

We claim:

1. A wireless communication apparatus to alert a user of a vehicle when out of network that a communication is desired, the wireless communication apparatus comprising:

a first wireless communication device located in a cab portion of the vehicle and available to the user of the vehicle, wherein the first wireless communication device comprises a display indicator and is configured to:

couple to a dispatch center via a first wireless communication network;

couple to a second wireless communication device via a wired data link, wherein the second wireless communication device is located in a trailer portion of the vehicle, comprises a satellite communication device, and is coupled to a second wireless communication network that facilitates two-way data communication between the dispatch center and the second wireless communication device; and

when the first wireless communication device loses connection with the dispatch center over the first wireless communication network, receive from the second wireless communication device over the wired data link a communication request signal originating from the dispatch center causing the display indicator to indicate an alert.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the display indicator is selected from the group of indicators consisting of a light, a vibration, a text display, and a ring tone.

3. A method for alerting a user of a first wireless communication device located in a vehicle that a dispatcher wishes to communicate with the user, comprising:

receiving by the first wireless communication device a display signal from a second wireless communication device over a wired data link coupling the first wireless communication device to the second wireless communication device, wherein the display signal is generated at the second wireless communication device based on a communication request sent to the second wireless communication device by the dispatch center when the first wireless communication device loses connection with the dispatch center over a first wireless communication network, the first wireless communication device is located in a cab portion of the vehicle and available to the user in the vehicle, the second wireless communication device is located in a trailer portion of the vehicle, the second wireless communication device comprises a satellite communication device, and the dispatch center and the second wireless communication device are in two-way data communication over a second wireless communication network; and

causing a display indicator on the first wireless communication device to indicate said alert based on the display signal, wherein the user is alerted that the dispatcher wishes to communicate.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein causing the display indicator to indicate includes causing the display indicator to at least one of illuminate, vibrate, ring, or display a text message.

5. A wireless communication apparatus to alert a user of a vehicle when out of network that a communication is desired, the wireless communication apparatus comprising:

a second wireless communication device located in a trailer portion of the vehicle and comprising a satellite communication device, wherein the second wireless communication device is configured to:

couple to a second wireless communication network that facilitates two-way data communication between a dispatch center and the second wireless communication device;

couple via a wired data link to a first wireless communication device, wherein the first wireless communication device is located in a cab portion of the vehicle and is available to the user of the vehicle, comprises a display indicator, and is configured to couple to the dispatch center via a first wireless communication network; and

when the first wireless communication device loses connection with the dispatch center over the first wireless communication network, transmit to the first wireless communication device over the wired data link a communication request signal originating from the dispatch center causing the display indicator to indicate an alert.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the second wireless communication device is further configured to supply a communication request confirmation signal to the dispatch center to confirm the communication request signal was received.

7. A method for alerting a user of a first wireless communication device located in a vehicle that a dispatcher wishes to communicate with the user, comprising:

receiving a communication request sent by a dispatch center to a second wireless communication device, wherein the second wireless communication device is located in a trailer portion of the vehicle, the second wireless communication device comprises a satellite communication device, and the dispatch center and the second wireless communication device are in two-way data communication over a second wireless communication network;

generating a display signal at the second wireless communication device based on the communication request;

transmitting to the first wireless communication device the display signal from the second wireless communication device over a wired data link coupling the first wireless communication device to the second wireless communication device, wherein the first wireless communication device is located in a cab portion of the vehicle and available to the user in the vehicle, and the display signal causes a display indicator on the first wireless communication device to indicate said alert and the user is alerted that the dispatcher wishes to communicate.

8. The method of claim 7 further comprising supplying a communication request confirmation signal to the dispatch center to confirm the communication request signal was received by the second wireless communication device.

9. A wireless communication apparatus to alert a user of a vehicle when out of network that a communication is desired, the wireless communication apparatus comprising:

a dispatch center configured to:

couple to a first wireless communication device via a first wireless communication network, wherein the first wireless communication device is located in a cab portion of the vehicle and is available to the user of the vehicle, and comprises a display indicator;

couple to a second wireless communication device via a second wireless communication network that facilitates two-way data communication

between the dispatch center and the second wireless communication network, wherein the second wireless communication device is located in a trailer portion of the vehicle, comprises a satellite communication device, and is coupled via a wired data link to a first wireless communication device; and

when the first wireless communication device loses connection with the dispatch center over the first wireless communication network, transmit to the second wireless communication device a communication request signal that causes the second wireless communication device to transmit to the first wireless communication device over the wired data link the communication request signal causing the display indicator to indicate an alert.

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the dispatch center is further configured to receive a communication request confirmation signal from the second wireless communication device to confirm the communication request signal was received.

11. A method for alerting a user of a first wireless communication device located in a vehicle that a dispatcher wishes to communicate with the user, comprising:

entering into, by a dispatch center, a two-way data communication with a second wireless communication device over a second wireless communication network, wherein the second wireless communication device is located in a

trailer portion of the vehicle and wherein the second wireless communication device comprises a satellite communication device;

when the first wireless communication device loses connection with the dispatch center over a first wireless communication network, sending a communication request to the second wireless communication device by the dispatch center, wherein the communication request causes a display signal to be generated at the second wireless communication device based on the communication request, wherein the display signal is transmitted to the first wireless communication device from the second wireless communication device over a wired data link coupling the first wireless communication device to the second wireless communication device, the first wireless communication device is located in a cab portion of the vehicle and available to the user in the vehicle, and the display signal causes a display indicator on the first wireless communication device to indicate said alert and the user is alerted that the dispatch center wishes to communicate.

12. The method of claim 11 further comprising receiving a communication request confirmation signal by the dispatch center from the second wireless communication device to confirm the communication request signal was received.