

GUARDIAN

A Publication of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

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Six Tips

to Take Full Advantage of Your CVSA Membership 



Meet the Nominees
for CVSA Secretary

Commercial Motor Vehicle
Enforcement Officer's
Daughter Saves His Life

Montana Taking
Move Over Law
to the Next Level

IN THIS ISSUE

Insight

President's Message	1
Executive Director's Message	2

Regional News

Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Officer's Daughter Saves His Life	3
Florida Highway Patrol Participates in Operation SafeDRIVE	4
Florida Highway Patrol Teams Up with Publix for Truck Driving Championship.....	5
Florida Highway Patrol Names Toni Schuck Trooper of the Year	6
Updates from Mexico	7
Montana Taking Move Over Law to the Next Level	8
California Highway Patrol Conducts Commercial Special Enforcement Detail	10

Cover Story

Six Tips to Take Full Advantage of Your CVSA Membership.....	11
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CVSA Committee and Program News

FedEx World Hub Experience Tour	17
Meet the Nominees for CVSA Secretary	18
2022 IDEA Winner Ruth McDonough Lives Out Her Childhood Dream, Drives 4 Million Miles Without Incident	20
Good Nutrition is High-Quality Fuel for Driver Alertness.....	22
Debunking 10 Nutrition Myths	24
Operation Safe Driver Program Update	26

Inspector's Corner

How to Avoid Getting Stopped for Inspection.....	27
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Government News

The Legislative and Regulatory Rundown	28
FMCSA Launches Operation Protect Your Move, A Nationwide Crackdown on Moving Scams.....	29
Overview of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes in 2021.....	30

From the Driver's Seat

Integrity in the Moving Industry.....	31
---------------------------------------	----

Knowledge Matters

Critical Safety and Compliance.....	32
-------------------------------------	----

Industry Perspectives

Driver Input Enhances Fleet Safety Policies	33
Is There a Missing Element in Fatality-Reduction Strategies?.....	34
The Real World of Disc Brakes	36
Carriers and Enforcement Working Together: A Mutually Beneficial Relationship	38

GUARDIAN

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Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Outside the Comfort Zone

By **Maj. Chris Nordloh**, Texas Department of Public Safety; CVSA President

Our world in commercial motor vehicle (CMV) enforcement is complicated and taxing. Standards should be consistent across the board for enforcement and industry. The details matter, of course, and not every enforcement member of the Alliance has the same job or set of responsibilities. For those working in industry who were formerly in an enforcement role, times and demands have likely changed since you were roadside.

For a CMV enforcement trooper in Texas, aside from attaining and maintaining a suite of certifications, there are also state laws to consider. Weight and size limitations are stacked on top of general traffic enforcement to include crash investigations and criminal law enforcement. Our troopers also have border enforcement requirements, assist police departments with violent crime task forces and help protect the Texas State Capitol.

Local officers may also conduct crash investigations and answer calls for service. This could look like responding to a disturbance call and then immediately going back into CMV enforcement mode. The chain of command may not include officers with a CMV enforcement background or with the experience needed to calculate a weight problem or review a CMV inspection report.

Additionally, some of our agencies have hiring and retention problems that are compounded by retirements and budget cuts. Staffing pressures certainly have an effect on our highly technical profession, and industry needs our commitment.

This is not a complaint, but a statement of how difficult our profession can be. It requires consistent effort to maintain our areas of expertise while balancing the other commitments with which we are entrusted.

To our alliance of professional members, my observations may seem like I'm preaching to the choir. Rather, I'm hoping that those who don't or can't attend workshops, conferences or other events get a chance to read this and are encouraged to continue to push forward.

Take advantage of resources available to you through CVSA, which is made up of professional members developing policy, training specifications, out-of-service criteria, enhanced inspections and more. Troopers, officers and inspectors involved in these efforts are influencing the future, which likely will further change.

Stay strong and focused. ■





EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The Importance of an Effective and Reliable Enhanced Safety Inspection Program for Autonomous Commercial Motor Vehicles

By **Collin B. Mooney**, MPA, CAE, Executive Director, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

In recent years, the development of autonomous commercial motor vehicle (CMV) technologies has been increasing at an unprecedented rate. With the goal of saving lives by eliminating crashes through enhanced road safety standards, improving economic performance and reducing carbon emissions, several companies are investing in the development of self-driving trucks, buses and other commercial motor vehicles. However, as these vehicles become more prevalent on our roads, it is important to ensure they are operating safely and efficiently.

Enforcing safe practices and conducting regular enhanced safety inspections of autonomous CMVs can have numerous positive impacts on the transportation industry and society as a whole. From improving road safety and building public trust to promoting cost savings and environmental benefits, there are many compelling reasons to prioritize safety in the development and operation of these vehicles.

First, by requiring regular enhanced safety inspections and enforcing safe driving principles for autonomous CMVs, we can minimize the risk of crashes caused by mechanical failure or technology malfunction. While autonomous CMVs have the potential to dramatically improve and revolutionize road safety, they are currently not infallible. Just like human drivers of CMVs, these systems can experience mechanical failures or encounter unexpected debris on the road.

Furthermore, ensuring that autonomous CMVs are operating safely can help to build public trust in this new technology. The idea of self-driving vehicles, and more so autonomous CMVs, can be intimidating for many people. Safety concerns have been a major obstacle to their widespread adoption. However, by demonstrating that these vehicles are subject to rigorous enhanced safety standards and inspections, CMV enforcement and industry can help to alleviate these concerns and promote the acceptance of autonomous technology.

Another benefit of enforcing safe practices and inspections is that it can lead to cost savings for commercial transportation companies. While a company's initial investment in autonomous technology can be significant, the long-term



benefits can include improved fuel efficiency, reduced labor costs and increased productivity. However, these benefits can only be fully realized if the CMVs are operating safely and efficiently. Regular enhanced safety inspections can help identify issues that may impact safe operation or performance, allowing for prompt repairs and maintenance to keep the vehicles running smoothly and efficiently.

In addition to promoting safety and efficiency, enforcing safe practices and the effective implementation of enhanced safety inspections can also have a positive impact on the environment. One of the main benefits of autonomous CMVs is their potential to reduce carbon emissions by minimizing downtime and idling while reporting to roadside inspection stations/weigh scales, optimizing delivery routes and reducing highway traffic congestion. However, this potential can only be realized if the autonomous CMVs are operating at their full capacity. By ensuring they are properly maintained and functioning as intended, we can maximize their environmental benefits.

Finally, enforcing a culture of safe practices and enhanced safety inspections can help to promote innovation in the autonomous vehicle industry. As with any new technology, there are bound to be challenges and setbacks along the way. However, by setting and enforcing safety standards, we can encourage companies to prioritize safety in their development and testing processes. This can lead to the creation of more reliable and efficient autonomous CMVs, ultimately benefiting the transportation industry and society.

Overall, the development of safe practices and inspections for autonomous CMVs can

have a wide range of positive impacts. From improving road safety and building public trust to promoting cost savings and environmental benefits, there are many compelling reasons to prioritize safety in the development and operation of these vehicles.

However, it is important to note that these benefits can only be fully realized if there is a strong regulatory framework in place to oversee and enforce these standards. While the autonomous vehicle industry is still relatively new, it is important that governments and industry stakeholders work together to establish clear safety guidelines and regulations. This will ensure autonomous CMVs are held to the same high standards as traditional human-operated vehicles and that their potential enhanced safety, economic and environmental benefits are fully realized.

In conclusion, while the introduction of autonomous CMVs is an exciting development for the transportation industry, we must prioritize safety in their development and operation. As the industry evolves, it is crucial that we continue to work together to establish clear safety standards and regulations to ensure the safe and efficient operation of autonomous CMVs on our roads. By enforcing safe practices and conducting regular enhanced safety inspections, we can minimize the risk of crashes, promote public trust, and maximize the economic and environmental benefits of this new technology.

For more information, please read about CVSA's enhanced CMV inspection for autonomous truck carriers:
www.cvsa.org/news/new-enhanced-cmv-inspection-program. ■

REGION II

Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Officer's Daughter Saves His Life

By **Officer Jimmy Valenti**, Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement, Cedar Hill Police Department, Texas

My name is Jimmy Valenti and I am a commercial motor vehicle enforcement officer for the Cedar Hill Police Department in Texas. This is an article explaining an unfortunate event that happened to me that drives home the importance of everyone learning CPR.

On Sept. 30, I came home from work, and while cutting the grass in my backyard, I inadvertently ran over a nest of yellowjackets and was stung multiple times on my neck and ear. I am highly allergic to wasps and yellowjackets.

I notified my wife. Within minutes, I started to feel very weird. I ran into the house and grabbed two of my EpiPens® and administered one. Before I could administer the second, I felt my life slipping away. I threw the remaining EpiPen to my wife, telling her to call 911 because I was dying. I then fell to the ground and went into anaphylactic shock and cardiac arrest.

My adult daughter immediately started CPR as my wife called 911. An unknown 911 dispatcher talked my wife and daughter through the proper CPR procedure and dispatched Mansfield Fire Station 1 C shift to my residence. By the time medics arrived, my daughter had been giving me CPR for several minutes. I was still in full cardiac arrest and was not breathing. Medics worked on me for a while, having to restart my heart and intubate me prior to rushing me to Mansfield Methodist Hospital.

Upon arriving at the hospital, my heart was beating but I was in critical condition. The emergency room trauma team stabilized me and brought me to the intensive care unit, where that trauma team had to place me in therapeutic hypothermia for 72 hours in hopes of saving my

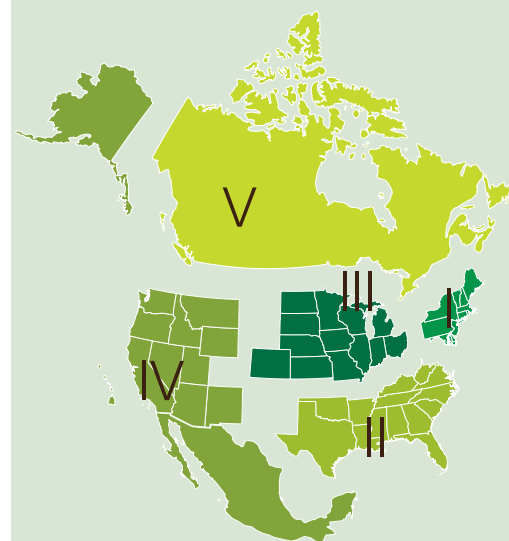
brain functions and life. I spent four days in that state and woke up on Oct. 4. I remained in the hospital for 11 days and received at-home care for several months before returning to work on light duty where I remain at the time of this article.

I am still recovering from this incident and have a long road ahead, but I want to stress that if it was not for my daughter Nicole and her ability to perform out-of-hospital CPR, and the quick actions of my wife Madonna, I would not have survived until the medics arrived. I also would not be alive today without the help of the anonymous 911 dispatcher, Mansfield Fire Station 1 C Shift medics and the dedicated staff at Mansfield Methodist Hospital.

Nicole's CPR efforts saved my life. Doctors have told me that I had a 2-9% chance of surviving this incident. After beating the survival odds, 60% of patients who live through what I did experience permanent brain damage. If not for out-of-hospital CPR, I would not be here today. I owe my life to God and to all of the people who came together to save me that day. Please take a CPR course. You too could save a life, just like mine. ■



Ofc. Jimmy Valenti is pictured with his family.



REGIONAL MAP

Region I

Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, U.S. Virgin Islands and Vermont

Region II

Alabama, American Samoa, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia

Region III

Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin

Region IV

Alaska, Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Mexico, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming

Region V

Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Yukon

Please take a CPR course.

You, too, could save a life.



Florida Highway Patrol Participates in Operation SafeDRIVE

By **Sgt. Denise Meredith**, Office of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, Florida Highway Patrol

The Florida Highway Patrol Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) participated in the Operation SafeDRIVE detail Feb. 28-March 2. During the effort, CVE troopers aimed to eliminate commercial motor vehicle crashes through concentrated patrols along the southeast I-95 corridor. SafeDRIVE enforcement efforts focus on passenger vehicle drivers and commercial motor vehicle drivers, placing a focus on aggressive driving, speeding, tailgating, not wearing a seatbelt, distracted driving, driving under the influence and other violations. ■



REGION II

Florida Highway Patrol Teams Up with Publix for Truck Driving Championship

By Sgt. Denise Meredith, Office of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, Florida Highway Patrol

The Florida Highway Patrol Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Unit teamed up with Publix again this year in its annual truck driving championship. Drivers competed against each other to test their driving skills and pre-trip inspection knowledge. Troopers even got a chance to show their driving talents on the course. The winners of the challenge will compete at the Florida Truck Driving Challenge in Daytona Beach, Florida, later this year. ■



Florida Highway Patrol Names Toni Schuck Trooper of the Year

By **Chief Jeffrey S. Dixon**, Office of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement, Florida Highway Patrol

On Feb. 25, Director of the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) Col. Gene Spaulding named Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Tpr. Toni Schuck as Trooper of the Year for her selfless act of heroism on the morning of March 6, 2022. Early that morning, Tpr. Schuck was working near the Sunshine Skyway bridge in Tampa, which was closed for the fifth annual Skyway 10K run. There were over 7,000 participants on the bridge during the event.

While the event was occurring, troopers were notified of a reckless driver heading toward the event area at a dangerously high speed. The driver had already maneuvered around and through several roadway lane closures, bypassing law enforcement personnel, highway signs, traffic cones and safety barrels. Tpr. Schuck, who was the last line of defense, quickly responded to the area and observed the reckless vehicle approaching with no indication of stopping. Without hesitation or regard for her own personal safety, in an act of bravery, Tpr. Schuck drove her patrol vehicle

into a defensive position in the middle of the two-lane roadway and strategically positioned herself in front of the oncoming vehicle. The reckless vehicle struck Tpr. Schuck's patrol vehicle in an imminently dangerous head-on collision, resulting in injuries to both Tpr. Schuck and the reckless driver who was later found to be driving while impaired.

Tpr. Schuck's heroic action in the face of grave personal danger stopped a reckless driver who was endangering the lives of thousands of innocent and unsuspecting participants. Because Tpr. Schuck was on the bridge that morning, serving her community and the state of Florida, a tremendous tragedy was averted, and lives were saved. That day, Tpr. Schuck represented all the men and women of the Florida Highway Patrol and exemplified its motto: Courtesy * Service * Protection.

At the sixth annual Skyway 10K a year later, participants lined up to thank Tpr. Schuck for her life-saving actions. Though Tpr. Schuck

had received many awards and recognitions to commend her heroic actions, she stated the following about the outpouring from the race participants: "To be honest, yesterday meeting all those runners, including ones that were running last year, was more memorable than any award I could ever receive. Those people are the reason we serve our communities, and I am proud to represent our agency and every member of FHP." ■



Tpr. Toni Schuck



A year after Tpr. Schuck's life-saving actions, runners from the race lined up to thank her for her selfless act of heroism.



Tpr. Toni Schuck receives the Trooper of the Year Award. Pictured left to right: FHP Advisory Council President Mr. Steven Barnett; HSMV Executive Director Dave Kerner; Tpr. Toni Schuck; Col. Gene Spaulding; Lt. Col. Troy Thompson; and Lt. Col. Mark Brown.

UPDATES FROM Mexico

Hazardous Materials Training for Federal Inspectors

As a part of the training tasks for the Ministry of Infrastructure, Communications and Transportation (SICT), inspectors and enforcement personnel, federal trucking inspectors and members of SICT's General Directorate of Federal Motor Carrier Transportation (DGAF) received a virtual training course on hazardous materials on Jan. 25.

The training was conducted by DGAF Executive Director of Supervision Irma Flores, who shared the safety regulations for the various classes of hazardous substances or materials; allowable quantities and products for the consumer/public; acceptable packaging and containers; and other inspection considerations. The training also addressed the inspection and enforcement procedures for vehicles and drivers.

These training activities are part of a general framework of courses that inspectors must be certified in for the performance of their duties, in addition to contributing to road safety and the continuous professional development of public servants. ■



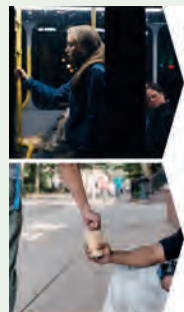
Human Trafficking Awareness Campaign at Bus Terminals

Several activities were conducted at bus terminals in Mexico to combat human trafficking through coordinated awareness and training measures for the public, the business community and the government.

Recognizing that bus terminals are a transit route through which criminals transport their trafficking victims, during the month of January, SICT coordinated the placement of posters to raise awareness of and prevent human trafficking in the country's passenger terminals. Providing support was the National Chamber of Passenger Transport and Tourism, the Citizen Council for Security and Justice of Mexico City, and Pozo de Vida, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that fights against human trafficking in Mexico and Central America. U.S. NGO Truckers Against Trafficking also donated resources.

DGAF inspectors also distributed flyers for the "Guardianes del Asfalto" campaign, to draw awareness to the prevention of human trafficking in passenger terminals in Mexico City. This was a part of CVSA's Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative, which took place from March 13 to 17.

As a result of these efforts, passenger bus drivers, terminal personnel and users had access to relevant information on their role in preventing the crime of human trafficking. Several participants asked questions and made direct observations to the inspectors about their concerns and interest in the subject. ■



La Trata de Personas puede disfrazarse de un buen trato

- » ¿Conseguiste un buen empleo en otro estado? ¡Cuidado, puede ser un engaño! Verifica la información y si detectas algo raro, solicita ayuda.
- » Nadie tiene derecho a retener tus documentos personales. Si la persona con la que viajas te los quita, reporta.
- » Antes de viajar por amor, verifica su identidad. Los tratantes enamoran a sus víctimas con fines de explotación sexual.

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CANAPAT

EL POZO DE VIDA

Montana Taking Move Over Law to the Next Level

By **Cpl. Jonathan Larson**, Motor Carrier Services Division, Montana Department of Transportation

On Oct. 25, 2020, tragedy struck when two Hanser's Wrecker Co. wrecker operators were killed as they were working roadside to recover a disabled vehicle on Interstate 90, near Columbus, Montana.

When a semi-truck and trailer slowed down, the pickup truck and trailer following the combination moved into the passing lane where the wrecker operators were working to recover a disabled vehicle. The pickup truck struck and killed the Hanser's Wrecker employees, William Allen, who was only 28 years old, and Nicolas Visser, who was only 37 years old.

Instances where first responders are struck and killed while bravely working roadside happens all too often. According to a 2021 AAA article, an average of 24 first responders, including tow-truck drivers, are killed each year on U.S. roadways. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that a tow-truck driver's risk of dying is 15 times higher than those in other dangerous professions, and the risk of injury is double the average.

At the time of this accident, Montana had a move over law, but fines were minimal, and the law was not clear on what was required of drivers approaching first responders working roadside. At the time, a fine for a first offense of not slowing down or moving over for an emergency vehicle was only a minimum of \$25 and could not exceed \$300.

Since this tragic event, many wrecker companies, first responders, law enforcement officials, and the Montana legislature have been working diligently to enact legislation to prevent tragedy from striking again. Tow companies around the state have also been working on a memorial in tribute to all emergency first responders who have been killed while in the line of duty on Montana's roadways. That memorial is set to be completed before the end of 2023.

In April 2021, the Montana legislature improved the move over law by adding clear and concise verbiage on the consequences for motorists who approach first responders that are stopped roadside. House Bill 264 revised the move over law to:

- Include tow-truck drivers and highway workers as emergency personnel
- Allow tow truck operators to establish temporary speed limits during recovery operations
- Increase the fine to no less than \$100, with a maximum of \$500
- Include the ability to charge reckless endangerment with jail time up to 90 days
- Establish that failing to comply is grounds to suspend a commercial motor vehicle driver's license

Another often overlooked first responder group is snowplow operators. These workers allow commerce to keep moving during snow events, risking their lives as they brave hazardous roads to make them safer for the rest of the traveling public. As of March, 19 MDT snowplows have been struck on Montana highway systems this year. In late 2022, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) passed legislation allowing the use of green flashing lamps on snowplows for better visibility.

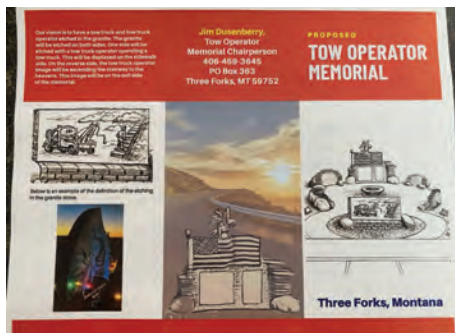
Motor carrier officer Jacob Feist was struck from behind when assisting with a disabled semi truck, smashing his truck against the disabled semi truck.



In 2022, the Federal Highway Administration outlined its comprehensive approach to safety through the National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) and Safe System Approach. Under the NRSS, post-crash care is one of five key tactics that will help crash victims receive medical care more quickly, helping more people survive roadway crashes. NRSS will also create a safer working environment for first responders and prevent secondary crashes through robust traffic incident management. Those two tactics aim to help states, cities and counties work toward the U.S. Department of Transportation's ambitious goal of zero roadway fatalities.

This combination of state and federal legislation can highlight the importance of – and risk to – the highway first responders who put their lives on the line to help others, reminding the driving public to “move over” and ensuring the safety of everyone who must work roadside.

Please remember to slow down and move over. ■



Brochure for upcoming memorial in Three Forks, Montana.



MDT snowplow that was struck while stationary in a crossover on I-90.



Memorial at Hanser's Wrecker in Billings, Montana.



Hanser's Wrecker vehicle that was struck while working recovery operations.



Flashing green lamps on rear of MDT snowplow for increased visibility.

California Highway Patrol Conducts Commercial Special Enforcement Detail

By **Lt. Robert J. Daniels**, Commercial Vehicle Section, California Highway Patrol

On Feb. 15, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) Southern Division Special Services Command conducted a commercial special enforcement detail on Interstate 210, working with the field commands located in the CHP's southern and inland divisions. The detail resulted in 373 commercial motor vehicle citations and 45 verbal warnings, as well as 10 drivers and 21 trucks being placed out of service. Most of the citations consisted of mechanical and moving violations. ■



Photos courtesy of CHP Rancho Cucamonga Area.



Six Tips

to Take Full Advantage of Your CVSA Membership

CVSA®



Before learning how to take full advantage of your CVSA membership, it's essential to understand who we are and what we do. CVSA is a nonprofit organization comprised of local, state, provincial, territorial and federal commercial motor vehicle (CMV) safety officials and industry representatives from across North America. Together, we work to prevent crashes involving CMVs and the injuries and fatalities they cause. To achieve this, the Alliance provides guidance, education and advocacy for CMV enforcement and industry.

CVSA member organizations are dedicated to transportation safety and helping the Alliance achieve its goals of uniformity, compatibility and reciprocity for CMV inspections. There are four membership types: state/provincial/territorial, local agencies, associate and federal.

• CLASS I MEMBERS

State/provincial/territorial agencies, represented by various departments of transportation, public utility and service commissions, state police, highway patrols, departments of motor vehicles and ministries of transport

Example: Ontario Ministry of Transportation (Canada)

• CLASS II LOCAL MEMBERS

Municipal or city law enforcement agencies with at least one sworn personnel member

Example: City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police (Pennsylvania)

• CLASS III LOCAL MEMBERS

Companies, organizations, trade associations, trucking and bus companies, industry suppliers and vendors, training institutions, consultants, insurance companies, state or provincial trucking associations, large- and small-fleet owners or owner-operators, etc.

Example: Various commercial motor carriers and industry service providers

• CLASS IV FEDERAL MEMBERS

Representatives from federal government agencies

Example: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (U.S.)

CVSA is a member-driven organization. Everything we do centers on the voices and experiences of our members and exists to benefit them in their efforts to make our roadways safer. While the Alliance delivers many intangible benefits, the more you participate, the more you will get out of this vibrant and involved community.

Let's break down how every member can make the most of a CVSA membership.

[Continued on next page](#)

Continued from page 11

CVSA DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES BRIAN NEAL EXPLAINS THE PORTAL

Q What do you wish more CVSA members knew about the portal?

A I wish more members knew how the membership profiles are structured. There are two types: One for the member organization and another for its employees to register individually and access benefits.

Q What's the difference between the two profile types?

A The first, for member organizations, is for managing the organization's profile and paying dues. The second type allows individuals of member organizations to access CVSA benefits and manage communications. They can also register for events, training or other special meetings. Members can also join committees and programs via the portal. If you are the primary contact for your organization, you will see login options for both profile types.

Q How can utilizing the portal help members be more involved with CVSA?

A When you join a committee, you will receive all communications related to that committee. This empowers you to be more informed and proactive about CMV issues that may be relevant to your organization. You can also register for events up to a year in advance. Early sign-up can mean lower registration costs and booking travel in advance can bring cost savings.

TIP #1: Utilize the CVSA Member Portal and CVSA Learning

The CVSA member portal (www.cvsa.org/memberportal) is the easiest way to access all the information you may need. Log in to see your account balance, membership status, events, committees, programs, sponsorships, certifications, awards, competitions and more. You can also update membership information and choose what communications you want to receive by signing up for various emails and mailing lists.

The member portal also hosts CVSA Learning, our learning management system that features online courses, training videos and other educational resources. CVSA Learning is customized for each member, so you will only see content that is relevant to your profession and that you are eligible to access.

Some of the most popular courses for enforcement members include Quick Fix Wheel Seals, Contaminated Linings, Level II Inspection and Identifying Long Stroke Brakes. Many industry members find the hazardous materials instructional training courses particularly useful.

Currently, there are more than 5,000 members on CVSA Learning. We anticipate that these numbers will grow thanks to a \$5 million Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Training and Support Grant/Cooperative Agreement awarded by the U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Through this cooperative agreement, CVSA will build on FMCSA's instructor pool and course and testing materials to expand and deliver a comprehensive suite of certification and non-certification training courses to the inspector community, leveraging existing content and creating new content as well.

"Once we've transitioned the state training services from FMCSA's National Training Center, those enrolled in these courses will access their student information and take their exams in CVSA Learning," said CVSA Learning Management System Specialist Wendy Smith. "Plus, there's tons of information on CVSA Learning that members won't find on the regular CVSA website, like crash data, hazmat information, resource listings and recorded webinars. If members aren't utilizing their portals, they're missing out on a lot of great content."

CVSA Director of Member Services Brian Neal added, "In a recent committee discussion, someone mentioned that most, if not all, of the CVSA Learning training is not available from any other source. You can't find this

information anywhere else – and many regard it as the best in the industry."

CVSA Learning also records training history. Members can easily view certificates to update their resumes and LinkedIn profile, or print copies for their records. Users also earn an electronic profile badge for each completed course. Help and support from a friendly staff member are just a click away in CVSA Learning.

"You're never going to chat with a robot or be redirected to a troubleshooting page," said Neal. "You reach real CVSA staff members who are happy to help you work through the issue."

TIP #2: Learn from the Experts: Sign Up for Webinars

CVSA offers webinars for enforcement and industry on a variety of topics, such as nutrition and sleep for drivers, the emergency declarations portal, post-crash inspection reports, hazardous materials, pre-event meetings and post-event debriefs. Topics may be timely – addressing a new guideline or law, explaining out-of-service criteria updates, etc. – or may focus on established principles, expanding knowledge and complementing ongoing in-service training. Each session is led by CVSA staff (sometimes with special subject matter experts as guest presenters) with time for discussion and Q&A. These webinars are free for CVSA members, and whether or not you're able to attend a webinar, all recordings and related materials are available to members in CVSA Learning after the live webinar.

"CVSA strives to offer the best available content," said CVSA Fatigue Management Specialist Rodolfo Giacomani. "Our webinars offer a highly effective and accessible way for motor carriers and commercial drivers to improve their knowledge and skills, ultimately leading to a safer and more successful performance on the road."

"For enforcement, we offer webinars that are basically pre-planning meetings, used to set expectations before an enforcement event or collective effort," said CVSA Director of Enforcement Programs Jake Elovirta. "Before initiatives, like Operation Safe Driver Week or the Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative events, CVSA staff gathers on a webinar with members of the enforcement community to educate them on program goals, so everyone is on the same page about the information we'll be sharing with commercial drivers and the public."



Members can sign up for upcoming webinars at www.cvsa.org/webinars and can view past webinars in CVSA Learning.

TIP #3: Make an Impact: Attend CVSA Events

CVSA hosts four standing events each year:

COHMED (Cooperative Hazardous Materials Enforcement Development) Conference is a training and information-sharing event for those involved in the regulation, enforcement and safe transportation of hazardous materials and dangerous goods.

CVSA Workshop helps government officials, enforcement and industry continue to advance CMV safety through collaboration to affect meaningful changes to the overall culture of transportation safety.

NAIC (North American Inspectors Championship) brings together top inspectors from across North America to compete against each other and receive training on the latest CMV safety trends, technologies, standards and inspection procedures, while sharing insights, ideas, techniques and experiences with other inspectors.

CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition includes roll-up-your-sleeves meetings of CVSA members, elected leadership, technical working committees, program committees and task forces where everyone works together to promote road safety and save lives.

“At CVSA events, you’re not going to just sit down and listen to a bunch of keynote speakers,” said CVSA Deputy Executive

Director Adrienne Gildea. “You’re going to give your opinion, hear about common problems, brainstorm and workshop solutions, and really get into the nitty gritty. You’ll walk away with a sense that you impacted something important – because you did.”

“Whether you’re new to this work or have been in the industry for decades, CVSA events offer something for everyone,” said CVSA Manager of Meetings and Events Cassy Dafin. “When people in this field come together to share their experiences, we create a safer environment for industry drivers, enforcement and the general motoring public. When you utilize your membership and attend events, you are a part of something bigger.”

To view the dates and locations of our upcoming events, visit www.cvsa.org/events.

Continued on next page



Attendees check in at the 2022 CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition.

BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS ALL ACROSS NORTH AMERICA – CANADA, MEXICO AND THE U.S.

- Our website and most of our materials are available in English, French and Spanish.
- Program and committee meetings at conferences include participation from members in Canada, Mexico and the U.S. Representatives from all three countries provide updates at our workshop and annual conference.
- There are many opportunities for inter-country networking.
- Because representatives from Canada, Mexico and the U.S. are present during discussions – whether virtually or at an in-person event – often one country may be able to offer a solution or best practice to another country with a similar issue.
- CVSA Fatigue Management Specialist Rodolfo Giacoman also serves as CVSA staff liaisons to Mexico, attending meetings and giving presentations.
- CVSA Director of Inspection Programs Kerri Wirachowsky and CVSA Director of Multimedia Development Ken Albrecht serve as CVSA staff liaisons to Region V, Canada.
- The North American Cargo Securement Harmonization Public Forum brings together country representatives to address concerns with cargo securement regulations in pursuit of developing and implementing uniform regulatory requirements.



Contestants receive motorcoach inspection training at last year's NAIC.

Continued from page 13

CERTIFICATION TRAINING FOR ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL

AVAILABLE NOW AND COMING SOON

- Advanced Explosives Inspection
- Advanced Hazardous Materials Inspection
- Advanced Roadside Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Substance Inspection
- Cargo Tank Facility Review
- Cargo Tank Inspection
- General Hazardous Materials Inspection
- Investigative Safety Analysis
- Level VI (Transuranic Waste and Radioactive Materials) Inspection
- Level VI (Transuranic Waste and Radioactive Materials) Train the Trainer
- New Entrant Safety Audit
- North American Standard Inspection Part A
- North American Standard Inspection Part B
- Other Bulk Packaging Inspection
- Passenger Carrier Vehicle Inspection
- Performance-Based Brake Tester (PBBT) Inspection
- Post-Crash Inspection

Visit www.cvsa.org/training-categories/certification-training for the full schedule of upcoming certification training courses.

TIP #4: Receive Training from Subject Matter Experts

Learning something as technically specific as the Code of Federal Regulations can be daunting. Are you spending your time learning information that is correct and current? When you have questions, do you have a trusted list of contacts with answers? CVSA's training can help.

CVSA Director of Training Services Shannon Heck explains the benefits of receiving training from the subject matter experts at CVSA. "For those of us who have spent a decade or more in the motor carrier industry, or even those who are just starting out in it, we must be certain of our knowledge, resources and answers. In this industry, we are not allowed to guess at the regulations and how we enforce them or follow them," said Heck.

CVSA hosts numerous training courses throughout North America, for enforcement and industry. Some training courses are uniform, while others may vary depending on current industry trends. All training courses are posted to www.cvsa.org/training. There are three types of trainings:

- **Certification Training for Enforcement Personnel** – These are multi-day, intensive sessions. Participants who successfully complete a course and complete the required number of inspections with a field training officer will receive a certificate of proficiency and are authorized to conduct the related inspection.
- **Continuing Education for Enforcement Personnel** – These are often offered virtually and are intended to supplement previous trainings. They fulfill continuing education requirements that are mandatory in some jurisdictions.

- **Industry Training for Motor Carriers and Drivers** – These range from single-day virtual or in-person training courses to multi-day sessions. Motor carrier decision-makers, safety directors or managers, drivers and industry (non-enforcement) trainers can all benefit.

After receiving initial training, it can be beneficial for CMV drivers and enforcement officers to take additional supplemental training sessions. "These materials are constantly changing. There are new interpretations and new regulations that come out all throughout the year," added Heck. "It is imperative to stay up to date. And, where you get your information matters. In the CVSA committees, changes to regulations are discussed. Issues for action are raised, reviewed, researched and resolved. Requests for interpretations are made. This allows CVSA to remain at the forefront of the changes to the Code of Federal Regulations. CVSA members directly benefit from these discussions and actions."

Furthermore, acquiring additional training provides deeper knowledge and a broader understanding of the regulations pertinent to safe transportation practices. For industry safety directors or managers, that means they have more employability and a better understanding of how to protect their drivers and motor carrier. When a motor carrier achieves a better safety score, it advances not only safety on the road, it also improves their bottom line. For drivers, it means they have a better understanding of how to comply with regulations, making them safer drivers with cleaner inspection results. For the inspector, it means understanding not just the rules, but also what the exceptions are and how they are to be applied, so they perform inspections fairly and accurately.



CVSA offered a Post-Crash Inspection Training Course in New Hampshire in May.

"When all those who are involved in the process of enforcing, following and creating the regulations are trained well – and trained often – the benefit is a safer roadway and transportation system," explained Heck.

Since being awarded the Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Training and Support Cooperative Agreement/Grant, many more training sessions are being added to the website. Keep an eye on www.cvsa.org/training-categories to stay up to date on training news. If you are interested in training offered in a particular location, you can fill out the training interest form at www.cvsa.org/training-interest-form.

TIP #5: Make Purchases at a Discount

The CVSA Store is your one-stop shop for the North American Standard Out-of-Service Criteria (OOSC), safety publications, brochures/outreach material, inspection tools, apparel and more. You will find access to essentials for enforcement, drivers, fleet owners and trainers. CVSA members get discounted rates on all products and services.

CVSA Director of Inspection Programs Kerri Wirachowsky explained the importance of staying current on the latest OOSC, whether you are from the industry or the enforcement community. "Things are always changing and evolving, which requires updates, additions or deletions from the criteria. It is imperative that enforcement personnel stay current on what is considered an imminent hazard and when a driver or vehicle should be declared out of service."

"This year, the biggest amendment was related to when drivers will be placed out of service for falsifying their record of duty status," added Wirachowsky. "The only way to know this is to access the new 2023 OOSC. All the new information in the OOSC is highlighted, making it easy to scan and find the updated information. We're pleased to offer a discount to members on the OOSC as a benefit of their membership, to make this information more accessible to all."

TIP #6: Have Your Voice Heard

CVSA is an organization driven by the expertise and lived experiences of its members. One of our core values – in addition to integrity, professionalism and leadership – is teamwork, defined as "valuing people working together to achieve common goals and partnerships to achieve uniformity and enhance our effectiveness." We can only do this by hearing the voices of our members, loud and clear. CVSA members of all types can make their voices heard by participating in committees, putting in an Issue/Request for Action and submitting an article to "Guardian" magazine. Additionally, CVSA gives a voice to member needs in discussions with government agencies.

Participate in Committees. "Our committees are a forum to get work done," said Gildea. "Any member can join any committee that interests them – they just sign up through the CVSA member portal." When an issue is brought up, it gets referred to the appropriate committee, where it is discussed and voted on before proceeding to consideration by the CVSA Board of Directors.

"Let's say there's a new truck with an innovative braking system," Gildea said. "There's nothing in the existing regulations that provides parameters. Members would invite the manufacturer to talk about it in committee. They'd ask many questions: How does this work? What does it look like when it breaks? How can it be fixed? Then, we would make recommendations, petition FMCSA to update the regulations, add any clarifying information to the applicable inspection procedure(s) or develop an inspection bulletin, and make any necessary adjustments to the OOSC. Committees do the work and influence policies. There's lots of rolling up sleeves and troubleshooting issues."

Committees are also a forum for discussion – on best practices, what drivers and enforcement are seeing on the roadways, and what members are hearing and concerned about. "In committee, we talk a lot about what we see coming in the future," added Gildea.

To learn more about our committees, visit www.cvsa.org/committees.

Put in an Issue/Request for Action. Anyone can submit an Issue/Request for Action at www.cvsa.org/issuerequest-for-action. This form asks the member to summarize the

Asking the CVSA Staff

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT BENEFITS FOR EACH TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP?

- **CLASS I MEMBERS** "Access to certification and ongoing training is essential to Class I Members," said CVSA Director of Training Services Shannon Heck. "These trainings are comprehensive and hands-on, and for those who routinely perform commercial motor vehicle inspections, they're the basis of their everyday work. They need to know these procedures like the backs of their hands."
- **CLASS II LOCAL MEMBERS** "Access to CVSA resources, like their member portal and CVSA Learning, is essential for Class II Local Members," said CVSA Director of Enforcement Programs Jake Elovirta. "Generally, local members perform fewer inspections than state members, so they see fewer real-world examples of violations. With CVSA resources, they can look at operational policies, inspection schematics and inspection procedures, and they can even watch video snippets that show real-life scenarios. These technical resources are an essential benefit."
- **CLASS III ASSOCIATE MEMBERS** "By far, the biggest benefit of being a Class III Associate Member is the networking," explained CVSA Hazardous Materials Specialist Katie Morton. "Whether you are attending one of our conferences or in-person or virtual training courses, the networking opportunities are limitless when you utilize the full potential of your membership. Attendance at our activities promotes your organization with industry leaders and the enforcement community, affords direct access to open forums for discussion about regulatory topics, and provides the exchange of information for additional resources down the road. The exposure and opportunities for businesses to provide insightful information from an industry perspective as well as gain knowledge in the application of regulations is a unique one-of-a-kind experience provided by CVSA."
- **CLASS IV FEDERAL MEMBERS** "CVSA gives Class IV Federal Members direct access to the jurisdictions, which are their stakeholders," said CVSA Deputy Executive Director Adrienne Gildea. "This creates a pathway for dialogue between federal agencies and state governments, which helps to inform and structure programs. It also helps federal agencies better respond to the needs of the jurisdictions."

Continued on next page

Continued from page 15

CVSA[®] COMMITTEES

Crash Data and Investigation Standards Committee – Establishes and promotes uniform comprehensive crash investigation, reporting and data collection standards for all stakeholders.

Driver-Traffic Enforcement Committee – Promotes effective traffic enforcement strategies to reduce commercial motor vehicle crashes and provides leadership through uniformity of driver-related safety issues.

Enforcement and Industry Modernization Committee – Identifies technological advancements that can be leveraged to improve commercial motor vehicle safety by enhancing the performance, quality and uniformity of commercial motor vehicle inspections and transforming enforcement-related activities.

Hazardous Materials Committee – Provides technical expertise related to hazardous materials/dangerous goods to reduce incidents and encourage uniformity and consistency in applying regulations.

Information Systems Committee – Works to ensure state, provincial, territory and federal enforcement systems are compatible to serve the needs of all stakeholders in providing accurate, timely and actionable data with a safety and compliance focus.

Passenger Carrier Committee – Works toward the goal of an environment free of passenger-carrier crashes on our roadways.

Policy and Regulatory Affairs Committee – Develops the Alliance's policy positions and implementation strategies for the agency/department leaders responsible for coordinating and overseeing commercial motor vehicle safety and enforcement programs. The committee also serves as a forum for international regulatory harmonization discussions.

Size and Weight Committee – Helps establish uniformity of size and weight regulations that will serve the needs of industry while protecting our infrastructures.

Training Committee – Identifies training needs and develops courses leveraging the latest methodologies and technologies to help achieve excellence in the performance, quality training and uniformity of commercial motor vehicle inspections.

Vehicle Committee – Focuses on issues associated with the vehicle to ensure an environment free of commercial motor vehicle incidents on public highways.

issue, describe the justification or need, and suggest a solution. They can also upload supporting documents or photos. From there, the entry is reviewed by CVSA staff members and then brought to committee for discussion.

Members can also search submitted comments at www.cvsa.org/search-issues to avoid duplicate requests.

Be Represented in Government. CVSA works directly with members of the U.S. Congress and their staff to educate them on the CMV industry, enforcement procedures and safety. "There's a lot of back and forth. We explain the real-life translation from policy to the work on the side of the road," said Gildea.

Guiding these conversations is engagement with membership. CVSA listens to their challenges and looks for ways to solve them. A legislative solution is often the last step.

"First, we get all the players in the room, create an inspection bulletin to clarify an issue, update training materials and/or produce troubleshooting videos, or reach out to another stakeholder for collaboration to update a best practice standard," said Gildea. "If it can't be solved through those measures, we go external, petitioning FMCSA or going to Capitol Hill, especially if the issue is something only Congress can decide. CVSA leadership is also often asked to testify before Congress on commercial motor vehicle matters. Our members also testify on their own at the local or state level. And our staff members are always attending industry events and providing the CVSA perspective."

Submit to "Guardian." Lastly – and with some shameless self-promotion – one of the most direct ways to have your voice heard is by submitting articles and photos to "Guardian," the quarterly magazine you're reading right now. "Guardian" focuses on news and information related to CMV transportation safety, processes, regulations and enforcement. It provides members with a valuable mix of trends, perspectives and innovations. We are always looking for interesting, relevant content for the magazine – and we're always ready to hear from you with new ideas. Read more about submitting content, including submission deadlines, at www.cvsa.org/guardian-magazine and email submissions to CVSA Writer-Editor Emily Moorhead at emily.moorhead@cvsa.org.

Bonus Tip: Make a Friend or Meet a Mentor.

If you choose to attend a CVSA event – whether it is your first or your 25th – you'll walk away with added knowledge, invigorated passion and new friends. Some of these friends may become your sounding board or even mentors. They understand your shared experiences and can offer their unique perspectives, teaching you something along the way.

"Even though we're all together only a few times a year, there's always palpable energy in the room the moment everyone comes together," said CVSA Executive Director Collin Mooney. "The instant camaraderie and immediate mutual understanding are the things I most look forward to at CVSA events. I am humbled to call so many amazing individuals my friends and colleagues." ■



CVSA currently has 10 development and implementation committees that meet in-person twice annually.

FedEx World Hub Experience Tour

During the CVSA Workshop, CVSA's board, enforcement and associate members experienced an on-site tour of the FedEx World Hub in Memphis, Tennessee. ■



The group poses in front of a FedEx cargo aircraft.



You can't take the inspection out of the inspector. Jonathan Nicastro, director of New York State Department of Transportation's Motor Carrier Compliance Bureau and committee chair of CVSA's Operation Safe Driver Program, takes a closer look at the wheel hub of a FDX 777 cargo aircraft.



Left to Right: Brad Marten, Montana Department of Transportation; Lt. Robert Daniels, Jr., California Highway Patrol; Cory Ayon, New Mexico Department of Public Safety; Cpt. Nicholas Doko, California Highway Patrol; Tpr. Joshua Anderson, North Dakota State Highway Patrol; Cpt. Jonathan Olsen, Minnesota State Police; Marvin Sudduth, FedEx Logistics; Jonathan Nicastro, New York State Department of Transportation; Steff Mosby, Missouri Department of Transportation; Sgt. Derek Livingston, Minnesota State Police.

Meet the Nominees for CVSA Secretary

TROOPER WILLIAM (BILL) ALARCON

New Jersey State Police



I am Trooper William (Bill) Alarcon of the New Jersey State Police, and I am running for CVSA secretary. I would like to ask for your support, but acknowledge I've not yet met all of you. Until I have the privilege, please accept the following as some insight into my thoughts and experiences.

I have been a trooper for 16 years. During that time, I've been actively engaged in all aspects of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) inspections (including hazardous materials, passenger carrier vehicles and performance-based brake testers (PBBT)), new entrant safety audits, post-crash investigations and overweight enforcement. These experiences helped expand my CVSA involvement early on. I have also found New Jersey's diverse CMV community to be a great asset. As small a state as we are, we boast one of the most heavily CMV-trafficked highways in North America and one of its largest ports. We have vast farm areas with major agricultural exports and a motorcoach industry that seemingly never stops running to and from New York City and Atlantic City. Regardless of region, I believe I can empathize with many of your challenges and look forward to discussing different solutions.

First and foremost, I am an inspector. Although I currently run a squad of state police CMV enforcement troopers, I interact with drivers and companies almost daily. We, at CVSA, constantly talk about communication and collaboration between enforcement and industry. I believe this is where it starts; those concepts build from the bottom up. I take every opportunity to talk to drivers about their trip, their load, and their questions about CMV regulations. When the April and September meetings roll around, I keep those conversations at the forefront of my mind.

I am also an instructor. I teach North American Standard Part A and B Inspections, passenger carrier vehicle inspections, PBBT and weights/dimensions to troopers and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. This is my chance to ensure the fruits of our collaboration are passed on in a manner that fosters the uniformity of inspection our Alliance is predicated on. But this endeavor is not without challenges. Throughout conversations with my peers, I hear some common difficulties inspectors and agencies face, such as receiving an updated curriculum and maintaining and growing a staff of instructors despite a wealth of qualified candidates.

As the CVSA training program moves forward, we must endeavor to work with our current instructors and build a program that supports their needs. Given the opportunity, I will do everything I can to also see our Alliance acquire the missing piece – the ability to certify instructors. By building a comprehensive program, we can attract and retain qualified educators for decades to come. At the same time, we need to support industry by sharing much of the same information and education across their ranks.

Back home, I've tried to do so during safety audits and by providing educational safety talks to companies, when requested. I know many states have also found this successful. I believe

the Alliance has additional tools and a longer reach.

I am committed to CVSA and our future. I am currently the Region I president, chair of the Passenger Carrier Committee, chair of the Reauthorization Task Force, secretary for the Policy and Regulatory Affairs Committee, and a member of the CVSA Board of Directors and CVSA Finance Committee. As I worked my way toward these positions, I studied leaders in every committee. Now, as a leader, I'm still studying. I may not always see them in their respective committees, but during board meetings, I gain valuable insight into how they achieved their results.

I was also fortunate to take part in developing the CVSA Strategic Plan, which was another opportunity to see many accomplished CVSA members collaborate on leading the Alliance to a strong, successful future. In the end, I came to two conclusions. One: we must continue to support our current leaders and facilitate them moving the Alliance forward via the contributions of their respective committees. Two: we must identify those waiting in the wings and mentor them to continue our growth.

I believe we can share our collective knowledge with the next generation of region/committee leaders long before they step into these roles. I have always been grateful to receive guidance from those with more experience. Whether it was my first time as a voting member or the first time I took part in meetings with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration leadership or members of U.S. Congress, I felt more confident and better prepared because of the guidance I received. I want to pay that forward. Because of your collective work, there is a bright future on the CVSA horizon. We should continue to invest in it. ■

MAJOR ERICK MCGUIRE

Florida Highway Patrol



I am very humbled and grateful to be nominated for CVSA secretary. Being a true Florida native, I enjoy all Florida has to offer with my wife of 26 years and two adult daughters. As a family, we enjoy boating, four wheeling, off-roading, camping and most outdoor events. As a father of two, I am humbled to know that I play a very small, but essential role in making the roads a little bit safer each year for their travels while enjoying our adventures.

For the last 16 years, I have had the pleasure of serving the state of Florida in a variety of roles within the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) Office of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE). I started my career as a trooper, eventually being promoted through the ranks to major in 2020. Prior to my most recent promotion, I served within our training department as a National Training Center (NTC) master instructor for Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, along with obtaining a multitude of NTC federal instructor certifications.

During my tenure, I have always maintained a position within CVE. As a major, I have the responsibility of managing 135 CVE troopers and approximately 12 support staff. I make it my goal each year to improve in as many areas as possible.

Since 2012, I have participated in Florida's Inspector Championship (FIC) as a contestant and now in a leadership role. Participating in FIC has afforded me the opportunity to compete at the North American Inspectors Championship (NAIC). I never realized that competing at NAIC would open opportunities to network with so many wonderful

individuals throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico. I believe that networking has been essential in communicating and getting things done in an expedient manner. Along with networking, I have been blessed to gain lifelong friends with many people, including some I now consider to be my extended family.

I have been attending CVSA conferences since 2017 and currently hold the position of vice chair for the NAIC program. I have truly enjoyed and benefited by attending the conferences and committees. I am always intrigued by the vast knowledge displayed by most attendees. I am always ready to bring back the knowledge and new ideas I gain during the conferences and integrate them into the daily activities of the troopers with "boots on the ground."

If selected as CVSA secretary, my main priority would be assisting CVSA in improving roadway safety and saving lives. This is a very broad priority, but I believe safety isn't something that just happens by chance. Safety is something that is built by passion and grows through knowledge and experience. I believe I can contribute to roadway safety by assisting in building more robust partnerships, supporting the training team in providing the most accurate and up-to-date training, continuing to enhance uniformity, and pursuing new and innovative technologies to assist with our focus. All of this is easier said than done, but this is a team effort. My teammates are all of you, the CVSA members. When it comes to passion, knowledge and experience, there are no other alliances or memberships that can compare to the brilliant members of CVSA. So, to say the least, I am a member of a world champion team, which is focused on safety.

As mentioned earlier, the main ingredients of safety are passion, knowledge and experience. There is one ingredient that I contribute just as well as anyone, which is passion. I am dedicated to helping make the roads safer. I would like to do what I can, to keep my family and your families as safe as possible during their travels and new adventures. Knowing that CVSA exemplifies high standards and unwavering dedication to the profession and industry alike, I would be honored to be a part of the alliance that continuously works on ways to safeguard our roadways.

Thank you and be safe! ■

REMEMBER TO CAST YOUR VOTE AT THE 2023 CVSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION IN SEPTEMBER

During the CVSA Workshop this April in Memphis, Tennessee, two individuals declared their intent to run for the position of CVSA Secretary:

- **Tpr. William Alarcon**
New Jersey State Police
- **Maj. Erick McGuire**
Florida Highway Patrol

The secretary position is a one-year term, which then transitions to a year as vice president followed by a year serving as president, after which comes three years serving as past president.

Class I Member jurisdictions and Class II Local Membership will vote for secretary at the 2023 CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition this September in Grapevine, Texas.

CVSA's membership can get to know this year's nominees through the personal letters they have provided, including info on their careers, philosophies on commercial motor vehicle safety and qualifications for serving as the next secretary of CVSA.

2022 IDEA Winner Ruth McDonough Lives Out Her Childhood Dream, Drives 4 Million Miles Without Incident

Ruth McDonough, 2022 CVSA International Driver Excellence Award (IDEA) winner, knew from the time she was nine years old that she wanted to be a truck driver when she grew up. “My parents owned a plant nursery and a piano tuning and repair company. There was a very long service road that led to the businesses,” said McDonough. “My family became friendly with some of the truck drivers who would bring inventory and supplies, and I would beg them to drive their trucks down the service road. I’ve always known I wanted to be a truck driver.”

McDonough is a specialized commercial motor vehicle driver responsible for hauling radioactive and nuclear loads for Hittman Transport Services. During her decade-plus tenure at Hittman, McDonough has traveled more than a million safe and incident-free miles. She has been driving large vehicles – in the military and as a commercial motor vehicle driver – for more than 40 years and approximately 4 million miles, all incident free.

Ruth’s Experience as an IDEA Recipient

CVSA invited McDonough to the 2022 annual conference to be named the IDEA winner in front of an audience of her peers, commercial motor vehicle enforcement and industry representatives. McDonough’s best friend, sister and sister’s husband were also there to support her, along with Hittman Transport Compliance Manager Tammy Summers and Vice President of Logistics James Carrillo. McDonough was quite surprised at the crowd’s enthusiastic reaction to the announcement.

“When they announced my name, I did not expect the applause and the standing ovation. There was a roar. The crowd was acting like they were at a football game,” McDonough laughed. “One of the PrePass sponsor representatives was whistling and hollering. I figured there would be a nice round of applause, but I was not expecting all that excitement.”

“Lots of people came up to congratulate me and shake my hand. Truck drivers and police officers getting along,” proclaimed McDonough. “They’re just doing their job and we’re just doing our job – we’re working together to keep our highways safer.”

McDonough added that winning the award was a great way to commemorate more than four decades of truck driving. But her involvement with CVSA doesn’t stop there.



Ruth McDonough accepts the 2022 International Driver Excellence Award at last year’s annual conference awards luncheon in Rapid City, South Dakota.

McDonough now sits on the IDEA program committee and participated in the planning discussions for the 2023 award.

“The people who sit on the program committee really have drivers’ best interests in mind,” said McDonough. “There’s lots of discussion and consideration involved in every decision. Drivers and enforcement are openly talking to each other. I can tell you guys are true to your hearts in your work with CVSA. It’s not just about rules and regulations – it is about safety for everyone.”

When the nominations opened for the 2023 award, McDonough knew she could make an impact and spread the word about the Alliance. “I have an IDEA sign on my truck. I wrote on my sign with a paint pen to advertise the \$5,000 award. People ask about it all the time. I was in line at a truck stop and a lot of folks stopped and wrote down the information or looked it up on their phones. One woman got really excited – she was already involved with human trafficking prevention and wanted

to get involved with CVSA, too,” McDonough recalled.

A 44-Year, 4-Million-Mile Career

McDonough’s trucking career began in 1979 when she enlisted in the U.S. Army. She received basic training and truck-driving training at Fort Dix in New Jersey as one of only a few women in her class. Upon completion of training, McDonough was assigned to the 181st Transportation Battalion 51st Transportation Company in Mannheim, Germany, which was a movement control unit that provided tailored and adaptive transportation, expeditionary logistical capabilities for transportation, movement control and distribution in support of U.S. European Command.

McDonough supported transportation operations in Germany by safely delivering armored personnel carriers, ammunition and general supplies. She earned the Army Achievement Medal for her time in Germany. She was then stationed in Fort Bragg, North

Carolina, as part of the 839th Transportation Company, where she received the Driver of the Year Award at the retirement ceremony of the unit.

After her military service, McDonough continued her transportation career by working as a professional truck driver. She worked at Tri-State Motor Transit Company, out of Joplin, Missouri, and was one of the first women drivers to work for companies such as Hershey Chocolate in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and Mountain Valley Spring Water Company in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

In December 2011, McDonough was welcomed to the Hittman Transport Services team and has been proudly supporting the radioactive and nuclear field with Hittman ever since. Hittman Transport Services transports low-level radioactive waste and is one of the largest trucking companies for hauling nuclear fuel in the U.S. McDonough is one of few women who support the nuclear transport industry.

When asked what she enjoys most about her profession, McDonough said she loves getting to travel and meet new people. She also really enjoys that she gets to transport specialized freight to all parts of the country.

With retirement age on the horizon, McDonough is considering what her next steps will be. "My goal is to go to 70 years old. I'll be 69 when I hit 50 years on the job. We'll see if my body holds up. One knee was replaced, the other needs to be done, and I have some steel in my wrist. I just take it year by year. One of my first mentors when I was just starting out was 72 years old. If I see my reactions are slowing, I'll hang up the keys."

Advice for Drivers

With decades of driving experience and millions of incident-free miles, McDonough has amassed valuable knowledge for ensuring she is safe on our roadways. "I always keep my eyes moving and look ahead as far as I can," said McDonough. "I check the ramps for incoming vehicles, I check around my vehicle, I check my mirrors. With open-bed freight, you check your mirrors a lot."

"I also like to look through the back windows and mirrors of the vehicles in front of me," she added. "You can observe a lot by looking inside the vehicles around you, such as the driver's head bobbing, indicating that they might be sleepy or fatigued."

When asked how she has managed to have so many incident-free miles for so long, she attributed prayer, the Lord and the gift of being very observant for her success. McDonough also attributes her successful career to having varied interests in her free time. In addition to her stellar safe-driving history, McDonough is also an active member of her church community and has traveled around the world on mission trips to help those in need. When she's not on the road for work, McDonough enjoys traveling for fun and likes to spend her time supporting her sister's nursery and gardening business in Florida.

"I've had a really great life and it's not over yet. I feel so lucky to have done something that I've loved my whole life. My best friend pointed out the other day that not everyone gets to live out their childhood dream," remarked McDonough. "Once I found the open bed freight, I knew I found my home – and it's something new each and every day."

Check out the next edition of the magazine to find out who this year's IDEA winner is.

About PrePass Safety Alliance

PrePass Safety Alliance sponsored this year's IDEA. PrePass Safety Alliance is a non-profit public-private partnership of state agencies and trucking industry leaders devoted to safe, secure and efficient use of North America's highway system. The Alliance works with government agencies to increase regulatory compliance in commercial motor vehicle operations and reduce congestion and emissions on our roadways while helping motor carriers save time, fuel and money.

Learn more about PrePass Safety Alliance at www.prepassalliance.org. ■



About IDEA

CVSA recognizes the exceptional careers of professional commercial motor vehicle drivers and their commitment to public safety through its driver excellence award. The requirements to apply for this award are not easy to meet. Nominees must have at least 25 cumulative years of crash-free driving in a commercial motor vehicle with a clean driving record for the past three years, no felony convictions, no safety-related driving suspensions in the past three years and no driver violations in the past three years, excluding form and manner violations.

Read more about the IDEA program at www.cvsa.org/programs/idea.



McDonough's truck (left) and the sign she included to promote IDEA (above).

Good Nutrition is High-Quality Fuel for Driver Alertness

By **Rodolfo Giacoman**, Fatigue Management Specialist, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance



Just as high-quality fuel can maintain a commercial motor vehicle's engine performance, vehicle responsiveness and fuel economy, good nutrition can maintain driver's health, alertness and productivity. Conversely, just as using a low-quality fuel increases carbon build-up deposits on fuel injectors and intake valves and can lead to engine damage, malnutrition increases lipids deposits in the liver and blood vessels. This can lead to metabolic syndrome, a cluster of conditions that occur together and increase the risk of heart diseases and related problems. This cluster includes increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat around the waist, and abnormal cholesterol or triglyceride levels.

According to the North American Fatigue Management Program (NAFMP), nutrition is one of the five keys to wellness. Drivers' wellness is the main source of their alertness supply. This is why CVSA is conducting a webinar series on each of the five keys to wellness as part of the NAFMP Driver Series, including one on nutrition that was held on March 15.

In the first half of the webinar, we covered key metabolic concepts, the definitions of nutrition and malnutrition, and some general recommendations. In the second half, we did a virtual visit to truck stop restaurants and fast-food shops to check out their menu options based on what we learned during the first half. Lastly, we virtually visited a supermarket to pick up stuff drivers can take for the road. Here are some of the main takeaways:

What is Nutrition?

Simply, nutrition consists of using food to nourish our bodies. There are several kinds.

Macronutrients – required in relatively large quantities:

- Carbohydrates with fiber, such as vegetables, fruits, legumes and whole grains. Fiber is an indigestible carb that feeds our gut microbiome. A healthy microbiome boosts the immune system, protects against toxins, helps digest food and can boost mental health.
- Fats, except artificial trans fats. Good sources include fatty fish, nuts, seeds, avocado and dairy products (without added sweeteners).
- Proteins such as fish, seafood, chicken, beef, pork and tofu.
- Water. Yes, water is a nutrient!

Micronutrients – required in small quantities:

- Vitamins, both water-soluble and fat-soluble.
- Minerals, both macro and trace minerals.

We get vitamins and minerals from the macronutrients above. The most nutritious foods do not come with an ingredients list, nutrition label or health claims.

What is malnutrition?

Malnutrition means poor nutrition. It can occur from not taking in enough of the right food, or from excesses of substances that are toxic to the liver and brain, such as:

- Excess sweeteners
- Artificial trans fats
- Excess protein
- Alcohol and drugs

In the U.S., the two main sources of malnutrition are:

- Ultra-processed food, which lacks fiber and has excessive sweeteners and additives
- "Liquid candy," such as soda, juice, alcohol or any caloric drink

Both categories are engineered to taste really good. They are cheap, convenient, aggressively marketed and addictive.

How much should I eat?

Eat until you are satisfied. Take your time to really chew your food, don't just swallow it after a few chews. Digestion starts in the mouth; saliva contains an enzyme that starts breaking down starches.

Also, please be aware that the main satiety hormone (peptide YY) cells are found after traveling about 22 feet into the intestine. So, it takes about 20 minutes for food to reach those cells and for peptide YY to reach the brain receptors that signal you are full.

Therefore, allow at least 20 minutes before you decide to have a second plate.

When should I eat?

Eat when you have the appetite for it. Take your time to listen to your body. Sometimes, we confuse thirst with hunger, so drink water before deciding it is time for a meal. If you had a late dinner and you are not hungry in the morning, it is perfectly fine to skip breakfast or any other meal. Your digestive system will thank you for giving it a break. There is no law that says you must eat a certain number of meals per day. The timing of the meals is less important than what we eat.

What are some examples of nutritious foods drivers may eat on the road?

- Unsweetened drinks: Water, sparkling water with lime/lemon, coffee, tea, herbal infusions
- Seeds: Pumpkin, sunflower, cacao nibs, flax, chia, hemp
- Nuts: Almonds, walnuts, pecans, cashews, pistachios
- Veggies: Romaine hearts, celery, carrots, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, bell peppers
- Fruits: Berries, apples, oranges, clementines, bananas, plums, pears, pineapple
- Spreads: Guacamole, hummus, plain yogurt, unsweetened nut butters, cheese, pesto
- Not-so-smooth smoothies (keep the fiber): Made with any of the above foods
- Protein: Boiled eggs, rotisserie chicken, lamb/steak skewers, sashimi, fish fillet, tofu
- Beans: Pinto, black, kidney, edamame, chickpeas
- Minimally processed cereals: Steel cut oatmeal, barley, bulgur, brown rice, plain popcorn

What are some examples of malnutritious food?

- Protein bars
- Candy
- Cake and cookies
- Ice cream
- Soda
- Chips
- Breads
- Boxed cereals
- Alcohol

When it comes to ordering sides at a restaurant, think fresh fruits and vegetables. What sides should drivers avoid?

- Hash browns
- French fries (or anything fried)
- Baked potato with toppings
- Potato dishes
- Gravy or starchy sauces
- Macaroni and cheese

How do I know if I'm eating well enough?

As I wrote in "Debunking Nutrition Myths," losing weight should not be the primary goal of a healthy diet. Below are better biomarkers of good nutrition. Check them upon awakening or after emptying your bladder. These should stay the same or reduce a little.

- Waist circumference (measure at your belly button) – this is a measure of your visceral fat.
- Blood pressure – this is a measure of the elasticity of your blood vessels.
- Resting heart rate – this is a measure of your circulatory effectiveness.

Additionally, it's a good idea to have blood work done before you change your lifestyle so you may compare it in three to six months to see the effects of your changes. Here are some things to check:

- Lipid Panel: Triglycerides/HDL (good cholesterol) ratio is a marker of metabolic syndrome.
- Comprehensive Metabolic Panel: Alanine transaminase (ALT) is a liver enzyme that measures the degree of liver fat.
- Hemoglobin A1C: This is a marker of diabetes.
- Uric Acid: This is another marker for fatty liver.
- Complete Blood Count Panel: This is a marker for a wide range of conditions, including anemia and infection.
- Checking levels of any other vitamins and minerals your medical provider may suggest, such as B12, D, folate, ferritin and so on.

What is the single most important thing I should remember about nutrition?

Please try not to stress or obsess about food. The stress hormone cortisol causes fat storage and excess circulating fat to be relocated deep in the abdomen where it leads to metabolic disease.

If you went to dinner with friends and overindulged, that is okay. Just do not do it every day. Instead of beating yourself up over it, use that energy to get back on track.

After all, food is not only for nourishment. It is also for pleasure and for connecting with others. Bon appétit!

Thank you to those of you who have contacted me with feedback and questions about managing fatigue or the NAMFP.

Please keep the the messages coming at rodolfo.giacoman@cvsa.org or at 202-998-1830. ■



Download the slides and watch the recording of the nutrition webinar and previous webinars at www.nafmp.org/webinars.

Commercial drivers can also learn about nutrition and the other four keys to wellness by taking NAFMP's driver module #3, which is free and available online at www.nafmp.org.



Yes, water is a nutrient!

Debunking 10 Nutrition Myths

By **Rodolfo Giacoman**, Fatigue Management Specialist, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

Good nutrition is key to living healthier, happier lives. It also plays an important role in helping drivers stay alert behind the wheel. However, there's a lot of conflicting advice and confusion about what constitutes a healthy diet and eating habits. Let's debunk the most common misconceptions.

MYTH #1

The main purpose of dieting is to lose weight.

Body weight comes primarily from liquids. For instance, our bodies are approximately 60% water. Under normal circumstances, the more hydrated we are, the better; heavier is healthier. Next, body weight comes from muscle. The larger the muscle mass, the better; heavier is healthier. Then body weight comes from our bones. The higher the bone density, the better; heavier is healthier. Body weight also comes from subcutaneous fat, which may be neutral or protective for health. The last composition of our body weight comes from visceral fat which is what can trigger metabolic syndrome, a group of health conditions leading to increased risk of heart diseases and related problems.

For most of us, losing visceral fat will not lead to significant weight loss. If we are exercising and eating nutritiously, we will gain muscle mass, bone density and hydration. Noticeable weight loss would likely come from the wrong places in our body and will usually be regained in one to five years because of the body's homeostatic drive. When not achieved properly, weight loss may also involve a lack of essential nutrients and in extreme cases, may lead to eating disorders.

MYTH #2

Obesity is the cause of metabolic diseases.

In the U.S. adult population, 30% of people are obese – this means 72 million folks. Of these people, 20% (14 million) are healthy. Of the 70% (168 million) of Americans who are not obese, 40% (67 million) have metabolic disease. This is referred to as being TOFI, thin on the outside, fat on the inside.

There are more TOFIs (67 million) than obese individuals with metabolic disease (58 million). The two groups combined represent 52% of the U.S. adult population. Just like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and so on, obesity is a marker of metabolic disease, not the cause.

MYTH #3

It's the calories, duh.

It's what is in the food that matters, not just the number of calories. For example:

- A 20-ounce cola soda has 240 calories and 65 grams of carbs, along with sodium, calcium, potassium and phosphorus.
- Three eggs have 240 calories, 15 grams of fat, 1.8 grams of carbs and 19 grams of protein, along with sodium, calcium, choline, iron, phosphorus, selenium, iodine, zinc, magnesium, copper, manganese, potassium, and all vitamins except vitamin C. Eggs contain vitamins A, D, E, K, B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, B7, B9 and B12, which may represent up to 45% of our daily vitamin requirements.

Both items have the same number of calories. However, soda offers malnutrition (excessive sugar or artificial sweeteners that are toxic to the liver), while eggs offer rich nutrition. As you can see, calories are somewhat irrelevant from a nutrition perspective.

MYTH #4

I'm fat because of my lack of discipline.

That's hogwash. Obesity is a complex and multifactorial condition that is, in part, predisposed by genetics, environmental factors, medical conditions, psychological and psychiatric factors, and medications, all of which individuals have little to no control over.

MYTH #5

We must eat a diet of superfoods only.

Superfoods are a marketing ploy. We can get the recommended nutrients from a variety of everyday foods. Additionally, every substance and food has a lethal dose, even water. Anything in excess is unhealthy.

MYTH #6

There is only one healthy diet.

While we are omnivores, it is possible to get optimal nutrition with a strict herbivore or a strict carnivore diet, but it is more difficult. Many types of diets may have good medical, environmental and personal justifications for different individuals. Check the section of the article on page 23 "How do I know if I'm eating good enough?" to assess the health effects of your diet.

MYTH #7

Eating fatty foods is unhealthy.

This is a big one. Fats are one of the essential macronutrients. Except for artificial trans fats, most fats are either health-neutral or protective for most individuals. There is a segment of the population with genetic variations that may need to limit some fats and may need to be prescribed statins, a class of drugs commonly prescribed to lower cholesterol levels that may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. While they can be effective for certain individuals, there is growing concern that statins are being overprescribed due to doctors failing to distinguish between the two types of LDL cholesterol.

LDL cholesterol, often referred to as "bad" cholesterol, can be divided into two main types: small, dense LDL (sdLDL) and large, buoyant LDL (ldLDL). SdLDL is found to be harmful to cardiovascular health as it can easily penetrate the walls of arteries and contribute to the formation of plaque buildup, while ldLDL is less likely to cause damage. However, standard cholesterol tests do not distinguish between sdLDL and ldLDL, instead only measuring total LDL cholesterol levels.

This means that many individuals with high LDL cholesterol levels may actually have predominantly ldLDL, which is not harmful. Furthermore, statins can have potential side effects, including muscle pain, liver damage and an increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. These risks may outweigh the benefits of statins for individuals who do not have high levels of sdLDL.

Researchers have found the triglycerides-to-HDL (good cholesterol) ratio to be a better marker of cardiovascular risk instead of looking at LDL alone.

Remember that this may or may not apply to your case. Please check with your medical professional before making any changes to your medications and lifestyle. Do ask your doctor about it and get a second opinion if you are not satisfied with the answer.

MYTH #8**Eating low-fat foods is healthier.**

The problem with low-fat foods is that when removing the fat, food companies add more sugar. Excess sugar is one of the contributors to fatty liver and raises our levels of triglycerides, both of which are markers of metabolic syndrome. It is better to go for moderate portions of the whole-fat version and make sure you are eating all your nutrients.

MYTH #9**Freshly squeezed juice has less sugar than soda.**

You be the judge:

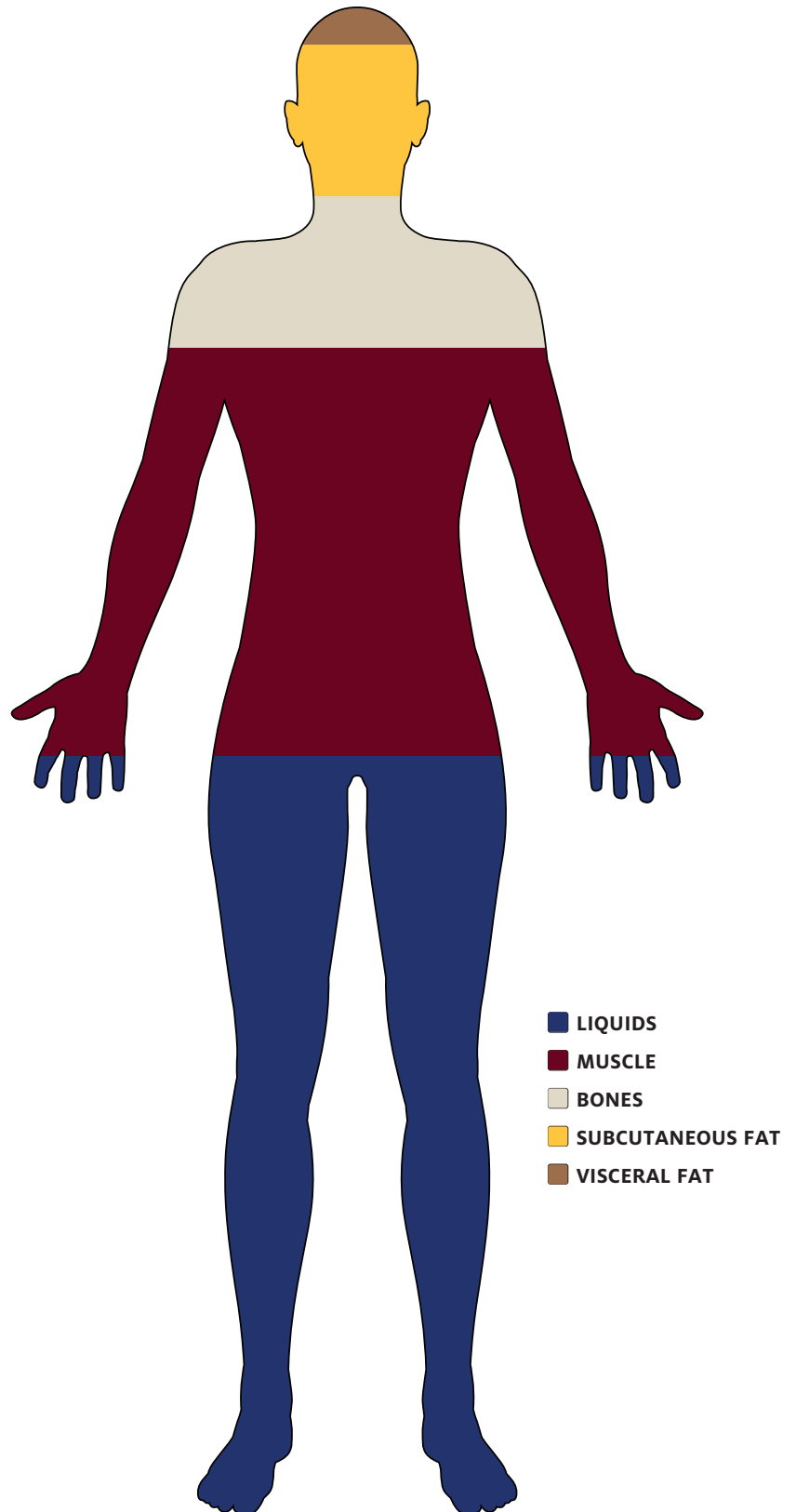
- A 20-ounce orange juice has 360 calories and the equivalent of 23.6 teaspoons of table sugar.
- A 20-ounce cola soda has 240 calories and the equivalent of 15.5 teaspoons of table sugar.

The excessive sugar in juice can negate any benefits we may get from its nutrients. Also, without the fiber that makes fruit filling and nutritious, juice doesn't satiate us. After drinking 20 ounces of orange juice made from six oranges (360 calories), you'll probably ask, "What's for breakfast?" If you try to eat six oranges, you'll likely throw up on the fourth one (240 calories). Fiber is a big part of what makes fruit nutritious.

MYTH #10**Nutritious food has a "healthy" label.**

Unprocessed foods that are highly nutritious, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and proteins, do not have any labeling. These foods are often found in the produce or butcher section of the grocery store and are typically minimally processed and unpackaged.

On the other hand, packaged, ultra-processed foods marketed as "healthy" are mostly malnutrition. Such labels are not regulated. A typical example of a "healthy" label is "all natural." There's nothing more natural than excrement, but that does not mean we should eat it! ■

— WHAT MAKES UP OUR BODY WEIGHT? —

Operation Safe Driver Program Update

By **Jonathan Nicastro**, Director, Motor Carrier Compliance Bureau, New York State Department of Transportation; Chair, CVSA Operation Safe Driver Program



Each summer, CVSA sponsors Operation Safe Driver (OSD) Week. This North American enforcement and education campaign targets unsafe driving behaviors by passenger vehicle and commercial motor vehicle drivers in an effort to combat fatalities.

The campaign started in 2007 and has become highly regarded by safety advocates, enforcement and industry.

The OSD program aims to reduce the unsafe driver behaviors that lead to crashes by educating all road users about ways to share the roads safely. The program:

- Targets unsafe driving behaviors by passenger vehicle drivers and commercial drivers
- Educates youth about safely sharing the roads with large trucks and buses
- Offers commercial driver education and awareness programs to the motor carrier population
- Informs the general motoring public about safe operations around commercial motor vehicles
- Aims to improve commercial driver regulatory compliance
- Conducts passenger vehicle and commercial motor vehicle traffic enforcement initiatives

The program's principals are practiced daily by professional drivers in trucks, buses and cars. Most reasonable people play the important role of driving safely and avoiding crash involvement. To this end, I like to think

about how many crash incidents are avoided by motorists, especially the professional commercial drivers on the roads that traversed 3.2 trillion miles in 2022. Our collective good driving behaviors save lives.

Additionally, seat belt usage is at an all-time high of over 91%. In 2017 – the most recent year the data is available – an estimated 15,000 lives were saved by seat belt use.

However, there is more work to do: In 2020, about 12,000 crash-related deaths were attributed to the vehicle occupants not wearing a seat belt. More than 25% of fatal crashes are speed related and more than 30 people per day are killed in alcohol-related crashes. These incidents are completely preventable. OSD's mission is to educate and enforce these preventable deaths away.

The OSD program leadership encourages all CVSA members and jurisdictions to participate in Operation Safe Driver Week, July 9-15. Here are a few ways industry and enforcement members can participate:

⚙️ Conduct comprehensive inspections and traffic enforcement in high-crash corridors.

- Target motorists displaying unsafe driving behaviors and violating traffic laws in and around commercial vehicles.
- Utilize additional officers to bolster your passenger vehicle enforcement capabilities.

🚚 Partner with trucking/bus associations to conduct industry outreach events and training.

- Expand the outreach to teen drivers by using social media and speaking at driver education classes.
- Leverage the training materials and video public service announcements provided on the OSD website to strengthen your training programs and communication efforts.

✉️ Promote OSD Week with postcards and social media.

Enforcement can send OSD Week postcards to the riskiest carriers in your jurisdiction and issue the cards roadside leading up to the event. Associations can provide the cards to members and use social media to promote OSD Week.

📊 Rate crashes for preventability.

Bolster your organization's safety posture by understanding that crashes are preventable. Rate every incident you have for preventability and use these ratings to mitigate risks.

📶 Try driver-monitoring technology.

Consider using technology to monitor driver behavior and correct concerns before a crash occurs. ■



INSPECTOR'S CORNER

How to Avoid Getting Stopped for Inspection

By **Michael Trautwein**, Senior Police Officer, Houston Police Department; North American Inspectors Championship Jimmy K. Ammons Grand Champion

As commercial motor vehicle inspectors, we must choose which vehicle to inspect. It can be a brand-new, clean truck with no obvious violations, or it can be a ough-looking older truck with a violation or two that can be spotted before the stop is made. All inspectors are different and may have their own items they look for when selecting a truck for inspection.

I work for the Houston Police Department. That means my truck selection pool is within the city limits of Houston, Texas. When people think of a department of transportation inspection, many think of a scale house on a highway. When I think of a truck pulling into a scale house, I picture the driver on their best behavior. Their seat belt is on, and their cell phone is tucked away. Both of their hands are on the wheel.

However, in Houston, we do not have a scale house or a dedicated inspection area. Our traffic is heavy and congested most of the time. If I decide to inspect a truck that is on a freeway, I will have the driver follow me to an empty parking lot as a safe inspection site. We also select trucks on city streets. There is a big difference between empty lots, city streets and the scale house.

At the scale house, the driver knows they are about to speak with a trooper. In the city, the driver has no advanced warning that an inspection or a traffic stop is about to happen. This, in my experience, leads to more "driver behavior violations" spotted by officers here in our city. In Houston, my favorite area to work is the northeast side of town. There are trucks everywhere of all shapes and sizes. You name it, you can find it in our city.

"Driver behavior violations" is a term I use in safety meetings while speaking to a group of drivers. These are violations that are created by the driver that can draw law enforcement's attention and may result in a stop and inspection, with a possible ticket. Some examples of driver behavior violations are speeding, failing to signal a lane change or turn, failing to obey traffic-control signs, following too closely, not wearing a seat belt, using a cell phone for talking or texting, etc. If a driver refrains from these behaviors, they can reduce the chance of getting stopped, delayed, inspected and fined. No driver wants to be stopped. It slows down progress toward their destination. Additionally, if violations are discovered on an inspection, they can result in costly fines as well as discipline by the driver's employer.

If the driver behavior category is good, there are some other things that can help avoid a stop. Fix any violation on the truck or trailer that is visible while travelling on the roadway. These items should be detected and corrected when the driver conducts a good pre-trip inspection. Some components to inspect for violations are lamps, tires, mud flaps on rearmost vehicle (required in Texas), license plates, vehicle markings, load securement, loose material, items mounted to the windshield, blocking the driver's view, and window tint. For hazmat vehicles, examples also include placards, ID numbers, test date markings, emergency shut-off markings and additional markings on high-pressure cargo tanks.

Avoiding inspection stops is pretty simple. If you can eliminate all the obvious violations that are clearly visible to an officer, then you may reduce your chances of being stopped. Of course, while you are attending to these visible details, you should attend to any issues that could make your vehicle less safe. In our Houston Police Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Unit, we have a mission statement: "Safe trucks driven safely." If companies and drivers apply that statement to their daily operations, they will likely reduce their chances of being stopped for inspection. ■





THE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY RUNDOWN

By **Adrienne Gildea**, CAE, Deputy Executive Director, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

CVSA's Reauthorization Task Force Underway

In the last edition of "Guardian," I noted the CVSA Policy and Regulatory Affairs Committee would be assembling a reauthorization task force to recommend a new set of legislative priorities for the Alliance to pursue in the next transportation bill. Class I Members from each region were identified, as well as local and associate members. The group held its first meeting on June 26. The task force will evaluate issues, gather input from outside organizations and various partners, discuss possible solutions and, ultimately, make recommendations to the CVSA Board of Directors on what policy positions the Alliance should support in the next highway bill.

The group will discuss what changes may be necessary to improve the grant programs that help fund the jurisdictions' enforcement and inspection programs, as well as what policy changes may be needed to help advance safety on our roadways, particularly when it comes to advancing and promoting safety technology.

As the group's work gets underway, it is imperative to engage CVSA's membership in the process, ensuring the positions that will be submitted to the board of directors for consideration fully reflect the Alliance's perspective on a variety of commercial motor vehicle (CMV) safety topics. CVSA will survey the membership to gather input on topics and meeting with other industry stakeholders to collect recommendations and potential policy solutions for the group to consider. If you have an issue or policy position you'd like the reauthorization task force to discuss, please

submit an Issue/Request for Action through the CVSA website at www.cvsa.org/submit-issue. Those will be referred to the task for review.

Congress Focuses on Supply Chain Improvements

Despite a long list of non-CMV related transportation priorities on the 'to-do' list for this Congress, the U.S. House of Representatives still found time to focus on trucking issues. In May, the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure held a full committee markup session to consider several bills related to supply chain issues, including several CMV-related bills. The package approved by the committee included, among other things:

- Funding for truck parking
- Adjustments to commercial driver's license testing requirements
- A 10% axle variance for dry bulk loads
- A requirement that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) develop a new Safety Fitness Determination
- A voluntary 10-year pilot program for states to increase truck weights on federal interstates up to 91,000 lbs. on six axles
- A 10% weight increase for certain types of automobile transporters
- A weight exemption for CMVs powered by hydrogen

The House may consider additional supply chain-related legislation in the fall as well. Any legislation approved by the U.S. House of Representatives would then need to be

approved by the U.S. Senate before heading to the president for signature. Given the competing legislative priorities, including several transportation reauthorizations and the annual appropriations process, it's unclear how much progress a supply chain package can make this Congress.

CVSA Continues Its Commitment to U.S. DOT's NRSS

Earlier this year, CVSA joined with many other organizations as a "First Mover" in support of the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) initiative. As noted in the previous edition of "Guardian," CVSA has committed to support the U.S. DOT's pledge to zero roadway fatalities by improving and increasing traffic enforcement on commercial motor vehicles; improving post-crash reporting; and educating the judicial community on the importance of accurate commercial motor vehicle drivers' records and the need to eliminate masking of driving offenses.

In May, CVSA participated in FMCSA's inaugural "Our Roads, Our Safety" Week. FMCSA held an event on May 11 to discuss the agency's and the industry's commitment to road safety. CVSA was invited to speak and share the Alliance's commitments to the program, along with representatives from the American Bus Association, American Trucking Associations, National Safety Council, National Tank Truck Carriers and Truckload Carriers Association. On June 1, CVSA joined stakeholders once again for the U.S. DOT's NRSS Call to Action Workshop. CVSA participated in discussions and roundtables on a host of topics. ■

Reauthorization Task Force Members

CHAIR

Bill Alarcon
New Jersey State Police

REGION I

Dyann Prouty
Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities

Chris Rogers
Maine State Police

REGION II

Fred Whisenant
Texas Department of Public Safety

James Martin
Mississippi Department of Public Safety

REGION III

Jon Smithers
Indiana State Police

Joe Greene
Mississippi Department of Public Safety

REGION IV

Daniel Hunter
Utah Department of Transportation

Brad Marten
Montana Department of Transportation

REGION V

Krista Cull
Newfoundland and Labrador

Pat Dowling
Prince Edward Island Department of Transportation and Infrastructure

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CVSA STAFF

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Margaret Edwards
CVSA

FMCSA Launches Operation Protect Your Move, A Nationwide Crackdown on Moving Scams



There has been a significant uptick in complaints of movers holding household possessions hostage to extort exorbitant additional charges from consumers. In response, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) launched Operation Protect Your Move, a nationwide crackdown on scam movers ahead of the busy summer moving season. During the operation, FMCSA will deploy dozens of investigators across the country in an enforcement sweep that targets movers and the brokers that purport to connect consumers to local movers but instead, facilitate fraud. The administration will also address complaints against moving companies and brokers that are not in compliance with federal safety and consumer protection regulations and statutes while transporting household goods.

“Moving is stressful enough without having to worry about being scammed by your moving company, so we’re cracking down on moving companies that hold people’s possessions hostage, and the brokers who facilitate that fraud,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg.

“FMCSA takes its responsibilities very seriously to help protect consumers when moving their household valuables from one state to another,” said FMCSA Administrator Robin Hutcheson. “Consumers should feel confident they can trust the company hired to transport their possessions.”

Frequent complaints have been filed with FMCSA, alleging companies use deceptive business practices that cause consumers to pay higher fees, experience delays in receiving household goods or, in some cases, not receive their possessions at all. FMCSA is making every effort to protect consumers from these moving scams. The agency will formally document violations and has the authority to review and revoke the licenses of movers and brokers. The agency may refer cases involving potential criminal misconduct to the U.S. Department of Justice for further investigation. Additionally, FMCSA will work directly with consumers to guide them through the process of attempting to get their money and goods back.

The operation is the first of many efforts planned to address non-compliant companies

moving household goods. In addition to ramped up investigations, FMCSA is taking several actions to crack down on mover scams, including doubling the number of investigators assigned to moving complaints and enhancing partnerships with consumer protection and attorney general offices across the country.

FMCSA also provides important information at www.ProtectYourMove.gov for consumers planning an interstate move. There, consumers can download a moving checklist, view videos on spotting red flags, confirm a mover or broker’s FMCSA registration and check for complaints against a particular company. Consumers can also file a complaint against any FMCSA-regulated company by visiting the agency’s National Consumer Complaints Database at nccdb.fmcsa.dot.gov. ■

Overview of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes in 2021

The most recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) traffic data shows us that crashes and crash-related fatalities are on the rise. There were 42,939 people killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes on U.S. roadways during 2021. This is the largest number of fatalities since 2005. It also represents a 10% increase from 39,007 fatalities in 2020, or 3,932 more people killed in traffic crashes in 2021. The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) increased by 2.2% from 1.34 in 2020 to 1.37 in 2021.

The estimated number of people injured on our roadways increased in 2021 to 2.5 million, rising from 2.28 million in 2020, a statistically significant increase of 9.4%. The injury rate per 100 million VMT increased by 1.3% from 79 in 2020 to 80 in 2021. The estimated number of police-reported traffic crashes increased from 5.25 million in 2020 to 6.10 million in 2021, a statistically significant 16% increase.

Total VMT increased by 8.1% from 2.9 trillion in 2020 to 3.14 trillion in 2021. Overall, the monthly VMT for 2019 and 2021 are similar in pattern; the monthly VMTs for 2020 were different with vehicular travel declines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key findings from 2020 to 2021:

- Fatalities and people injured increased in most categories.
- Speeding-related fatalities increased by 7.9%, alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities increased by 14% and seat belt non-use fatalities increased by 8.1%.
- Urban fatalities increased by 14%; rural fatalities increased by 4.7%.
- Female fatalities increased by 12%, and male fatalities increased by 9.2%.
- Nighttime (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.) fatalities increased by 11%; daytime (6 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.) fatalities increased by 9.7%.
- Forty-three states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico had increases in the number of fatalities.

People Killed and Injured in Traffic Crashes Involving Large Trucks

The table below displays the number of people killed and the estimated number of people injured in crashes involving large trucks from 2020 to 2021. Large trucks include commercial and non-commercial trucks with GVWRs (gross vehicle weight ratings) over 10,000 pounds. The number of people killed in crashes involving large trucks increased by 17% from

2020 to 2021. Among fatalities in crashes involving large trucks in 2021:

- Occupants of other vehicles killed increased by 648, a 19% increase from 2020.
- Large-truck occupant fatalities in multi-vehicle crashes increased by 108, a 34% increase from 2020.
- Large-truck occupant fatalities in single-vehicle crashes increased by 78, a 15% decrease from 2020.
- Nonoccupants killed increased by 9, a 1.4% increase from 2020.

The estimated number of people injured in crashes involving large trucks increased by 9.4% from 2020 to 2021. Among the estimated number of people injured in crashes involving large trucks in 2021:

- Nonoccupants injured increased by 16% from 2020.
- Occupants of other vehicles who were injured increased by 13% from 2020.
- Large-truck occupants injured in multi-vehicle crashes increased by 6.6% from 2020.
- Large-truck occupants injured in single-vehicle crashes decreased by 7.7% from 2020, the only decrease in this table. ■

People Killed and Injured in Traffic Crashes Involving Large Trucks, by Person Type, 2020 and 2021

Person Type	Killed				Injured			
	2020	2021	Change	% Change	2020	2021	Change	% Change
Total	4,945	5,788	+843	+17%	141,613	154,993	+13,380	+9.4%
Large -Truck Occupants	822	1,008	+186	+23%	41,566	42,164	+598	+1.4%
In Single-Vehicle Crashes	504	582	+78	+15%	14,969	13,823	-1,146	-7.7%
In Multi-Vehicle Crashes	318	426	+108	+34%	26,597	28,341	+1,744	+6.6%
Other People	4,123	4,780	+657	+16%	100,048	112,829	+12,781	+13%*
Other Vehicle Occupants	3,501	4,149	+648	+19%	97,595	109,981	+12,386	+13%*
Nonoccupants	622	631	+9	+1.4%	2,452	2,848	+396	+16%

Sources: FARS 2020 Final File, 2021 ARF; CRSS 2020-2021
*These estimates are statistically significant at the $\alpha=.05$ level of significance.
Note: Fatalities are not tested for statistical significance because they are a census.

The full report is available at crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813435.



FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Integrity in the Moving Industry

By **Terry Hocking**, Owner-Operator, northAmerican® Van Lines

My name is Terry Hocking. I am an owner-operator with northAmerican® Van Lines. I have worked in the moving industry for 44 years and have accrued more than 2 million miles without an accident or moving violation. Recently, I was awarded the highest honor our industry offers – the prestigious American Trucking Associations Lifetime Achievement Award.

While those of us in the moving industry are part of transportation and interstate commerce in the U.S., what we do is often esoteric to the masses. Make no mistake, we must adhere to all the rules, regulations and tenets of the industry, as well as state and federal laws and regulations. However, as household goods (HHG) van operators, we must be more than a safety-focused truck driver. The moving industry has a multitude of additional unique and demanding parameters.

It all starts when we accept our van assignment. The major van lines are less-than-truck load (LTL) carriers, centered on the specific needs of those that utilize our services. We have customers who will fill a tractor-trailer, while others may only have 30 items. How we service each customer is as varied as the shipper themselves. No trip is ever the same for anyone in our business, and each day can be the opposite of the one before.

In HHG transportation, accessing clients typically involves driving in residential areas. Challenges are everywhere, as each neighborhood is unique and generally not designed for large vehicles. Obstacles are constant and can run from low-hanging branches and fire hydrants to school zones and children at play. Special attention is required in these obstacle-heavy environments as we negotiate each hurdle while driving 75-foot-long tractor-trailers with low clearance on our belly boxes. In addition to the attention HHG operators give to safety, we must be hypervigilant in protecting our equipment and the people who live in each neighborhood. Navigating these communities is always an exercise in discretion and attention to detail.

NorthAmerican Van Lines is leased to the Beltmann Group, and I am very fortunate to work using their incredible business model. Beltmann, like so many legacy carriers, is truly customer-focused. Before we ever arrive at our shipper's home, they are contacted by a team member who prepares them for the



moving process. Furthermore, the customer receives a brief profile and description of the driver and their image, so they are aware of who will be coming into their home.

I believe part of the reason for the success of my carrier's business model is the driver vetting process, which begins with an interview. After that, we conduct background checks and references. This process is multifaceted, with my agent and northAmerican taking a proactive role in leaving no stone unturned. Before putting a new driver behind the wheel, the company flies them to Minnesota for training. The training instills how to treat the customer with respect. Drivers also learn how to use personal communication devices to ensure that the customer can stay in contact while their goods are in transit. They are also trained on cutting-edge technology that affords customers with the best possible service.

Another requirement for being an HHG driver: We must be comfortable in our own skin and respectful of the fact that we are a guest in someone's home. This begins with home protection, such as laying rug-runners. With large shipments, we can spend several days with the customers. These exchanges can evolve into long-lasting friendships. This extended period also means we are not piling up miles on our trucks. In a good year, I may put 45,000 miles on my tractor. Our workday begins at 8 a.m., and the customer is always ready to have their house back by 4:30 p.m.

While most movers exhibit nothing but integrity, the industry is plagued by some rogue operators. These less-than-scrupulous individuals prey on unwitting consumers. My wife and business partner, Karen, and I have

had customers regale us with tales of moves that turned into horror stories. Our industry is plagued by "rogue operators" – less-than-scrupulous individuals who prey on unwitting consumers. Some of them defy logic, and all give the industry and movers – who exhibit nothing but integrity – a bad name.

While these rogue operators can give the industry a bad name, most movers exhibit nothing but integrity. The internet has made it easier than ever to find quality drivers with good references. Some even share their techniques on social media, supported by pictures and videos. I live by the principle of treating people the way you would want to be treated. I have met numerous haulers from all the major van lines and can confirm that they share the common goal of customer satisfaction.

I am extremely proud to say that I have almost 30 years of experience with the Beltmann Group. The integrity and honesty that emanate from the top of the organization, and follows a multifaceted path throughout, make the perfect combination to turn a task that nobody wants to do into a pleasurable experience for our customers. The personal growth I have experienced because of this industry is immeasurable. Karen and I have been gifted in many ways by customers, leaving us with fond memories that we cherish.

About 70% of moves take place between May and September, so be on the lookout for more the next time you pass a brightly colored moving van. Wave at the driver, and I bet they return the salute with a smile. When they do, rest assured they are in their happy place. ■

Critical Safety and Compliance

By **Dave Elniski**, BSc, CTSP, CRSP, Industry Advisor in Safety and Compliance, Alberta Motor Transport Association



Canadian and U.S. trucking and busing companies follow similar safety laws. While significant differences exist between the two countries – and between the provinces and states within each country – these laws require carriers to implement safety programs with four basic pillars:

- Driver competency
- Hours-of-service (HOS) management
- Equipment maintenance
- Safety program administration

We find carrier safety staff often emphasize the importance of compliance, and for good reason: Canada and U.S. safety regulations form excellent safety standards which, if followed, significantly reduce the risk to professional drivers and the motoring public. Oftentimes, compliance becomes the ultimate goal, and safety managers stop seeing legislation as a minimum performance standard but instead as the height of achievement.

However, compliance-only as an approach to fleet safety management doesn't foster safety innovation. Imagine the task facing transportation safety policymakers: they must

create an actionable framework of rules to apply to all types of vehicles and operations throughout an incredibly diverse geography, in an ever-evolving industry. The fruits of their labor deserve respect and strict adherence while still being understood as a minimum performance standard. When seen this way, a safety department can be viewed as a solution and an innovation center — not, as they sometimes are when being disparaged by other parts of an organization, as a hindrance to new ways of doing business.

This is not to minimize compliance and paint it as an easy goal. Good audit scores and clean roadside inspection reports deserve recognition and celebration; the realities of the industry and the intricacies of the rules make running a compliant company an active, challenging task. Or consider the rollout of electronic logging devices (ELDs) or the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse. When new programs and requirements enter the industry, basic compliance can be challenging. Learning requires time.

Interesting things start to happen when we see safety departments as being able to make their own decisions within the existing arcs of compliance. A carrier can implement

fatigue management best practices while still following the HOS rules, and ELD data can be used to improve trip planning while complying with Canadian and U.S. ELD regulations. A driver's file can be used to track positive feedback from customers and law enforcement as well as retain driving records and previous employment history. Maintenance records can be used to identify appropriate preventative practices at operationally friendly intervals for specific equipment while still satisfying audit requirements and ensuring driver-spotted defects get corrected.

Compliant drivers and safety departments should be proud of their accomplishments but should not forget that they can improve upon a regulator's safety rules by critically examining how those rules are applied within their specific operations. Safety innovation leads to best practices, which light the way for other carriers who share the goal of helping all road users arrive safely at their final destinations. ■

Driver Input Enhances Fleet Safety Policies

By **Rachel Plant**, Content Marketing Specialist, Fleetio

Safety Policy Customization

Fleet safety policies allow organizations to meet safety compliance standards while helping ensure a safer working environment for drivers, technicians and other fleet employees. While many fleets have a safety policy in place, these should be updated periodically to include any new federal and/or local government regulations and to address any safety issues brought up by fleet employees. Fleets can also build customized safety policies to account for the nuances of their specific operations, allowing companies to minimize preventable workplace and jobsite incidents.

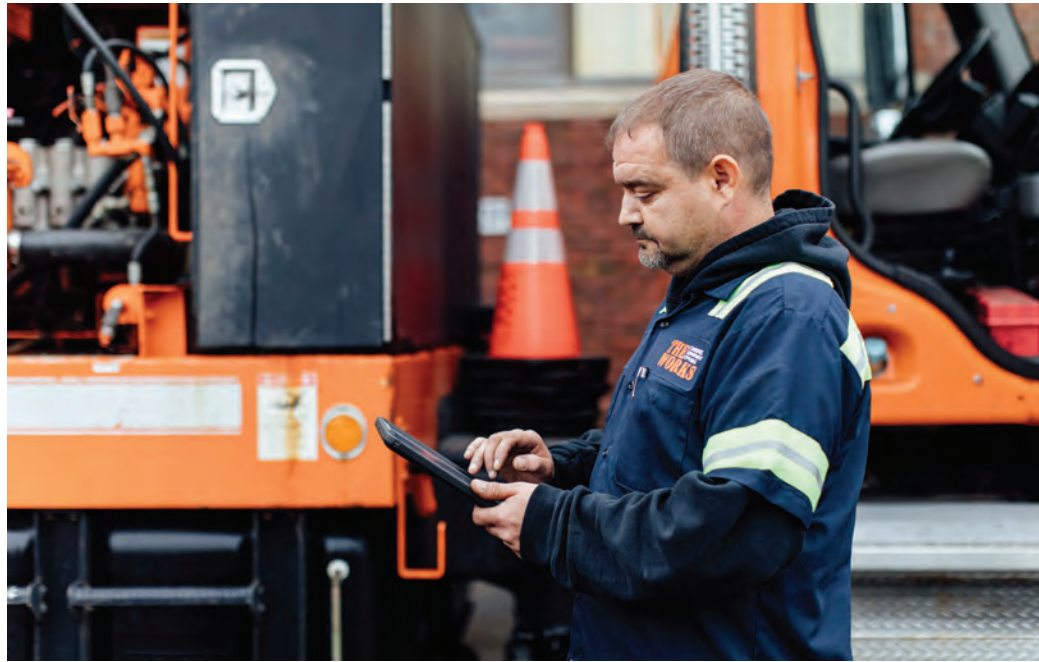
Listening to and acting on employee feedback can provide managers with a better understanding of how the safety policy operates in real-world conditions and where it may be lacking. Talk to all drivers to get a feel for gaps in different environments, such as local vs. national routes. Use their feedback to improve areas of concern, such as driver training materials or post-accident coaching. In turn, fleets can enhance driver retention, productivity and overall safety. A custom fleet safety policy affords fleet managers and owners the flexibility to adjust to employee concerns.

Importance of Driver Input

Too often safety policies can be redundant, difficult to read and out of touch with actual daily processes. Fleets with large diversity among assets will likely have larger policies, as some assets will need different or more stringent safety measures than others. Considering feedback from primary users of specific assets can help you identify potential unaddressed gaps in your fleet's safety policy.

Tracking and monitoring safety can be a difficult task considering the mobile nature of drivers and the assets they operate. But when drivers feel they can mention safety issues and be heard – meaning, management will act upon the feedback given – they're more likely to buy into the policy, improving compliance.

"The way you create safety is have your meetings with the guys, get their input, make sure it's an open door. Show that you value their input, and then act upon it. You can't just have them speak and then not do anything," said Brent Godwin, equipment manager at Bighorn Construction and Reclamation. "When you don't have that open line of communication, that's when you get guys tuning out. You don't get compliance. There's no buy-in."



Incorporating driver feedback can also help fleets update safety policies to match productivity goals. If safety concerns aren't considered when changing process strategies to boost productivity, you could be looking at an increase in related workers compensation claims and higher employee turnover.

Driver Training Improves Safety

Driver training is a major slice of the safety pie and a money saver in the long run: Vehicle accidents cost companies around \$60 billion a year. Including comprehensive driver training programs into your safety policy can reduce the chances of on-road accidents. With many convenient online class options, you can choose the safety training program that best fits your fleet operation.

Because drivers have better insight as to how the current training program stands up to real-world, on-the-job experience, driver input is also vital when it comes to choosing the right safety program. For example, drivers may note that additional defensive driving training is needed to spot and avoid distracted or aggressive drivers. By discussing training needs with drivers, fleets can make more informed decisions around which courses and topics to incorporate into safety policies for maximum benefits.

Safety Impacts of Ergonomics

Ergonomics is often seen more as something geared toward comfort, rather than safety or productivity. However, poor ergonomics can lead to work-related musculoskeletal disorders, muscle strain, fatigue, poor circulation and more. Upfitting or retro-fitting fleet assets for improved ergonomics increases driver safety and reduces workplace accidents, such as slips, sprains and hyperextension, making ergonomic improvement a valuable addition in fleet safety policies. Some examples of improved ergonomics include vehicle entrance and exit assists, such as grab handles and steps, and posture assists, such as lumbar support seats or cushions.

Incorporating driver feedback into your safety policy is key in locating areas that need improvement. Companies using fleet management software or other fleet solutions can easily track and analyze driver feedback by creating a custom safety inspection form within the software. These custom inspections allow managers to include items related to ergonomics, personal protective equipment and any other safety concerns. Additionally, drivers can submit comments on failed items, even attaching images and documents. Fleets can also include a safety training item for drivers to leave feedback on how the current training program stands up to their personal experience. By including any safety policy items which require feedback on a single inspection form, you can pull comprehensive annual safety reports to gain clear and actionable insights to improve your fleet safety policy. ■



Is There a Missing Element in Fatality-Reduction Strategies?

By **Fred Fakkema**, Vice President of Safety and Compliance, Zonar; Former Cpt. with Washington State Patrol

Every 16 minutes, someone in the U.S. dies in a traffic crash.

Reducing traffic-related deaths is an urgent priority for fleets and all roadway users. The more public and private organizations that partner together, the more lives we can save together.

In 2021, fatal crashes in the U.S. reached a 16-year high. The latest data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) shows rates have decreased marginally, about 0.2% for the first nine months of 2022 compared to 2021. Still, the nation's roadways are in a state of crisis.

The National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) outlines new regulatory measures, safety initiatives and funding to reduce fatal crashes. At the strategy's core is the U.S. Department of Transportation's adoption of the Safe System Approach, which focuses on five objectives: safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer speeds and post-crash care.

When I was a young recruit going through the state patrol academy, we were taught that the three Es were the key to reducing collisions: engineering, education and enforcement. These common-sense principles may be simple but can be impactful when put into action.

Engineering Safety into Roads and Technology

Road conditions and braking capabilities are common factors in fatal collisions. However, most of the crashes in the U.S. are a direct result of human error, according to the organization Toward Zero Deaths.

How can we anticipate errors and design their solutions into our roads, vehicles and technology? We start by learning what the hazards are and where they frequently occur.

In 2020, 55% of fatal crashes involving large trucks occurred in rural areas, while only 27% occurred on interstate highways, according to data from NHTSA. Roadway infrastructure in these high-collision areas must be reworked, but we don't need to reinvent the wheel. Rumble strips, guardrails and crash cushions are proven effective in increasing road safety. Let's fund more of this infrastructure.

This design concept extends to vehicles and technology. In-vehicle technology must be designed for proactive safety, while preventing inherently distracting activities. For commercial drivers, one low-hanging solution is streamlining the number of digital tools and devices required for the job. Provide one interface for all the resources, monitoring and

information drivers need – navigation, weather alerts, tire pressure monitoring, messaging and workflows – and include intelligent locking to prevent distracted driving. Fleet management platforms that integrate with driver apps and in-cab tablets give back-office managers the assurance that each driver has what is needed to do the job efficiently and safely.

On a more sophisticated level, machine learning technology within in-cab coaching devices can intelligently track, detect and proactively alert drivers in real time so they adjust to avoid lane departures, drifting, collisions and more. This technology also detects behavior that typically results in collisions: speed limit violations, stop sign violations, hard braking, excessive acceleration and excessive cornering.

Educating Our Way to Smarter, Safer Users

We all have a shared duty – safety and compliance officers, government organizations, researchers, advocacy groups, law enforcement, corporations, tech providers and the general public – to make our roads safer.

The National Safety Council's Road to Zero Plan identified several initiatives to reduce roadway fatalities. One initiative prioritizes safety by



» *One death is too many.
How will you step up to help?*

creating a positive safety culture. This invites constructive thought on our individual and collective choices.

Commercial fleets have long instilled that safety culture. Fleets don't just talk about the culture, it shows up in how drivers prepare for all types of weather events, obey construction zones, keep safe distances from other vehicles and operate safely around other vehicles.

It's also a culture that embraces a willingness to learn. When we know what works, we can double down on proven strategies. We know humans make mistakes, and those mistakes can lead to crashes. So, we design systems and processes to account for it. For example, one pencil-whipped miss in a trip inspection can result in a collision. That's why fleets are increasingly adopting verifiable, digital pre- and post-trip inspections to comply with regulations and help put drivers in a safety mindset. It's also proven to reduce safety risks by getting ahead of any necessary maintenance needs before they become a significant issue.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has been studying fleet inspection data and is proposing changes to better identify carriers with a high crash risk. The new methodology splits vehicle maintenance by carrier (maintenance violations

commonly identified by a mechanic) and driver (maintenance violations observed by inspectors as part of a Level II roadside inspection). This proposal puts more emphasis on pre- and post-trip inspections for safety scores, making inspections fairer, more accurate and more transparent to improve road safety.

Changing Driver Behavior through Enforcement

Aggressive driving, seatbelt usage, speeding, and distracted or impaired driving are among the most common injury-causing behaviors on the road. Speeding alone has been a factor in nearly a third of all motor vehicle fatalities, according to NHTSA.

All the preventative safety measures in the world – thoughtfully designed infrastructure, educational initiatives, best practice analysis and in-vehicle technology – are inadequate on their own. This is where enforcement comes into play.

Targeted enforcement can reduce collisions by using technology and data to focus on problem areas. In the past, it helped curb two major collision-causing behaviors: seat belt usage and alcohol consumption. An emerging collision-causing behavior is cell phone use. The behavior is outlawed at the federal level for commercial drivers. The next step is to

close the gap and extend the prohibition to passenger vehicle drivers. The National Safety Council is already calling for action from employers, legislators, drivers, and vehicle and smartphone manufacturers.

The issue of law enforcement sparks passionate debates. Although the NRSS mentions enforcement, it isn't named as an explicit priority. In my opinion, that's a miss. Together, enforcement, engineering and education create a holistic approach to make roads safer.

What Is at Stake

Road safety is where public-private partnerships can make a life-or-death difference.

I was a state trooper for 25 years and captain of the commercial vehicle division for the state of Washington before joining the private sector. It's great to see a national initiative as comprehensive and coordinated as the National Roadway Safety Strategy. It's going to take all of us to bring the annual number of roadway deaths down to zero.

The challenges have changed since I was a young cadet eager to make a difference, but the goalpost remains the same: one death is too many. How will you step up to help? ■

The Real World of Disc Brakes

By Sulev "Swede" Oun, Owner, O&K Truck Repairs

This article is meant to raise awareness of inspection and maintenance practices pertaining to air disc brakes, regardless of whether you are an inspector (roadside or industry annual), maintenance person, driver, safety personnel or anybody else in the commercial motor vehicle (CMV) field.

From the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) Appendix A to Part 396 – Minimum Periodic Inspection Standards:

"A vehicle does not pass an inspection if it has one of the following defects or deficiencies: absence of braking action on any axle required to have brakes upon application of service brakes, such as missing brakes or brake shoes failing to move upon application of a wedge, S-cam or disc brake."

This is the minimum inspection standard. But I'm proposing that we go beyond the minimum and ask the following questions:

- Is anyone checking for these issues on the disc brakes?
- What is the window of opportunity to check brake pads?
- Do wheels need to be off the ground to verify some of the requirements?
- What are the consequences if the caliper doesn't move?
- How do you know if the problem is the caliper or pistons?

An additional question pertains to FMCSR Part 393.47 (1) and (2), which requires pad/lining thickness of not less than 1/8 inch. In my brake trainings, I explain and show why that limit is much too low. It needs to be rethought and rewritten.

Another question I have involves the minimum requirements pertaining to brake drums and rotors found in CFR Appendix A: "A vehicle does not pass inspection if an external crack or cracks open upon brake application."

If someone inspected my vehicle and they found a crack, even if it hasn't quite opened yet upon a brake application, I would hope that they would fail my brakes or at a minimum tell me to replace them immediately, regardless of what the regulations say. Just recently, one of the local police officers brought me a piece of a brake drum he found on the road, considered to be road debris, to use as a show and tell for my classes. Are we really going to wait until that crack opens and risk a brake drum going through somebody's windshield?



Consider our inspection procedures. For example, what happens if the rotor crack is in the caliper, hidden from view? What if a dust shield is in use, further diminishing the window of opportunity for an inspector to see many of the brake components? Point being, our inspection methods quite often are difficult to execute and leave a lot to be desired.

Hydraulic brake systems present similar issues. For example, trying to determine lining/pad thickness is very challenging. Ask any inspector. So, we are back to the same question: Are disc brakes really checked/inspected to an ideal level? In the real world, we are constantly changing pads, rotors and calipers. Defective (frozen) calipers are not uncommon at all. I have hundreds of pictures and videos regarding these defects that I utilize in training. Many manufacturers that historically did not make disc brakes are now manufacturing disc brake components because they recognized a rise in demand as components began to fail in the field.

Hydraulic disc brakes are prone to frozen caliper problems. It's one of the first checks a technician performs when working on disc brakes, especially if there is uneven lining wear. As a side note, most of the general motoring public waits until they hear a grinding noise, metal on metal, before having someone look into the problem. I see the same thing quite often with air disc brakes. However, the grinding noises are less audible if you are sitting in a tractor 50 feet forward and well above the source of the sound. Instead of hoping to catch audible clues, we need to rely on a good CMV inspection program to ensure safety.

The automatic adjustment system is very simple in hydraulic disc brakes. It utilizes a square-cut beveled O-ring that is meant to deflect, adjusting the clearance between the pad and rotor. The automatic adjustment on air disc brakes relies on a more complex system using spindles/threaded pistons/tappets, clutches and gearings. Specific components are dependent upon the type and manufacturer of the disc brake. However, the concepts are similar – you automatically adjust and maintain a specific/designed clearance. If this portion fails, the result could be an overadjustment or underadjustment.

An overadjustment can create dragging, heat or a lining wear issue. An underadjustment can result in excessive clearance with the consequence of not generating enough braking force in the affected wheel(s). This will lead to an unbalanced braking of the whole vehicle's braking system. Keep in mind, if you have one or two wheels not contributing to the whole braking effort, the properly operating wheels will have to work harder to provide the overall friction required to slow the vehicle. The properly operating wheels and brakes will generate more heat, accelerating their wear rate and lessening efficiency. After all, a brake system is nothing but a heat machine; converting kinetic energy into heat is the only way we can stop a moving vehicle. Well, that's not quite true. Another method is to hit a solid object, but of course, that is definitely not a good way to stop a vehicle.

In my trainings, I emphasize the importance of grabbing the chamber with brakes released and attempting to move the caliper inward and outward. This is essential to any



inspection or preventive maintenance task. You are looking for an approximate .08-inch (2mm) movement. To make it simple, use a fraction format: from 1/16" to under a 1/4"; approximately the thickness of a nickel. The manufacturer manuals use thousandths-of-an-inch increments and dial indicators. In the real world, this doesn't happen. You are more likely to perform certain checks if you keep it simple. By using my movement check, you are probably doing more than most inspectors and technicians. You are trying to check a system that has limited visual window of opportunity of components. By checking for movement, you are trying to verify the potential of the system working or not working properly.

The reduced stopping system requirement has generated an increase in the utilization of disc brakes. This has led us all to complacency in checking brakes. Quite often, whether it be an inspection or maintenance task, I have noticed the people assigned the task will pass by the disc brake system with a sigh of relief, assuming everything is fine because there are no pushrod strokes to check. However, there is still a lot to inspect and maintain, just like with S-cam brake systems.



The following quick check should apply to anyone involved in inspection and maintenance, including drivers. Treat the system the same as you did with drum brakes for all those years. Check for:

- Air leaks: hoses, diaphragms, fittings
- Oil and grease leaks: seals, hubs
- Condition and placement of hoses
- Damaged components: chambers, brackets, calipers, mounting bolts, rotors (cracks, severe rust). NOTE: Calipers are a hard decision-making component.
- Pad wear: wear indicators (visual at calipers) or electrical indicators

Get comfortable with the various wear indicators. They indicate if the time has come to pull the wheels and take a more in-depth look at the components.

The bottom line is that disc brakes are here to stay, and more vehicles are being made with them each year. In the real world, failures and wear are becoming more common. Some of these issues aren't caught in time because our inspection procedures aren't as thorough or consistent as they should be. As with any newer systems out there, there could be a lack of comprehensive training, and some regulations need to be revisited. There are too many gray areas for the people that must perform inspection tasks. Hopefully the information in this article will help CMV inspectors and maintenance staff overcome that challenge, keeping our roads safer for all. ■

📅 MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition

SEPTEMBER 17-21, 2023

The Alliance's premier meeting, the CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition, provides the opportunity for government officials, enforcement and industry to gather together to affect meaningful changes to the overall culture of transportation safety throughout Canada, Mexico and the United States.

The next CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition is scheduled for Sept. 17-21 in Grapevine, Texas, at the Gaylord Texan.

Visit www.cvsa.org/events/cvsa-annual-conference-and-exhibition to learn more information and register for this year's annual conference.

Don't miss your opportunity to join your colleagues at the year's most important gathering of the commercial motor vehicle safety community. Together, we make a difference and save lives.



Carriers and Enforcement Working Together: A Mutually Beneficial Relationship

By **Rick Wright**, Safety Manager, Safe Charters, VIP Sports Getaway



VIP Sports Getaway began in 2007, with an entertainment bus geared toward giving people a chance to get away for a fun adventure, primarily to sporting events. Due to a demand for a variety of experiences, VIP Sports Getaway decided to enter the charter bus business, so that customers could enjoy similar outings with up to 55 of their friends. Soon, VIP Sports Getaway saw a need to open a separate division for its growing charter bus service and launched what is now known as Safe Charters. The goal of Safe Charters has always been to be a safety-driven company with quality buses and drivers.

In business, the customer comes first. At Safe Charters, we put the safety of our customers first. We want them to know that they will be safe when they board our buses. We try to make all of our customers' big ideas happen, but if somebody presents a tour idea that is not safe, we pass on the opportunity.

To support this mindset, we decided to hire a safety manager; a position that had overall safety as its focus. With questions about how to best meet company goals, our new safety manager contacted the local Texas Department of Public Safety Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (DPS CVE) troopers.

Being in the commercial vehicle class, Safe Charters is required by federal law to have our buses inspected at least once a year. When we started our relationship with DPS CVE, we discovered that both organizations had needs we could meet by working together. The inspectors needed to inspect several buses each year, and we felt that the more buses they inspected, the safer our buses

would be for our customers. Additionally, we had the opportunity to get to know the CVE team and share information. Whenever we ran into a gray area or needed interpretation of a regulation, we knew we could contact one of "our troopers" and get an answer.

Initially, we worked with Sgt. EJ Nunez, Tpr. Jeremy Usener and Tpr. Daniel Self. We now work with Sgt. Justin Tabor, Tpr. Brandon Smedley and Tpr. Daniel Self. All work (or worked) out of the Abilene, Texas office. Other troopers from the area also assist.

The inspection process starts with the troopers coming to our yard to inspect available buses. They will point out necessary repairs, weak points or any other concerns that require our attention. Many times, we can correct the repairs on the spot. This gets us closer to our goal of having the safest buses on the road. It also earns that bus a "golden sticker," showing law enforcement agencies and our drivers and customers that it has passed a detailed inspection. During this process, the troopers and our staff exchange information that allows all present to sharpen their skills.

A few years ago, DPS CVE asked if they could inspect our buses as a refresher for Tpr. Usener to brush up ahead of the 2018 North American Inspector's Championship competition. He did a thorough inspection for us and went on to win the championship. To this day, we take every chance we get to brag about one of "our troopers" winning the top inspector title and how he regularly inspected our buses. It has been an honor to know him and to have helped prepare him for the competition.

After some time off for the COVID-19 pandemic, we have resumed the full inspection process with the DPS CVE Team. In February, we invested in a set of bus lifts to allow easier access for the inspectors, who can now get under the buses while standing rather than moving around on creepers. The lifts also enable our maintenance personnel to walk alongside the inspectors. Being shown what issues to look for and what should be corrected, versus going by what we think might be good enough, helps ensure our buses stay running and operate safely.

The best part of Safe Charters embracing regular inspections is that we have developed a great relationship with the local officers who inspect commercial motor vehicles. A benefit of this is that we have a place to go with questions or concerns about the buses, drivers, hours of service and many other safety-related topics. We have also had the DPS CVE team out for our quarterly safety meetings so they can meet our drivers, answer any questions and further strengthen our relationship. We concur with the sentiment of the "Inspector's Corner" article in the 2023 first quarter edition of *Guardian*: The main goal for carriers and enforcement is safety – and we can only accomplish that by working together.

We encourage any organization that operates commercial motor vehicles to build a relationship with the officers who are responsible for vehicle inspections in your area. Once that relationship is started, you will begin to look forward to working with the inspectors. This collaborative approach goes a long way for all sides. ■

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