

NO NEED FOR SPEED: ACTIVE ISA FOR FLEET MANAGERS



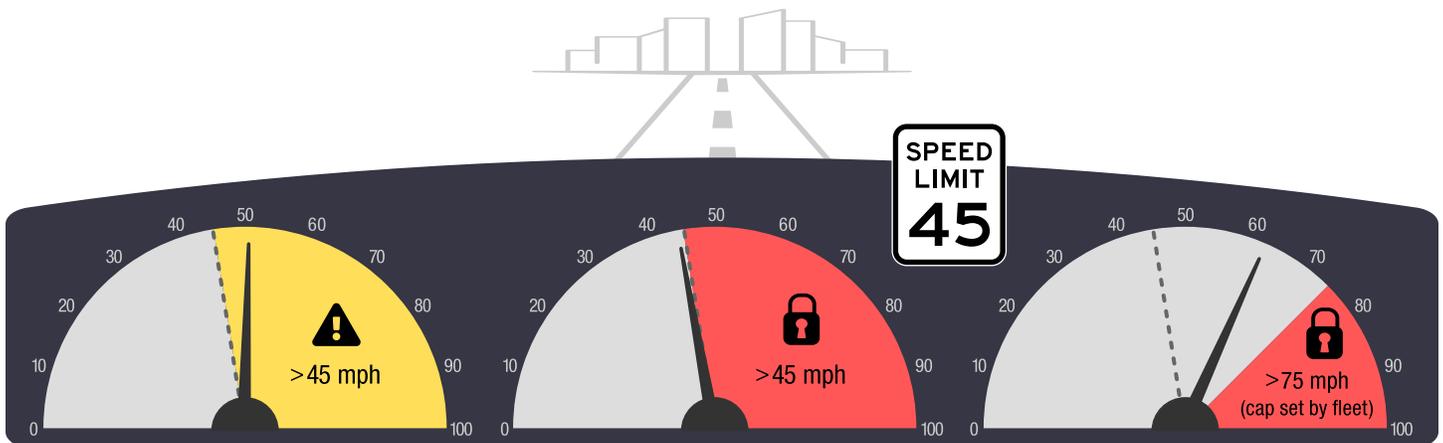
Prepared by
U.S. DOT Volpe Center

The dangers of speed

Speeding by truck drivers is particularly dangerous. The higher weight of trucks means they have longer stopping distances than other vehicles and are far more destructive in a crash.

What is ISA?

Intelligent speed assistance (ISA) uses GPS technology, onboard sensors that “read” speed limit signs, or a combination of both to determine the speed limit on any given road and detect when the driver exceeds it.



Passive ISA issues visual or auditory alerts when the limit is exceeded, but doesn’t control vehicle speed.

Active ISA limits the throttle to prevent the driver from exceeding the speed limit. It does not brake to reduce vehicle speed. Research has found active ISA substantially reduces speeding above set thresholds.¹

ISA is different from a **static speed limiter**, which sets an overall top speed for the vehicle. This can reduce freeway speeding, but it doesn’t prevent a driver from going over the limit on slower roads.

Active ISA can be customized to allow a temporary override or incorporate a set tolerance over the speed limit. Some fleets choose to limit vehicles to speeds lower than the posted limit in certain situations, such as on S-curves. Some ISA systems can help drivers avoid low bridges and track and halt a stolen truck.

¹ Yahoodik, S., Epstein, A. K., Brodeur, A., Drake, J. & Landsman, T. (2024). New York City Intelligent Speed Assistance Pilot Evaluation (No. DOT-VNTSC-NYC-24-02). United States. Department of Transportation. [nyc.gov/assets/dcas/downloads/pdf/fleet/nyc-intelligent-speed-assistance-pilot-evaluation-2024-oct.pdf](https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dcas/downloads/pdf/fleet/nyc-intelligent-speed-assistance-pilot-evaluation-2024-oct.pdf)

What do fleet managers say about ISA?

Researchers spoke to eight fleet managers about their experience deploying or piloting active ISA.

The fleet managers reported:

- reduced speeding and related violations.
- less aggressive driving generally, including fewer hard braking events and longer following distance. ***One fleet estimated a 30% reduction in preventable collisions after implementing ISA.***
- reduced wear and tear, which in turn led to lower maintenance costs.
- improved Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) scores due to fewer speed violations and fewer roadside inspections resulting from being pulled over for speeding. ***One company estimated its average CSA score fell from about 65 to 20.***

Best practices for implementing ISA

The following was compiled from conversations with fleet managers and is based on their experience.

✔ Show, don't tell.

Provide opportunities for management and drivers to experience ISA firsthand. This will help address common misconceptions about ISA being distracting or leading to sudden braking.

✔ Before implementing, help leadership understand the potential benefits.

Illustrate organizational benefits by documenting the fleet's baseline metrics to demonstrate the need for active ISA and to quantify the impact after implementation.

Baseline metrics may include CSA scores, number and cost of physical damage claims, time spent coaching drivers, current insurance costs, current maintenance and damage costs (e.g., bridge strikes, vehicle wear-and-tear from speeding), frequency of speeding and collisions and fuel burn rates.

Explain to leadership that ISA can help avoid negative brand exposure and negligence claims. When competing for contracts, the use of ISA can help demonstrate a company's commitment to safety.

[Read the full report at iihs.org/isareport](https://www.iihs.org/isareport)

Yahoodik, S., Epstein, A. K., Herman, A. E., & Brodeur, A. (2026). *Intelligent speed assistance in fleet management*. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

✔ Engage with drivers before, during, and after deployment to improve driver buy-in.

- Establish the difference between active ISA, passive ISA, and speed governors.
- Provide opportunities for drivers to ask questions, for example in quarterly group safety meetings.
- Emphasize that the driver remains in control of the vehicle. If you plan to allow driver override, show how the driver can use it in instances that call for driving above the speed limit.
- Explain driver-specific benefits, such as decelerating if the driver experiences a seizure or other medical emergency and protection from legal consequences or disciplinary action that could result from speeding.
- Respond in a timely manner to drivers' questions, concerns or reports of inaccuracies.

✔ Start small in a friendly testing environment.

Before implementing active ISA across your fleet, consider piloting it on a small scale to allow time to identify technical challenges such as geofencing errors and to properly customize the system to your fleet's needs. This may also help address skepticism within your organization.

✔ Explain the societal benefits of ISA.

Speeding has consequences not just for your company and its drivers; it harms everyone who shares the road with them. Remind drivers and leadership of the true cost of speeding in terms of lives lost.