POLICE FLEET MAGAZINE ARTICLE

DRIVING SUCCESS— IMPROVING POLICE FLEET EFFICIENCY
WITH TELEMATICS AND T-MOBILE

In today's rapidly evolving law enforcement environment, police fleet managers are faced with the complex task of optimizing operational efficiency, ensuring officer safety, and maximizing resource utilization.

With technological advancements driving significant changes in fleet management, the integration of telematics solutions has emerged as both powerful and transformative. Among the leading players in this arena are Geotab, renowned for its advanced telematics capabilities, and T-Mobile for Government, a premier provider of wireless services for the public sector. Together, they offer a compelling solution that not only streamlines fleet operations but also enhances overall performance and safety.

Predictive maintenance—proactive and cost-effective

Consider a scenario where a law enforcement agency's fleet is comprised of various vehicles ranging from patrol cars to specialized units. Traditionally, maintenance schedules have been based on mileage or fixed intervals, leading to potential oversights or unnecessary servicing. However, with Geotab's predictive maintenance capability running on the robust and resilient T-Mobile network, fleet managers gain real-time insights into each vehicle's operational status.

Geotab's system continuously monitors multiple aspects of vehicle operation. By analyzing this data in conjunction with historical performance trends, the system can identify potential maintenance issues before they escalate.

Geotab monitors engine fault code information and provides comprehensive data that allows for accurate diagnosis of vehicle issues. If an anomaly is detected in a patrol car's engine performance during routine operations, Geotab's analytics can alert the fleet manager to schedule maintenance promptly. This is in stark contrast to the all-to-often occurrence of a patrol vehicle being operated for multiple shifts after a maintenance-required warning light comes on. This proactive approach not only reduces repair costs but also minimizes vehicle downtime, ensuring that each vehicle remains in optimal and safe condition for duty.

Fuel savings—optimizing efficiency and sustainability

Due to the 24/7 on-road nature of patrol operations, fuel expenses represent a significant portion of an agency's budget. With Geotab's telematics solutions, fleet managers can unlock substantial savings through enhanced fuel efficiency. Imagine a scenario where a patrol unit's route optimization is dynamically adjusted based on real-time traffic conditions and incident alerts. Geotab's intelligent tracking algorithms, combined with high-speed data connectivity from T-Mobile, enable vehicles to navigate the most fuel-efficient routes. Additionally, Geotab's idle time management feature identifies instances of prolonged idling, prompting actionable insights to mitigate excessive fuel use. These optimizations not only result in cost savings but also contribute to reducing the department's carbon footprint, an area of growing concern in some communities.

Officer safety—real-time insights for enhanced protection

Officer safety is a priority in any agency and the use of telematics can play a key role in improving safety related to vehicle operations. Geotab's telematics solutions, powered by T-Mobile for Government, offer advanced features that significantly enhance officer safety and situational awareness.

Consider a scenario where a large-scale, high-risk tactical operation is unfolding quickly. Geotab's real-time location tracking provides the command center with precise information about each vehicle's location, even those that are not equipped with CAD-integrated automatic vehicle location (often the case with plain cars or specialized equipment). This enables a more coordinated response and improved situational awareness. Also, Geotab's geofencing capabilities support defined virtual boundaries, such as restricted or extreme-risk zones. If a vehicle enters a geofenced area, instant alerts enable swift intervention and help ensure officers are within prescribed operational parameters.

Increased accountability—data-driven insights for enhanced performance

Accountability is fundamental in optimizing fleet performance and adherence to vehicle operations policies. Geotab's comprehensive reporting and analytics, combined with T-Mobile's robust data infrastructure, empower fleet managers with actionable insights into driver behavior and vehicle usage.

For example, suppose a patrol unit's driving patterns exhibit aggressive acceleration or harsh braking. Geotab's analytics identify these behaviors and generate detailed reports for each driver, highlighting areas for improvement. Department managers can then implement targeted training programs or coaching sessions to promote safer driving habits and compliance with departmental policies. Additionally, Geotab's integration with onboard sensors provides telemetry data, allowing for precise monitoring of vehicle performance and maintenance needs.

Implementation considerations

Regardless of the manufacturer, implementing telematics in a police fleet may result in resistance from labor groups concerned about the potential for targeted monitoring and disciplinary use. This can be mitigated by emphasizing the positive aspects of telematics, such as enhancing operational efficiency and officer safety. Rather than focusing on discipline, framing telematics as a supportive tool for promoting safer driving habits and proactive maintenance can foster collaboration and acceptance. It also helps to recognize exceptional operators and safe driving milestones. Involving frontline officers and transparently addressing concerns prior to rollout can facilitate a positive perception of telematics as a strategic asset benefiting both officers and the community.

Conclusion—transforming fleet management for the modern era

The synergy between Geotab's advanced telematics solutions and the T-Mobile nationwide network represents a paradigm shift in police fleet management. By leveraging predictive maintenance, optimizing fuel efficiency, enhancing officer safety, and fostering accountability, this integrated approach empowers fleet managers and department supervisors to operate with unprecedented awareness.

Telematics is not just about data collection—it's about providing actionable insights that drive meaningful improvements in operational capability, resource utilization, and officer safety. As law enforcement agencies continue to embrace digital transformation, investing in innovative technology solutions becomes imperative for staying ahead of challenges and delivering a higher level of service.

State and local agencies can now take advantage of the Geotab and T-Mobile partnership with an all-in-one fleet management bundle that's available for one low monthly price. The bundle comes with Geotab ProPlus and provides near real-time vehicle tracking and advanced driver coaching. Plus, you'll have a dedicated support team and scalable options that will help ensure the implementation goes smoothly while meeting the needs of your organization.

The bottom line is clear—Geotab powered by T-Mobile provides visibility into fleet operations, enabling proactive engagement, and delivering significant risk mitigation. This translates into improved operational capability, a sharper mission focus, and an overall higher level of service to ensure safer and more secure communities.

For more information on optimizing police fleet operations with telematics, check out this informative eBook—**Insightful Fleet Management, Harnessing Data-Driven Telematics For Modern Law Enforcement**.

About the author

Dale Stockton is a 32-year-veteran of law enforcement and founder of Below 100, an award-winning officer-safety initiative designed to reduce police line-of-duty deaths. He is a retired police captain from Carlsbad, California and taught criminal justice classes for over 20 years. Stockton is also an accomplished technology practitioner who has managed major projects, including personnel locate devices, license plate recognition systems, and regional smartphone deployments.