

Maverick Improves Driver Visibility with New Camera Systems

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Safety has been first and foremost at Maverick Transportation since the Arkansas-based fleet was founded in 1980. And, according to Dean Newell, vice president of safety and driver training, that has always meant that Maverick takes a proactive approach when it comes to new technology.

“It’s just in our culture,” Newell says. “Maverick has always had an unwavering emphasis on safety. And because of that, we’ve also gotten in on the ground floor with promising new technology. We want to help develop and mold new technologies as they mature.”

Case in point: Stoneridge’s MirrorEye Camera Monitor System, which relies on external cameras placed in strategic areas around a tractor-trailer to give drivers a much more enhanced view of vehicles and traffic conditions around a truck. The fleet recently decided to make it a standard spec on all new Class 8 tractors it will purchase going forward.

“We first started experimenting with the MirrorEye system four years ago,” Newell says. “And we’ve played a big part in helping Stoneridge develop and refine the system.”

Beyond simply making its trucks safer, Newell says Maverick wanted to reduce high-cost insurance payouts due to accidents and injuries resulting from road crashes. Another benefit is the possibility of fuel savings at some point in the future, if Maverick ever elects to remove rear-view mirrors completely in favor of the more aerodynamically streamlined MirrorEye cameras.

“We might be able to add a percentage point or two per truck to our overall fuel savings,” Newell says. “And that could be a significant cost savings for us, given how large our fleet is.

“But we knew that up front, the potential for saving money in insurance claims could be phenomenal. We’re tracking the data on that now, because there are a lot of factors in play when it comes to calculating those costs. We’re not quite at the point where I can announce any concrete numbers. But our gut told us that number would be huge, and we are already seeing some indications that is going to be the case.”

Feedback from Maverick drivers on the MirrorEye system has been consistently positive, Newell says, from the inception of the first prototype trials to the standard spec being put on trucks now.

“It takes some time to get used to the cameras,” he notes. “But we find that after a week to two weeks, they’re not only used to the camera system, but actually prefer it in many instances. There are no blind spots anywhere around the truck. And the cameras give much better clarity and perception in views to the sides and rear of the truck at night and in bad weather.”

Maverick will be using mirrors for the foreseeable future, but Newell says it sees MirrorEye as an added tool to make drivers safer out on the road.

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