

Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (MCSAC)

Task Statement

Task #09-01

I. TASK TITLE

Developing a National Agenda for Motor Carrier Safety

II. BACKGROUND

In carrying out its safety mandate to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA):

- Develops and enforces data-driven regulations;
- Harnesses safety information systems to focus on higher risk carriers in enforcing the safety regulations;
- Targets educational messages to carriers, commercial drivers, and the public; and,
- Partners with stakeholders including Federal, State, and local enforcement agencies, the motor carrier industry, safety groups, and organized labor on efforts to reduce bus and truck-related crashes.

The most recent crash data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) indicates that in 2007 the total number of truck-related fatalities (4,808) decreased by 4.4 percent compared to the Agency's 2006 numbers (5,027). The Agency believes that the decrease is a sign that its strategy is producing results. However, the Agency also acknowledges that its work is not done – there is a continuing need to identify new strategies or approaches to further decrease truck- and bus-related fatalities by a significant amount.

III. TASK

The Committee should provide a letter report to the Agency identifying top safety challenges that FMCSA, working with its partners and stakeholders, should focus on to make significant advances in motor carrier safety. The Committee should also identify potential strategies for (1) initiating public-private partnerships to respond to these safety challenges, and (2) ensuring that the partnerships achieve meaningful results or specific deliverables. While the Committee's work on Task 08-01, Federal Surface Transportation Reauthorization, focused on safety provisions that should be included in legislation, this task is intended to identify new public-private initiatives that FMCSA could explore under its current statutory authority. The resulting letter report to the Agency would serve as a framework for developing a new National Agenda for Motor Carrier Safety. The Committee should consider:

1. Innovative safety initiatives and programs that have the potential to significantly reduce the number of truck and bus-related fatalities;
2. Research and development activities to assess the potential safety benefits of emerging technology; and,
3. Enhanced driver qualification standards and driver safety fitness determination criteria (safety ratings for drivers).

IV. ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE TASK

The Committee should submit a report outlining its findings at the March 2009 Committee meeting.

V. FMCSA TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE

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