

# **For Operators on Land, at Sea or in the Air**

## **Vigil Solutions**

### **Training Applications for the**

### **Los Angeles County Fire Department**

The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) is the embodiment of a progressive public service organization. It provides a multitude of services – including fire and emergency medical services, forestry and lifeguard operations - to 58 cities and towns in the Los Angeles area, in addition to Los Angeles International Airport and several smaller airports in the area. The department has two 65-person search and rescue teams who have participated in rescues worldwide. With more than 170 stations, the department receives some 900 calls per day.

The department's mission – “to protect lives, the environment, and property by providing prompt, skillful, and cost-effective fire protection and life safety services” – is manifested by its diversity of safety-related equipment including:

- Fire engines
- Truck companies (tiller trucks)
- Brush trucks
- Off-road brush rigs
- County Chief vehicles
- Patrol sedans containing small firefighting pumps
- Helicopters
- Helitenders (used to fuel helicopters)
- Fire boats
- Ambulance
- Other paramedic vehicles

Because a critical element in the department's successful day-to-day operations is a team of safe equipment drivers and vehicle operators, operator training is of paramount importance to the department.

According to LACoFD Fire Captain Scott Mahan, the department initially employed stationary driving simulators to train personnel. “The simulation units were not portable, so we were not able to transport them to many locations where operators needed to be trained. As a result, there was little field training despite a lot of field applications.” He said the simulators “produced video game-type behavior”, often leaving trainees dizzy and even feeling ill.



Captain Mahan was among several fire department officials tasked to find training technology that was portable and offered a flexible learning platform to accommodate the many types of emergency equipment in LACoFD's fleet. In addition, the organization wanted a product that offered a variety of status reports in which accidents were recorded and from which problem operators could be quickly identified.

LACoFD started a pilot program with Vigil Solutions. “At first, we initially purchased two VigilVanguards,” said Mahan. “After our success with those units, we purchased 23 additional VigilVanguards.”



VigilVanguard provided LACoFD instructors, supervisors, and management personnel with a paperless way to document and provide feedback regarding the driving performance of vehicle operators. No larger than a small notepad, VigilVanguard improved the quality and consistency of LACoFD operator evaluations. As a result, the department efficiently generated thorough, consistent profiles of driver traits. Elements comprising the driving experience, such as acceleration, braking, and turning were displayed on-screen allowing the department to generate reports instantly for print or electronic distribution.

## VigilVanguard Benefits

LACoFD has seen real, distinct benefits, according to Captain Mahan:

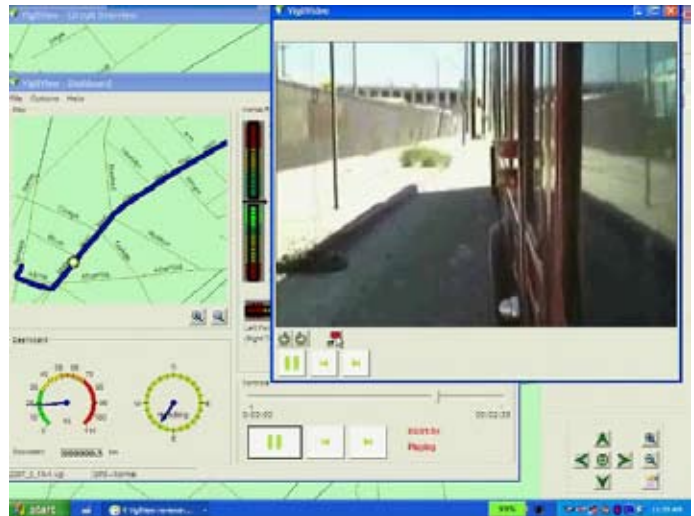
**A mechanism for the operator's self critique of his/her driving performance.** Drivers actually see their performances on video, rather than merely basing their evaluations on their own perceptions of performance.

**Customization.** VigilVanguard allows organizations to add new reports and forms and/or change existing ones to meet changing needs. According to Captain Mahan, LACoFD incorporates DMV pre-trip forms into VigilVanguard, providing operators with important information they need before they go to the DMV.

**Flexible reporting features that allow easy tailoring of content to address specific LACoFD needs.** With the variety of safety-related equipment in the department's fleet the number of operators to be trained and the variety of courses that are conducted by the department, exacting recordkeeping and adaptable reporting results are high on LACoFD's list of priorities. "Our custom reports include a driving program and a report that tracks operator training by equipment type, as well as course content." said Mahan.

### "Vigil Helps Us Improve the Quality of Our Training"

The LACoFD uses VigilVanguard to capture data during a driving session on the operator's route. VigilVanguard provides a graphical record of the operator's driving "style" such as how the operator accelerates, brakes, and turns. This information is reviewed and areas for



improvement identified and discussed by instructors and operators based on the data gathered by VigilVanguard. This tailored feedback has saved LACoFD anticipates that the department will save time, money and resources, as well as reduced vehicle wear and decreased fuel consumption thanks for improved driving habits by operators.

In addition, drivers requiring remedial training are identified using video captured during training sessions in which VigilVanguard is employed, as well as by tracking accidents, and generating action reports which identify problem drivers. These drivers are provided a week-long, two-on-one (two instructors to one operator) training course.

## Future Plans

According to Captain Mahan, the roll out of VigilVanguard has been carefully planned and will be implemented over the next three years. "We anticipated the economic downturn and planned this project accordingly," said Mahan.

And how has VigilVanguard performed for LACoFD so far? "To date, we have trained almost 200 operators," said Mahan. "Vigil Solution has done as good as you could ask for," said Mahan. We particularly like their 3-year support and warranty program." LACoFD anticipates that the department will save time, money, and resources thanks to the tailored feedback each trained operator receives based on data collected by VigilVanguard. "We look forward to reduced vehicle wear and decreased fuel consumption thanks to the improved driving habits of our operators".

**For more information contact:  
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