## Telematics – five things you need to know

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About vehicle telematics and using data in investigations

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1. Vehicle telematics describes a vehicle's onboard communication services and applications, which communicate with one another via Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers and other telematics devices.

Vehicles hold a vast amount of data, including:

- the vehicle's movements
- the functions of the vehicle (for example, braking, accelerating, speed, doors opening and closing)
- devices attaching to the vehicle by Bluetooth or USB
- various other data sets
- 2. Think of a car as a computer on wheels or a digital witness. Almost everything it does is recorded. When a lot of things happen at once, the car will choose which information is more important to save. A lot of valuable information can be harvested from vehicles.
- 3. All vehicles are different. Some give track points and breadcrumb tracks. Some give call logs and Wi-Fi service set identifier (SSID) information.
- 4. If you jump into a car, connect to Bluetooth, start the engine and pick up a friend, the following pieces of intelligence could be detected via telematics:
  - driver door opened and closed
  - iPhone connected (plus possible contacts)
  - ignition on
  - · possible track logs and route
  - vehicle and wheel speeds
  - vehicle stops (location)
  - calls logs

- passenger door opened and closed
- 5. Be aware that vehicles overwrite data. If you think telematics may be useful in an investigation, reduce your interactions for example, how often you open and close the door. Disconnect the battery and make a note of everything you have done.

Every force will have their own policies for when telematics can be used, so always seek the advice of a digital media investigator or your telematics single point of contact.

• This article was peer reviewed by Sergeant Steven Lefebve, Kent Police.

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