entries and reviews related to SR-22 and SR-26—saving almost 3,000 labor hours per year.

"Working with MV Solutions has been the best experience," McClellan says. "They were so helpful and accommodating, they met their deadlines, and they delivered everything they were supposed to." **m**



# Fighting Fraud with NMVTIS Data

## HOW THE NMVTIS LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCESS TOOL HELPS JURISDICTIONS

The National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) is a tool designed to assist vehicle title investigators and local, state and federal law enforcement in investigating, deterring and preventing vehicle-related crimes. The NMVTIS Law Enforcement Access Tool (LEAT) allows users to view NMVTIS data reported from state motor vehicle titling agencies, automobile

*“The fraudsters have realized that it’s quick money. If you steal a vehicle, you can VIN-switch it and sell it for \$70,000 or \$80,000. That’s a lot of profit.”*

JD DECKER

Compliance Enforcement Administrator, Nevada DMV CED

recyclers, junk and salvage yards, and insurance carriers. LEAT also contains stolen vehicle files, vehicle lien and impound records, cloned and counterfeit vehicle files, and other pertinent vehicle information.

For the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicle's (DMV) Compliance Enforcement Division (CED), accessing NMVTIS has been a powerful tool in the fight against fraud and earned the agency the International NMVTIS Enforcement Award. "NMVTIS is the place that we start with in any investigation; it's almost like a medical history for a vehicle," says JD Decker, compliance enforcement administrator at the Nevada DMV CED. "It's a way to match documents with the official history of the car. The history of the car is important. It has a manufacturer's certificate of origin (which is like a birth certificate), repair records, title change, registration change. If you move out of state or to a different country, it has all those things that should tell a story about how the vehicle got to where it is today."

The Nevada DMV CED uses NMVTIS to start every stolen vehicle investigation. In the past year, the team developed a stolen vehicle recovery program, which resulted in the recovery of more than 90 vehicles that had been stolen and/or had the vehicle identification number (VIN) switched—a scheme where fraudsters take a legitimate vehicle's VIN and place it on a stolen vehicle. The program resulted in more than \$3 million in recovered-vehicle values in Southern Nevada.

"The fraudsters have realized that it's quick money. If you steal a vehicle, you can VIN-switch it and sell it for \$70,000 or \$80,000. That's a lot of profit," says Decker. "Of course,

## VEHICLE DEALERS

There are several recent surveys related to vehicle dealers. These surveys have additional questions that provide more information. Full details can be found at the following link:

[bit.ly/AAMVA\\_SURVEYRESPONSES](http://bit.ly/AAMVA_SURVEYRESPONSES)

## PROOF OF OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS FOR DEALERS

### 32 RESPONSES

### DOES YOUR STATE LICENSE MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS?

Yes:  

***DOES YOUR STATE HAVE A VICTIM FUND THAT DEALERSHIPS PAY INTO TO SATISFY CLAIMS OF MOTORISTS WHO HAVE VEHICLES THAT ARE OUT OF TRUST?***

Yes: ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒

$N_0$ : 

### REASSIGNMENT OF OWNERSHIP BY REGISTERED DEALERS

#### 29 RESPONSES

### DOES YOUR STATE ALLOW REASSIGNMENT OF OWNERSHIP BY REGISTERED DEALERS?

Yes: 

No: ■■■■■■

## INTERFACE WITH DEALERS

27 RESPONSES

### DO YOU HAVE AN INTERFACE WITH ANY DEALERSHIP IN YOUR STATE?

Yes: ■■■■■■

No. 

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

AAMVAcademy

Fraudulent Online Dealers: [bit.ly/AAMVA\\_Cast242](http://bit.ly/AAMVA_Cast242)

### Conference Presentations

Stopping Fraud Against Motor Vehicle Dealers. AIC 2024: [bit.ly/3W33333](https://bit.ly/3W33333)

AAMVA2024AICPresentations

Motor Vehicle Dealer Regulatory Tools and Resources, AIC 2024: [bit.ly/AAMVA2024AICPresentations](https://bit.ly/AAMVA2024AICPresentations)

*“We are fortunate to have excellent tools to provide this service for our communities. In this case, because the mileage was altered on the titles submitted for vehicles from all over the country, we ran NMVTIS on each car to help build the story behind each car.”*

**PAM GOHEEN**

Assistant Commissioner for Communications, Virginia DMV

you don’t just do that once. If you’re capable of VIN-switching a frame and making the stickers, now you’ve got a production line for fraud.”

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles has also found NMVTIS vital in fighting fraud. They used NMVTIS in an

investigation after a major national used car chain submitted a complaint about an organized group of individuals believed to be selling company vehicles with odometer rollbacks. The initial complaint came in with approximately 120 vehicles titled or sold to stores in Virginia and Maryland.

The Virginia DMV shared information with the Maryland Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and determined that the suspects were also buying vehicles at various auto auctions using dealer credentials from shell dealerships. Eight shell companies were identified.

The investigators used the NMVTIS tool to locate the current and prior owners of the vehicles and track mileage. Investigators narrowed the scope of the investigation to about 200 vehicles. Using the NMVTIS report’s title history, they reached out to states where the vehicles were previously titled and obtained former owners’ names and addresses. From there, investigators found each owner’s contact information and collected details confirming the suspected rollback, including financial information and suspect information. In all, over 200 interviews were conducted.

At this point, the criminal organization appears to be



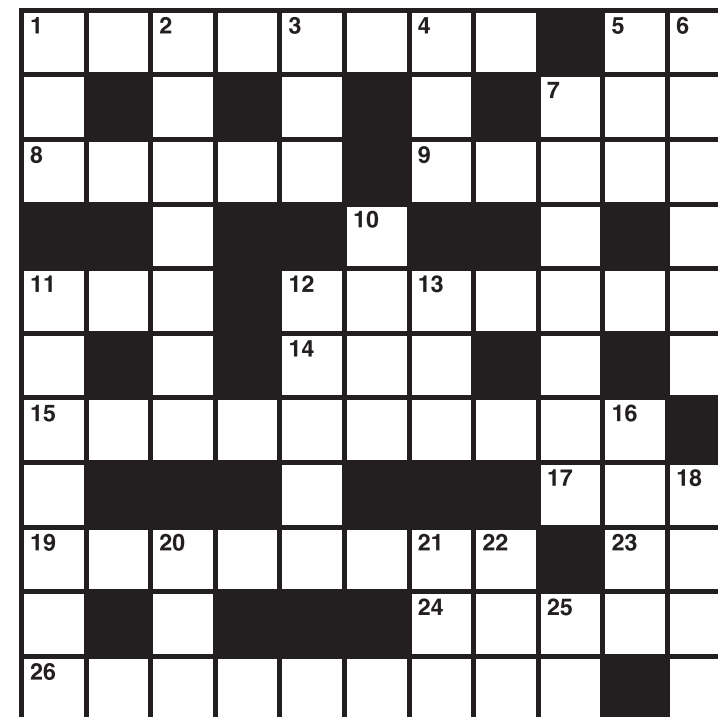
involved in other financial crimes. Another federal agency is investigating the suspects’ financials, as well.

“We know many of the routine cases we investigate can uncover the need for more in-depth investigations,” says Pam Goheen, assistant commissioner for communications at the Virginia DMV. “It’s in consumers’ and our communities’ interests for us to look behind why dealerships do not provide titles within the required 30-day timeframe or beyond a surface-level domestic dispute over a joint title to rule out potential forgery.”

Goheen adds, “We are fortunate to have excellent tools to provide this service for our communities. In this case, because the mileage was altered on the titles submitted for vehicles from all over the country, we ran NMVTIS on each car to help build the story behind each car. The tool saved us countless hours because we could look at the title and match the information without having to ask another jurisdiction’s agent to confirm the information. We know organizations like AAMVA and the National Insurance Crime Bureau are available and want to help. We appreciate the assistance as well as the accuracy and time-savings gained from these valuable resources.”

In general, communication with other agencies is essential, Goheen says. “Everyone has a piece of the puzzle, and the picture can only be completed when we all come together.” **m**

## crossword



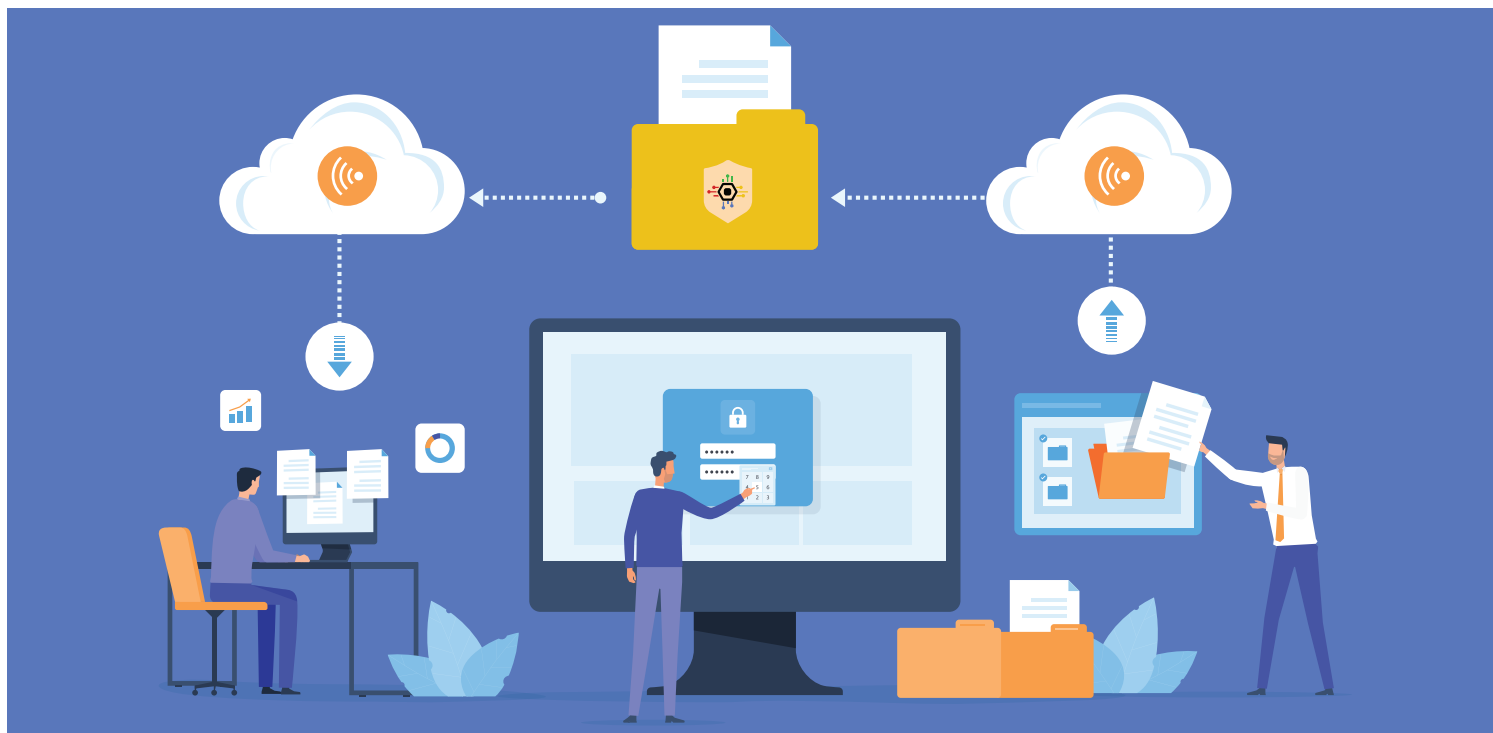
### ACROSS

- 1 The R of NRVC
- 5 Peach state, abbr.
- 7 Fuel at the pump
- 8 See 2 down
- 9 Means to solve problems
- 11 Owed and payable immediately
- 12 Vital safety wear provided to kids in First Nation tribes in Canada
- 14 Compass direction, abbr.
- 15 Traffic infractions
- 17 “Help!” call
- 19 A summons, like a ticket for example
- 23 Modern digital intelligence breakthrough, abbr.
- 24 Governing body
- 26 Imposes a penalty on

### DOWN

- 1 Camping vehicles, for short
- 2 AAMVA’s \_\_\_\_\_ Verification Service equips jurisdictions to instantly share records electronically, goes with 8 across, 3 words
- 3 Add color to
- 4 Bolt’s companion
- 5 Country Western lady
- 6 Determine the value of
- 7 Exercises authority over
- 10 Car door damage, e.g.
- 11 The D in IIDs
- 12 Courage to carry on
- 13 Hawaiian necklace
- 16 Rise dramatically
- 18 Neither the front or the back of a vehicle
- 20 Truck weight measurement
- 21 Classified ad abbreviation
- 22 Prefix with profit
- 25 Top grades





# The Case for Open Systems: Protecting Jurisdictions from Vertical Integration

For decades, vehicle title and registration systems have been constrained by outdated technologies and cumbersome processes. The push for modernization has brought new efficiencies—but also new challenges. As jurisdictions turn to third-party vendors to facilitate transactions for dealers, lenders, and service providers, they face a crucial decision: *Who controls the infrastructure, and what does that mean for the industry's future?*

At first glance, handing control to a single vendor may seem like the simplest solution. A closed, vertically integrated system promises convenience—one provider managing both the core infrastructure and the services that connect to it. But convenience often comes at a cost. When modernization efforts limit competition rather than encourage it, the long-term consequences can be both restrictive and expensive.

## Open vs. Closed Systems: What's the Difference?

An open system fosters flexibility and competition, allowing multiple service providers to connect while keeping jurisdictions in control of their data. This approach encourages innovation and seamless integration of new solutions.

A closed system, controlled by a single vendor who does not easily allow service providers to connect to it, restricts competition by forcing jurisdictions, dealers, lenders, and others to rely on one provider. That vendor would be both the system of record for the state as well as the sole source a dealer, lender, insurance carrier, or fleet could use to transmit its data. When a vendor plays dual roles—acting as both the system of record and the gateway provider for services like Electronic Registration and Title (ERT) or Electronic Lien and Title (ELT)—they control both the infrastructure and data exchange pathways.

Both models exist in state government technology procurement, each with real-world consequences. The question is: Which approach best serves the industry and its stakeholders?

“The best outcomes for dealers, lenders, insurers, and fleets come from a fair, open market—not a system engineered for vendor dominance.”

## Risks of Vendor Lock-In and Vertical Integration

When a single vendor controls a system and does not allow other vendors to connect to it, competition stalls. Without alternatives, innovation slows, and dealers, lenders, and jurisdictions are forced into dependency. A monopoly on essential services removes market pressure, leading to rising costs and limited service improvements.

The worst-case scenario is when a system-of-record provider also serves as a Service Provider to dealers, lenders, and insurance carriers. This creates a conflict of interest, giving the provider access to its competitors' transaction data. For example, if VendorX both enabled a system of record for a state or ERT for a state, and that entity was a Service Provider to dealers, they could manipulate integration timelines, delay competitor upgrades, and steer business toward their own dealer services. Worse, they would have full visibility into competitors' transactions, creating endless opportunities for exploitation.

Vendor control also raises regulatory and compliance risks. When a single entity dictates system access, jurisdictions lose flexibility in adapting to policy changes. Further, and to protect the public interest, any consultant hired by the state to help create RFPs or to evaluate vendors should be barred from future work with the state or any system provider to prevent conflicts of interest. This ensures that those advising on vendor selection remain impartial and free from financial incentives that could influence procurement decisions.



## Why Open Systems Matter

Modernization should foster competition, not restrict it. Open systems keep jurisdictions—not vendors—in control, ensuring a competitive and adaptable infrastructure. By maintaining an open framework, states can encourage competition, allowing multiple service providers to drive innovation, improve service quality, and maintain competitive pricing. Open platforms enhance flexibility, enabling jurisdictions to integrate new technologies and adapt to evolving industry needs. They also preserve regulatory authority, allowing states to implement policy changes without vendor-imposed constraints. Additionally, competition improves efficiency by fostering faster processing times, streamlined workflows, and better user experiences. In short, open systems future-proof jurisdictions against vendor lock-in while promoting a dynamic, innovative marketplace.

## Recommendations for Jurisdictions

To avoid the consequences of vendor lock-in and vertical integration, jurisdictions should adopt policies that protect competition and innovation. First, mandate open architecture in RFP processes to ensure interoperability. Second, like a judge recusing herself from a trial in which she is conflicted, states should require that consultants you hire are not engaging in a conflict of interest by also becoming a vendor to the state themselves, either directly or as a subcontractor to your ultimately chosen vendor. Third, be sure to allow for a healthy community of competitive Service Providers to connect to your system of record. Finally, ensure that whoever builds your system of record is also not a direct competitor with your Service Providers to maintain clear boundaries around fairness and data control.

## Conclusion: The Future is Open

Modernization should not mean monopolization. By resisting vertical integration and embracing open systems, jurisdictions safeguard their autonomy, ensure long-term cost efficiency, and create an environment where innovation can thrive. AAMVA members and policymakers: together, let's champion open systems for a truly progressive future.



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# BRIDGING the DIVIDE

HOW JURISDICTIONS IN  
THE U.S. AND CANADA ARE  
WORKING WITH TRIBAL  
AUTHORITIES TO IMPROVE  
ROAD SAFETY

BY MEREDITH LANDRY

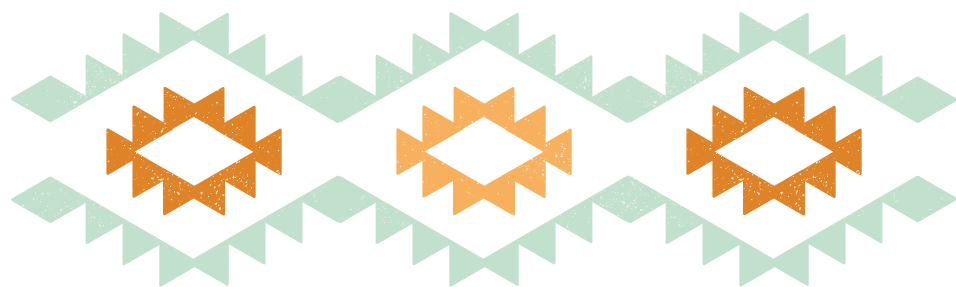


safety

There are 574 federally recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Native Villages in the United States today, while Canada recognizes over 630 First Nations communities. Legally deemed sovereign nations, tribes in the U.S. can establish their own traffic laws, road safety measures and transportation infrastructure on tribal lands.

This serves three major purposes. First, Indigenous nations use road-way governance as an expression of self-rule and cultural preservation. Secondly, because many tribal areas are remote, local control over road systems allows for quicker response to community needs. And third, tribes can implement laws that align with their traditional practices or address unique community concerns.





Unfortunately, road safety on these lands has long been a concern. American Indian and Alaska Native people had a traffic fatality rate of 28.5 per 100,000, a rate that's more than 10 higher than any other demographic, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. Since tribal communities also report higher-than-average crash rates, jurisdictions across North America are working toward a solution. In partnership with tribal authorities, many jurisdictions are helping to improve road safety through collaborative initiatives, improved data-sharing efforts and culturally sensitive engagement.

### THE CHALLENGE: A DISPROPORTIONATE RISK ON TRIBAL ROADS

Across North America, tribal communities experience disproportionately high rates of traffic-related fatalities and injuries.

"When we're looking at different populations that have been overrepresented in these fatalities, sovereign nations and tribal communities far surpass any other population," says Tara Casanova Powell, CEO of the Association of Transportation Safety Information Professionals.

Many factors contribute to this heightened risk, according to Casanova Powell, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of access to emergency services and an increased presence of mixed-use roadways where pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles share the same space.

"We analyzed collision data and found a lot of collisions occurring near First Nations," says Yadili Okwumabua-Gbakima, supervisor of Road Safety Programs, Manitoba Public Insurance, Canada. "Compared to the rest of the province, the proportion of collision fatalities in and around First Nations is substantially higher."

Alarmingly, she says that pedestrians made up a substantial percentage of these fatalities, often due to low visibility and limited pedestrian infrastructure.

### THE COMPLEXITY OF GOVERNANCE AND DATA COLLECTION

Jurisdictions working with tribal authorities must often navigate complex governance structures. As sovereign nations, each tribe has its own set of rules.

*Since tribal communities report higher-than-average crash rates, jurisdictions across North America are working toward a solution.*

"Every tribe's a little bit different," says Andrea Bill, associate director of the Eastern Tribal Technical Assistance Program. "It really depends on their background and whether they operate under Public Law 280 or not." (Public Law 280 gives certain states the ability to oversee jurisdiction in criminal and civil matters on tribal land.)

Some tribes maintain their own crash databases, she says, while others share data with state or federal agencies, which creates inconsistencies in the available traffic safety data.

"Some tribes have more advanced data systems and can share their data with the state or federal agencies. But there are still some tribes that don't collect data on some driving offenses on their roads," Casanova Powell says.

This inconsistency makes it difficult to assess safety risks and apply for funding to address infrastructure deficiencies.

### BUILDING TRUST THROUGH COLLABORATION

Recognizing the urgent need for improved road safety, organizations and government agencies have taken steps to build partnerships with tribal communities. A critical aspect of this work is earning the trust of tribal authorities.

"The biggest thing is listening," Bill says. "There are things that have gone back and forth for many, many years. Any idea we come up with is probably something they've already thought about and tried to do."

In her initial approach to a tribe, Casanova Powell says that she lets them do the talking.

"We ask, 'What do you need? How can we help you?' I'm not here to tell the tribes what they need—I have no idea what they need," she says. "I need them to tell me."

This approach of mutual respect and active listening has also helped open doors to cooperation across Canada.

"One of the big things that I can say is that we are really trying to look at how we can serve all Manitobans—including First Nations citizens," Okwumabua-Gbakima says. "Historically, Indigenous communities have been underserved, if served at all."

### INITIATIVES DRIVING CHANGE

Over the last decade, various programs have emerged to improve road safety in tribal areas. In Wisconsin, Bill's team worked to integrate tribal crash data into a statewide mapping system.

"We built trust step by step," she says. "Eventually, we got to a place where our crashes are almost all geolocated—over 90% are mapped



correctly. Now, tribes can use this data to apply for funding."

In Manitoba, Okwumabua-Gbakima says that a focus on community engagement has led to some targeted safety interventions.

"Following a review of collision data and discussions with stakeholders, we found that a lot of First Nations youth were using off-road vehicles as their primary mode of transportation," she says. "We recognized the need to partner with First Nations and Indigenous communities in ensuring youth had access to ATV and snowmobile education and safety equipment. This initiative is allowing us to support educational presentations and distribute safety helmets to children attending the sessions."

Another successful initiative in Manitoba involved distributing high-visibility gear to pedestrians in Indigenous communities, including reflective backpacks.

"We piloted a program at Manitoba Public Insurance, in collaboration with local First Nations, where we provided 1,300 kits that included backpacks, flashing lights and warm toques [beanies], all designed for high visibility. The response was overwhelmingly positive," Okwumabua-Gbakima says. "People appreciated that their safety was being considered and prioritized."

*A successful initiative in Manitoba involved distributing high-visibility gear, including reflective backpacks, to pedestrians in Indigenous communities.*

### OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

Despite these advancements, several hurdles remain. One of the main challenges is the reluctance of some tribes to share crash data, often due to concerns over jurisdictional overreach.

"Some grants that tribes can apply for require them to share their data," Casanova Powell says. "However, as sovereign nations, they are not required to do so outside of grant requirements. We've made it clear that we are not asking them to share anything they don't want to. Our goal is simply to help them collect the right data so they can make informed decisions."

Funding constraints are another persistent issue: Many tribal communities lack the resources to maintain roadways or implement safety measures.

"A lot of these roads aren't paved, and maintenance funding is minimal," Bill says. "That's why access to accurate data is so critical—it helps justify the need for funding."

### THE PATH FORWARD

Looking ahead, Okwumabua-Gbakima, Bill and Casanova Powell all hope to expand their current initiatives and continue strengthening partnerships with tribal authorities.

"We need to keep showing up. When communicating with tribes, I let them know, 'We're here for you. We'll be back.' It's about building relationships, not just checking a box," Casanova Powell says.

The ultimate goal for Bill is a holistic approach to road safety that transcends jurisdictional boundaries.

"In an ideal world, we'd focus on risk factors rather than road ownership," she says. "We need to stop seeing boundaries as barriers and instead look at how we can make all roads safer—no matter who maintains them."

Similarly, Okwumabua-Gbakima sees continued community engagement as essential.

"We're hoping to expand our outreach, bring more voices to the table and co-create solutions that make sense for Indigenous communities," she says.

By working closely with tribal authorities, jurisdictions in the U.S. and Canada are taking meaningful steps toward reducing traffic fatalities and making roads safer for everyone. But there is still a lot to learn.

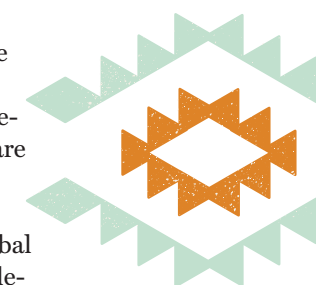
"We still have a long way to go," Okwumabua-Gbakima says. "But we're listening, working in collaboration with communities and doing our best to make the roads safer for everyone." **m**

### find out more

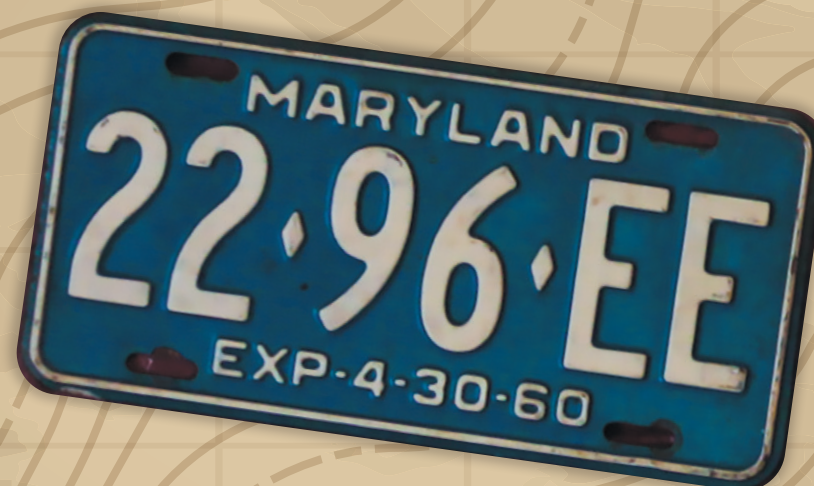
HEAR MORE ABOUT WORKING WITH TRIBAL AUTHORITIES ON ROADWAY SAFETY IN AAMVACAST EPISODE 200:  
[bit.ly/AAMVA\\_Cast200](https://bit.ly/AAMVA_Cast200)



safety







Imagine you're on a road trip, singing along to the radio with the windows down as you cruise across the country. Then you notice a patrol car behind you. After quickly glancing at the speedometer, you realize you're within the limit. But what if you hadn't been and picked up a speeding ticket issued by a state where you don't live?

For about the last half-century, drivers in this scenario generally have been able to proceed with their trip and deal with the ramifications of the citation later, so long as the infraction didn't warrant immediate intervention.

# NAVIGATING INTERSTATE LAWS





policy

That wasn't always the case, though. Up until the 1970s, motorists who received a moving violation while traveling out of state often were required to pay fines immediately or pause their travel plans so they could appear in a nearby court. In other cases, authorities would seize the driver's license as collateral or even take the motorist into custody. Without such measures, jurisdictions had no means to ensure that the motorists would be held accountable for the terms of their citations.

That began to change in 1965 when Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey became the first states to enforce penalties imposed by peer jurisdictions related to minor traffic violations, including suspensions of driving privileges. That effort soon led to the creation of the

*Up until the 1970s, motorists who received a moving violation while traveling out of state often were required to pay fines immediately or pause their travel plans so they could appear in a nearby court.*

Non-Resident Violator Compact (NRVC) of 1977. (The NRVC applies only to moving violations, not parking or standing violations.) Forty-four states and the District of Columbia eventually signed on to the NRVC, and the compact has underpinned decades of smooth cooperation between states.

The NRVC shares similarities with another interstate compact, the Driver License Compact (DLC), though the two serve distinct purposes. The DLC focuses on the tenets of driver's license issuance, while the NRVC specifically targets out-of-state traffic citations, ensuring that non-resident violators comply with citation terms or face potential license suspension in their home state.

"The Non-Resident Violator Compact has been functioning in the background for so long that it's almost been forgotten," says Chris Caras, director of the Driver License Division within the State of Utah's Department of Public Safety, and chair of the NRVC Executive Board. (AAMVA acts as secretariat to the NRVC board.)

That is, until recently. Two major speed bumps are on NRVC's horizon: the need for a technological update and to square away states' varying policies that have changed over time.

"It was kind of a sleeping compact until the last three to four years. Now states are looking at it and asking, 'Where does this fit in the conversation, and how do we deal with it in today's world?'" says Caras.

### REFRESHING THE NRVC

Why the sudden re-examination of a compact that's gone decades without much scrutiny? In part, that's because the NRVC was developed in an era when fax machines represented cutting-edge tech and sending records by mail made sense as the default transmission mode. Fifty years later, that's worth an update. For example, AAMVA's State-to-State Verification Service equips jurisdictions to instantly share non-commercial records electronically.

"The manual processes of the past are where we saw some of the real points of failure that can have tragic consequences," Caras says, such as if an unsafe driver is allowed on the road. "The technology is there. We just need to be utilizing it."

Yet making the switch is more difficult than, well, flipping a switch. The NRVC outlines specific protocols for transmitting information from state to state. Because of that granular guidance, the compact itself must be amended to accommodate the internet age.

Amending the compact isn't easy, either. Some states—including Utah, where Caras

lives—enshrined the text of the NRVC directly into state law. Modifying it will require passing new legislation through the statehouse. Before doing so, the NRVC board wants to ensure that the amended text is durable enough to hold up as long as the existing compact.

And that's the real rub. More than outdated technology or the logistical hurdles of pushing through an amendment, the biggest threat to the NRVC—and the biggest challenge facing its board—is a growing policy divide that could undermine the jurisdictional cooperation at the heart of the compact.

### GETTING THE STATES TO AGREE

According to the NRVC compact, if a visiting motorist incurs a citation in one state that eventually leads to a "failure to pay" (FTP) or "failure to appear" (FTA) violation, the motorist's home state agrees to enforce penalties based on the laws of the state where the violation occurred, including license suspension.

That component of the NRVC worked pretty well when jurisdictions were broadly aligned on how to approach FTP and FTA violations. But in recent years, lawmakers in some jurisdictions have expressed greater reluctance to take away someone's driving privileges simply because they cannot pay fines or appear in court.

"The conversation in many jurisdictions has moved toward seeing a license as a way to empower people—for example, to give them greater access to a job that may be farther away from where they live but provides a better opportunity," says Chrissy Nizer, a member of the NRVC executive board and administrator of the Maryland Department of Transportation's Motor Vehicle Administration.

If a person's license is suspended, it not only makes it difficult to maintain a long-distance commute, but it also inhibits the person's ability to attend a mandatory court appearance or pay a fee. Dios Arroyo, an NRVC executive board member and director of the Bureau of Licensing at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, puts it this way: "If someone's driving privileges are suspended, how are they supposed to be able to go to work to pay the fine?"

Based on this shift in thinking, some states have passed new laws or changed their practices by no longer assessing

license-suspension penalties based on FTP/FTA violations, whether the underlying violation occurs within or outside of the home jurisdiction. That puts those states at odds with "other jurisdictions, where the conversation is still about accountability for what's owed by that person," Nizer says.

In other cases, it's just messy: In Pennsylvania, for instance, legislators recently passed a law allowing violators to perform community service instead of paying fines for some moving violations. Because Pennsylvania is a party to the NRVC, Arroyo says the state will pass along sanctions for drivers who incur FTP violations in other states—but without offering the community service option, since the law only applies to in-state violations.

Those growing policy gaps are putting pressure on the long-standing NRVC. As the board members look to revise or amend the NRVC, their challenge is finding language that accommodates those policy differences while still facilitating cooperation among jurisdictions—a process that Caras likens to "charting a course through a minefield."

"The NRVC has to be modernized. We know that," says Nizer. "Do we change the enforcement mechanism? Are there modifiers or exceptions for certain circumstances? If we don't figure out the overarching NRVC, then we're going to get a hodgepodge of laws that don't allow that commonality to happen from state to state."

The potential for that fundamental breakdown is where the rubber meets the road. The challenges and policy concerns are real and valid—and so is the imperative to finding some version of a compact that facilitates ongoing cooperation between states. Accordingly, the board is conducting a legislative analysis of all NRVC member jurisdictions to determine both how they're currently administering NRVC-related requests and the legal mechanism used to secure NRVC participation. The analysis will help assess the compact's relevance, effectiveness and usage, ultimately shaping a path forward.

"We have to find a middle ground somewhere that will meet everyone's needs," says Naomi O'Dell, administrator of the Vehicle Registration and Licensing Division of Hawaii County, Hawaii, and a member of the NRVC executive board. The NRVC "is something that we want to keep because I'm afraid to see what would happen if we didn't have anything and we didn't honor each other's suspensions or revocations." **m**



*But in recent years, lawmakers in some jurisdictions have expressed greater reluctance to take away someone's driving privileges simply because they cannot pay fines or appear in court.*



Q & A WITH

# Simone Davis

*DIRECTOR, REAL ID, ENROLLMENT SERVICE AND VETTING PROGRAMS OFFICE, TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (TSA)*

**Q WHAT IS YOUR ROLE WITH TSA?**

As the director of the national REAL ID program, I drive the integration of all REAL ID initiatives across TSA and collaborate with the 56 licensing jurisdictions, other government agencies and our aviation, travel and tourism industry partners. I provide the strategic direction for the enforcement of the program and manage our national advertising campaign and partnership marketing initiatives. For instance, this spring, our national advertising campaign was focused on letting the public know that REAL ID enforcement was coming and [providing tips for] how to get their REAL ID while educating them on other forms of acceptable ID at TSA checkpoints.

All of our industry partners have been incredibly engaged, pushing REAL ID content through their communication channels to their customers, collectively reaching millions of travelers. DMVs have been especially innovative in their state campaigns, including offering mobile enrollments and leveraging local partnerships. Associations, airlines, airports, corporations and travel agencies all recognize the value of REAL ID in terms of security and customer experience. Sharing the benefits of REAL ID reflects well on their organizations as trusted advisors to their customers.

*DMVs have been especially innovative in their state campaigns, including offering mobile enrollments and leveraging local partnerships.*



**FAST FACTS**

**Simone Davis**



**HOMETOWN:**

*I am a proud native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, home of our six-time Super Bowl champions, the Pittsburgh Steelers.*



**HOBBY:**

*Traveling*



**PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION:**

*I served 20 years in the Air Force in the intelligence field, and I hold two master's degrees, one in the arts and one in science. Both contributed in a meaningful way to my career in the Air Force and TSA.*



**FAVORITE VACATION:**

*Dubai*



**WHAT DO YOU DRIVE?**

*Mercedes-Benz GLS*

*"It was a recommendation from the 9/11 Commission to create minimum standards for producing licenses and state IDs."*

**SIMONE DAVIS**

*Director, REAL ID, Enrollment Service and Vetting Programs Office, TSA*

**Q HOW DID YOU START AT TSA?**

I served in the Air Force for 20 years in intelligence. When 9/11 occurred, I was still on active duty in the Air Force. When the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was stood up, I took a great interest in that, and my desire was to come and work for the DHS. I was fortunate enough to be hired upon my retirement from the Air Force. I began my career with TSA in the Office of Intelligence. Prior to the REAL ID program, I managed the TSA PreCheck program as the executive lead. In that role, I integrated all the TSA PreCheck initiatives within TSA; collaborated with other

federal agencies, aviation and travel industry partners; and significantly grew enrollments.

**Q WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?**

I'm incredibly proud of the team at TSA for their hard work and dedication in developing a solid plan to enforce REAL ID on May 7, 2025. The REAL ID Act was written in 2005, and the enforcement date has been extended several times, all for good reasons. It was a recommendation from the 9/11 Commission to create minimum standards for producing licenses and state IDs. It's another layer of security that TSA executes to meet

our mission of protecting the nation's transportation systems to allow freedom of movement for people in commerce. Knowing the security benefits REAL ID brings, I couldn't be happier or prouder that we are now enforcing the act.

**Q WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THE FUTURE?**

As we move into the future, I intend to focus my work on identity assurance. This delivers a higher level of confidence that people are who they say they are and maintains the security of related documents. Somewhere way down the road, I do plan to retire and travel at my leisure. **m**

*Learn more about REAL ID in AAMVAcast Episode 210: [bit.ly/AAMVA-Cast210](https://bit.ly/AAMVA-Cast210).*



# The Keys to Partnering with Tribal Communities

*THREE INDUSTRY EXPERTS HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF DOING YOUR HOMEWORK, FACE-TO-FACE CONNECTIONS, STARTING SMALL AND MORE*

## DO YOUR HOMEWORK

**MATTY RAMS, HIGHWAY SAFETY SPECIALIST, MICCOSUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

When jurisdictions come to the table wanting to work with tribal governments, I always say the same thing: Come prepared and open-minded. Too many times, people walk in thinking it's business as usual—and it's not. Tribal communities, especially the more traditional ones like the Miccosukee, have very specific ways of doing things that are rooted in history, sovereignty and culture. If you don't do your homework ahead of time, you're already off on the wrong foot.

I'm not tribal myself—I'm Cuban—but I've worked closely with the Miccosukee for years as a highway safety specialist. And I'll tell you, one of my first big mistakes was walking into a meeting wearing all black. I had no idea that, in their tradition, that's a big no-no. It was a lesson in humility and a wake-up call about just how much I didn't know. The thing is, there aren't books you can grab off a shelf to teach you these things. You've got to talk to people. Reach out. Ask questions. Learn about the tribe's history, what they've been through and what matters most to them.

Every tribe is different. Miccosukee is more traditional; Seminole is more modernized. So the way you approach each tribe needs to be tailored. Sovereignty isn't just a word—it means something. It's protection. It's identity. When jurisdictions don't understand that, or try to bypass it, they lose trust fast.

Relationships take time. We've built mutual aid agreements with Collier and Broward counties, but it wasn't overnight. It's been years of back-and-forth, of building trust, of going back to the drawing board. But when both sides come with respect and good intentions, anything is possible. These collaborations aren't just helpful—they're necessary. Our department used

to rely on a dispatch system from the 1970s. Everything was manual. We couldn't even pull accurate traffic stats. Without data, you can't get funding. Without funding, you can't grow. It's a cycle.

One relationship that really works is with our law enforcement liaison in Florida. They've made an effort. They invite us to meetings, they share information, they include us in state-level campaigns. They've shown up on the reservation. That kind of openness matters.

At the end of the day, it's about respect—respect for the past, the tribe's traditions and the process. If you're not willing to do that, you're not ready to work with us.

## GO TO THEM

**TARA CASANOVA POWELL, CEO, ASSOCIATION OF TRANSPORTATION SAFETY INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS (ATSIP)**

I don't pretend to have all the answers—I'm still learning every day. But one thing I know for sure: If jurisdictions want to work with tribal authorities, they have to go to them. You can't sit back and expect tribes to show up at your conference or join your webinar. That's time and money they may not have. You have to meet them where they are—literally and figuratively.

What's worked for me is building trust through presence. Face-to-face matters. Tribes want to know who you are, what you can offer,

and whether you're going to stick around. That's why I keep showing up. I attend their conferences, regional meetings and committee gatherings. I go to the Transportation Research Board's meetings. They see me again and again. That consistency says, "I'm serious, and I care."

We're also starting peer-to-peer workshops so tribes can learn from each other in person, in their own regions. We're getting outside funding to make these sessions accessible and community-based.

I also make it personal. At the Lifesavers Conference, we had a tribal task force meeting. I didn't say, "Email me if you want more information." I said, "If your name is on this sign-in sheet, I'm going to reach out to you—unless you put a star next to your name." No one did. That tells me they value follow-up and appreciate when someone takes the initiative.

And look, I'm honest with them. I tell them straight up: I don't know what you need. I haven't walked your roads or driven your vehicles. But I'm here to listen and find ways to help—whether that's through my organization, ATSIP, or by tapping into our partners and stakeholders. We waited to build the right infrastructure before we made promises. Now, we have the capacity to deliver, and we're ready.

At the end of the day, this work is about humility, commitment and collaboration. Tribal communities know what they need. Our job is to show up, listen and follow through.

## START SMALL, BUILD TRUST

**TODD MULVEY, ROADS PROGRAM MANAGER, FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI**

Nine years ago, when the Forest County Potawatomi Community hired me, at their direction, I started going to local town and county meetings and really listened. That's where trust begins. You don't get much done without relationships, and those take time.

Early on, the tribe realized that their tribal roads program could support local projects through the federal Tribal Transportation Program. What a lot of people don't realize is that these funds can be applied to a wide range of routes—not just tribal or Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) roads, but also town roads, state highways and even U.S. highways, if they're included in the tribe's route inventory. So the tribe expanded theirs, adding town, county and even forest service roads. That increased their inventory to about 350 miles, making more projects eligible for federal funding.

One of the first wins was a dangerous intersection on Highway 8. Early on in my time with the tribe, they directed me to focus on safety improvements at a specific intersection where we noticed the sightline was terrible—only about 300 feet looking left. We worked with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to apply for a safety improvement grant, and it got funded. That kicked off everything.

Over the years, the tribe has built a strong partnership with the WisDOT and the Inter-Tribal Task Force. That group includes all 11 tribes in Wisconsin and meets regularly. We share knowledge, host conferences and have liaisons in each WisDOT region. Shortly after I started working for the tribe, they designated me as their representative on the task force.

The tribe has also signed agreements with two local towns—Lincoln and Wabeno—so they can coordinate services like snow plowing. Those agreements came out of COVID-era concerns but have grown into quarterly leadership meetings. That face-to-face communication clears up misconceptions and helps us proactively work together.

None of this would've happened without that early groundwork—listening, building trust and finding ways to help each other. If jurisdictions want to partner with tribes, our advice is simple: Start small, show up and keep showing up. **m**





# The Myth of the IT Fairy

*ALL OF US MUST BECOME TECH LITERATE TO RECOGNIZE WHERE TECHNOLOGY CAN AND CAN'T HELP*

Some of you may know I'm a bit of a technophile (that's technology, not techno music). Early in my career, I was a software developer and web designer. I've been a CIO twice, and I now have the privilege of chairing AAMVA's IT Advisory Committee (ITAC).

Digital identity is a passion. One of the big messages I have pushed is that IT is part of what we all do. It is the way we deliver services to our customers. As such, we all have to understand it—maybe not to the degree of a developer—but we must be tech-literate to succeed. It will be no surprise that (spoiler alert) technology will be part of our annual international conference theme (that's all I'll say about that).

Given my background, it may be a little surprising when I say technology is not a solution to all of our problems. Turns out, there are no magic digital beans (pun intended for you Java aficionados), and the IT Fairy is a lie. Don't get me wrong, I still love technology, but no tech solution will overcome bad processes or misdirected focus.

So, where does that leave us?

Technology is a powerful tool, but it will be wasteful unless it is implemented by focused leaders on strategically important processes. The first step is always to understand what problem we are trying to solve and then improve the underlying processes at the root of the problem. Sometimes, technology will be a tool in fixing those root causes, and sometimes it won't.

I suggest a two-prong approach. First, understand your processes. Look at your experience from your customer's perspective. What do they want? What do they value about the thing they want? What does "good" look and feel like for them? Remember that, as leaders, your customers include your employees and traditional customers. Once you understand what your process is delivering and what your customer actually wants, you can start to see the gap between



the two and find ways to adjust your process to better deliver what your customers are looking for.

Shameless plug: AAMVA's new MVA Operations and Customer Experience Committee and programs promise to be invaluable in this step. Look for their topics at upcoming conference sessions.

Second, get tech-literate. It's time to build technical capacity so that, as we look for ways to address the gaps we identify, we recognize where technology can help and where it's not needed. It's easy to get caught up in the latest tech fad, so understanding how things work will help us decide which tool to use. No one is an expert at everything, so build teams to understand new tools. (And yes, that includes tech like mobile drivers' licenses and AI.)

True, there is no IT Fairy. But with some focus and knowledge, we can implement flexible and powerful solutions to deliver real value to our customers. **m**

*Eric Jorgensen*  
2024-2025 AAMVA Chair of the Board

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