

## TMC Council Asks for Input on Mirrorless Systems for Trucks

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*Fox (Joe Terry/Transport Topics)*

### **ATLANTA** TMC Council Asks for Input on Mirrorless Systems for Trucks

— The Technology & Maintenance Council's Cab & Control Study Group is asking for input as the trucking industry begins exploring use of sensors, cameras and video monitors in lieu of mirrors on trucks.

The study group's leadership told Transport Topics it wants to hear from drivers and fleets that are beginning to use cameras and monitors instead of mirrors to develop best practices for the industry.

The move comes after December's announcement from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration that it has issued a five-year exemption to Stoneridge Inc. to allow its aftermarket MirrorEye mirrorless digital camera and sensor system to be installed on trucks and motorcoaches as an alternative to traditional mirrors.

Under current law, trucks and buses must have two outside mirrors positioned to show the driver a view of the highway to the rear, and the area along both sides of a commercial motor vehicle. The mirrors must contain at least 50 square inches of reflective glass that give drivers a side and back view of the area around the truck.

At American Trucking Associations' 2019 Technology & Maintenance Council annual meeting, officials from Stoneridge told participants at a panel session they believe their system could begin being installed on trucks by original equipment manufacturers by 2021 or the year after.

"It's moving along nicely," said Stephen Fox, Stoneridge vice president for business development. "We are really scaling up now with production units and that is the real key. We've done a lot of testing with prototype units, so now it is moving into that next production phase.

"Some fleets, some owner/operators are going to be skeptical and are not going to want to move quickly, they may wait. But the technology is coming; it is an advantage."

FMCSA officials backed Stoneridge's assertion when it petitioned the agency for approval that the all-weather cameras and sensors have an advantage over mirrors in rain, snow and ice, and low-vision conditions.

"The agency has determined that granting the exemption to allow use of the MirrorEye system in lieu of mirrors would likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level of safety provided by the regulation," FMCSA said.

The MirrorEye system works with five cameras, sensors and three digital displays. Along the right and left A-pillars are two 12.2-inch, high-definition monitors, and a 7-inch display is mounted high in the center of the cab. The displays are positioned within the driver's line of sight to improve their reaction time as they scan their panel.

Since 2017, fleets including Maverick Transportation, J.B. Hunt and Schneider have been testing the technology.

The Cab & Control Study Group said collecting and reviewing the data it receives likely will take about 18 months before its members write a report and make recommendations.