

## The Complete Guide to Mobile Video Solutions for School Bus Fleets

A school bus driver has one primary goal: Transport kids to and from school safely. It can be a difficult task when distracted and/or negligent motorists ignore the laws regarding driving around school buses.

A mobile video solution helps school transportation directors keep students safe by catching violators and observing bus driver behavior.

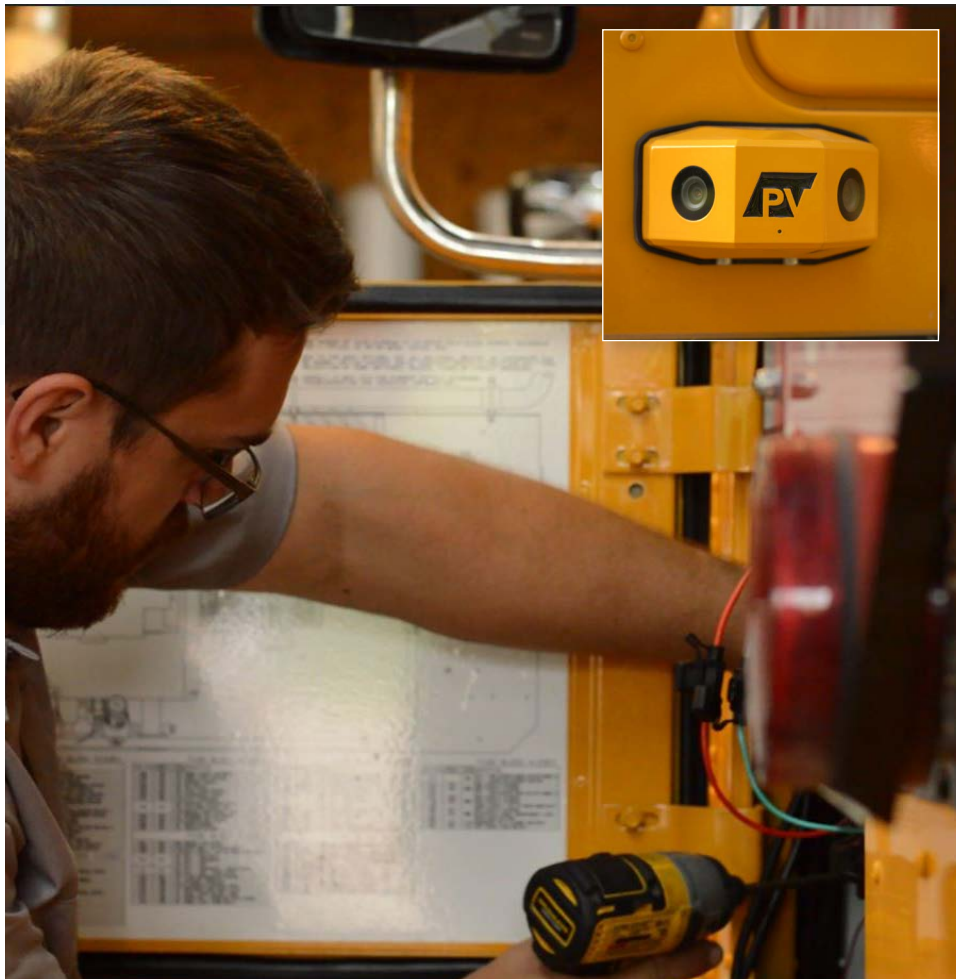
Many states are offering grants to school districts to offset the cost of implementing a mobile video solution, and some are even offering grants to help school districts upgrade existing equipment to comply with laws regarding camera mounts inside school buses.

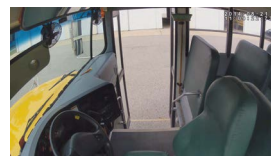
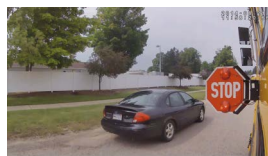
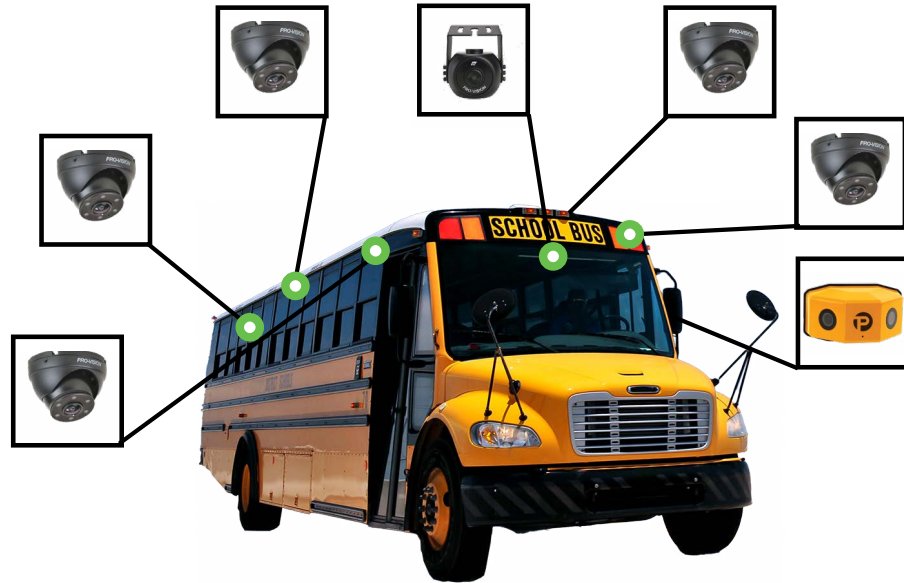
# What is a Mobile Video Solution?

Simply put, a mobile video solution is a set of cameras and DVRs (digital video recorders) implemented to record around moving objects. School bus setups generally include interior cameras, as well as exterior side, rear, forward-facing and stop-arm cameras.

The cameras on the exterior give the driver a complete 360° view of their vehicle. With an optional monitor, the driver can get a view behind the bus when reversing and views of each side when needed.

Interior cameras are not shown on the driver's monitor but are recording and can be referenced should an incident occur.





# What is Part of Mobile Video Solution for School Bus?

A camera configuration for a school bus slightly varies from a configuration used for a city bus, namely because school buses feature stop arms.

## Stop-Arm Camera: Identify Violators

A stop-arm camera is located on either the left side of a school bus near the stop sign that extends when the bus has completely stopped or on the stop sign itself. In the United States, it is illegal to pass a school bus that is loading or unloading children. Once the bus's flashing lights have been activated, even before the stop sign has been extended, you may not pass the bus on a standard two-lane road whether you are behind the bus or approaching from the opposite side. The laws vary by state regarding buses stopped on roads that feature two lanes or more in each direction.

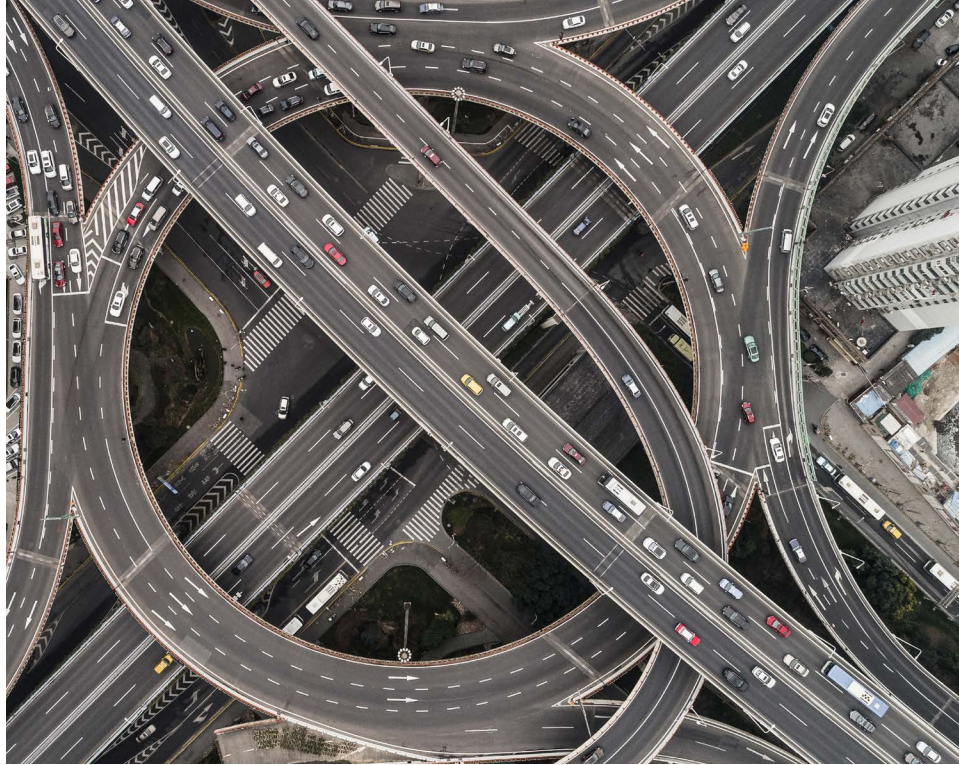
The goal of the stop-arm camera is to identify violators and report them to the local police so they can be issued a citation, which can be hundreds of dollars. Because violators are often speeding past parked or slowing buses, a stop-arm camera must be able to take a clear picture of not only the driver but also the driver's license plate. A high-definition camera generally is needed to record these details clearly, otherwise, the footage could be blurry or grainy.

## Flush Camera/Flush Mount: Reduce Potential Safety Hazards

Many states require cameras on the inside of buses to be mounted flush with the wall or ceiling to prevent injuries to students or other passengers. These ultra wide-angle cameras can feature horizontal views of up to 180° and vertical views of 90°, capturing a large section of the bus.

Interior cameras can be used to track student attendance, monitor driver behavior or document a complaint from a student.





## WDR Camera: Capture Footage in Low Light

A wide dynamic range (WDR) camera captures all the important details no matter how dark the surroundings are. WDR cameras feature a light image processor and a dark image processor, and by combining the two processors, they produce a clear, high-quality video or image by automatically brightening the dark areas and darkening the light areas.

Pro-Vision's AHD Forward-Facing Camera with Wide Dynamic Range is useful when school buses are traveling at night, for instance, while driving a sports team back home after an away game. After the sun goes down, any footage a normal dash camera records will be difficult to make out, but a WDR camera will automatically brighten up the dark areas for a clear picture.





## DVR: Save Footage to be Reviewed

Save the footage you record with a DVR. You can get SD cards that are as small as 32 gigabytes or a solid-state drive as large as 2 terabytes. How much recording space you'll need will depend on several factors, including the number of cameras, the number of hours recording per day and the number of days recording per week.

Should you run out of space, new footage will overwrite old footage. However, footage that is automatically tagged (such as a hard brake, stop or turn) or manually tagged by the driver with an event marker button will never be overwritten.

Some DVR units also feature built-in Wi-Fi, meaning if the bus gets in range of the school's Wi-Fi network, the videos will automatically upload.



# Why Consider Mobile Video Solution?

There are several reasons to consider a mobile video solution for a school bus. During one day in 2019, over 130,900 school bus drivers across 39 states reported 95,319 illegal passes while their buses' red lights were flashing and stop arms were extended. That's 3,971 illegal passes per hour and 66 per minute.

## Safety

The biggest reason to implement a mobile video solution is to keep everyone safe.

Fining stop-arm violators will deter them from making the same mistake again and make the streets safer for children when loading or unloading from a school bus, and side and rear cameras will help the driver navigate congested areas and avoid accidents.

## Exonerate Driver

The road is filled with distracted motorists and inattentive pedestrians. Without a mobile video system, an accident turns into a he said, she said situation, or you must rely on eyewitnesses to back you up.

Also, you can get an explanation for a hard brake. Was the driver driving erratically, or did a car cut off the bus while trying to turn at a stoplight?

## Tell the Whole Story

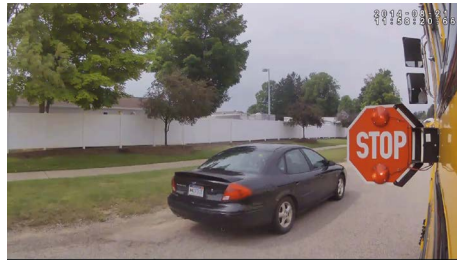
Everyone wants to know the truth, and a mobile video solution shows exactly what happened inside and outside the vehicle.

It can be difficult for bus drivers to remember all the details of an incident exactly as they happened. Bus drivers have enough to worry about when it comes to keeping their passengers safe. Cameras can corroborate their story and fill in the blanks where the details are fuzzy.



# What Features Does a Mobile Video Solution Offer?

There are several features to consider when selecting a mobile video solution for school buses.



## Pre- and Post-event Recording

Pro-Vision's mobile video solutions ensure you won't miss a crucial detail. With pre- and post-event recording, you can retain the footage captured before and after an event. This is helpful if you don't have the hard drive space to be continuously recording and can't begin recording before an incident or forget to turn it on after an incident.



## Automatic Triggers

Automatically record key events without worrying about them being recorded over when a DVR runs out of space. Maneuvers such as a hard brake, stop or turn are automatically recorded and will remain on the DVR to be reviewed. Additionally, an event marker button can be placed in the cab so the driver can manually mark events that don't fall under the automatic triggers.

## Durability

Exterior cameras are exposed to harsh environments, including rain, snow, dirt and mud. Pro-Vision cameras are IP69K rated to perform in these conditions and feature 17.3G shock ratings to withstand rough, bumpy roads. The onboard DVRs also feature solid-state hard drives. Unlike hard disk drives, SSDs feature no moving parts or the mechanical failures that come with them, making them perfect for the transit industry.





## Radar and Sensors

In addition to a visual view with an in-cab monitor, radars and sensors located at the rear of vehicles can be added to give drivers audio alerts when an object is too close. Danger areas can be configured to alert drivers from as far as 17 feet.



## Data Management

Pro-Vision offers an optional video management solution, CloudConnect, which is a cloud-based solution that simplifies the data management process and saves time. CloudConnect allows you to request video and share footage with individuals either inside or outside your organization while storing the data on Pro-Vision's cloud.

# What Questions Should I Ask When Considering a Mobile Video Solution?

Now that you've got a good understanding of what a mobile video solution is and why it would be beneficial to your organization, you've probably got a lot of questions.

Every organization's wants, needs and capabilities will be different, but every mobile video solution can be customized to work for you.

## Some key questions to ask are:

- What type of warranty comes with the products?
- Can the solution be upgraded should you need to add more coverage later?
- Is extensive training needed to learn how to use the solution?
- What type of training is included?
- How do I keep software up to date?
- How do I access the video footage?
- What happens when the DVR runs out of space?
- Does it matter what operating system (Windows, Mac, etc.) I use when accessing videos?
- Are there any monthly costs associated with a mobile video solution?
- Is it a one-size-fits-all type of solution or is there a variety of options that are selected to fit my unique needs?
- Where and how exactly are the cameras going to be mounted on the vehicles and what will the views look like?
- Who is handling the installation & implementation process?
- Is the system integrable to other programs and ecosystems?
- Does the system utilize an open API architecture?

## Warranty/Upgrade

Most Pro-Vision cameras and products come with a 5-year warranty, and more cameras/DVRs can easily be added should you decide you want to expand your coverage later.

## Training/Software Updates

Extensive training is not needed to operate the solution, but should you need assistance, Pro-Vision's support team is just a phone call or email away. Your installation technician will configure your mobile video solution to your desired settings and answer any questions you have about using the system.

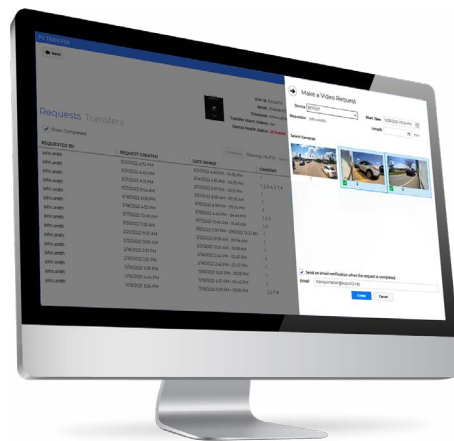
Pro-Vision's support page offers firmware updates to make sure your equipment is running smoothly.

## Accessing Video Footage

To access video footage from Pro-Vision cameras and DVRs, you use the PV Player program to submit a video request. The footage is sorted by date and camera. You could also hook up an SD card to your computer if you don't want the footage to be on a network or the cloud.

## DVR Out of Space

When there is no more free space left on the DVR, it begins recording over the earliest recorded footage. However, automatically triggered events or events marked with an event marker button will never be recorded over.



# Operating System

Pro-Vision's equipment only works on Windows operating systems.

# Monthly Fees

Should you decide you want to host your video footage on our cloud, there would be a monthly fee to store and keep that data secure. Otherwise, there are no other monthly fees.

# One-size-fits-all

Every mobile video solution can be customized to fit your needs. Even if you've got an out-of-the-box idea for how you want your company to utilize a mobile video solution, we will work with you to determine the best way to accomplish your goals.

# Where Are Cameras Mounted?

Dash cams generally are mounted on the windshield inside the vehicle, side cameras generally are mounted on exterior body panels near the side view mirrors and rear cameras generally are mounted behind the vehicle, either on the bumper or on top of the vehicle. Of course, depending on the vehicle and your goals, the location of these mounts could change.





## Installation Process

Pro-Vision has a national team of installation experts that will set up your system and configure system settings so when installation is complete, you're ready to go.

## Ecosystem Integration

Pro-Vision's system can be integrated with other programs and mobile video solutions. For example, if you have a dash camera but are looking to add side and rear cameras, Pro-Vision's hardware will work with your old hardware for a complete view of your vehicle.

## API Utilization

If you were previously working with a telematics company to obtain vehicle tracking data, Pro-Vision's API (application programming interface) allows you to seamlessly integrate the mobile video solution into a telematics company's back-end dashboard.



Do you have more questions that we haven't covered here or in our other industry-specific articles?

Contact a sales representative to help get your questions answered and find a mobile video solution that fits you.





“We’re very happy with our HD systems! The solid-state design is much more dependable, and SD cards make viewing videos convenient and easy.”

**- Darryl Hofstra, Director of Transportation – Forest Hills Public Schools, MI**

“Your HD systems give us a surprising amount of video clarity. They even allow us to zoom in so we can see what is really happening.”

**- Mike Skaggs, Transportation Director – Onalaska ISD, TX**

## About Pro-Vision

Founded in 2003, Pro-Vision is a leading video technology solutions provider trusted by thousands of organizations in 58 countries. Pro-Vision solutions include vehicle video recording systems, body-worn cameras, data management and cloud-based storage solutions. Pro-Vision’s transit, law enforcement and commercial partners utilize these solutions to enhance safety, increase productivity and protect critical assets.



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