



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

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Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar today announced the successful demonstration of a new electronic identification system designed to assist the motor carrier industry in the quick recovery of stolen or hijacked trucks.

"We are looking for a simple and relatively inexpensive method for identifying and locating vehicles from police helicopters, small aircraft and ground units," Secretary Brinegar explained.

The system, tested recently at DOT's Transportation System Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is designed to work with the airborne unit broadcasting a radio signal addressed to a specific truck. The signal activates a small "electronic license plate" in or on the truck, confirming its identity and indicating the direction and relative distance from the airborne unit.

Primary use will be to prevent truck hijackings and the theft of loaded trucks and tractor-trailers. The underlying objective is that the devices be able to contribute to the routine day-to-day operations of the motor carrier industry.

The tests at Cambridge worked well in excess of one fourth mile on the ground meeting the airborne slant range requirements for helicopter operations. The next step in the program will be testing the system in a live environment -- preferably the New York City/Northern New Jersey metropolitan area where truck hijacking is a serious problem.

The Department of Transportation is working closely with the transportation industry in a joint effort to reduce cargo theft losses that exceed one billion dollars annually.

"It is a voluntary, cooperative program," Secretary Brinegar said. "The Department's role is leadership, coordination and assistance to the transportation industry in strengthening its defense against cargo theft.

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