

# Increasing Safety Belt Use in Your Company



Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership  
[www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt)



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**

FMCSA-ESO-06-0011

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	The Impact a Safety Belt Awareness Program Has on Your Company .....	1
2.0	Sample Corporate Safety Belt Statement and Pledge .....	6
3.0	What Drivers Need to Know About Safety Belt Use .....	9
4.0	How to Create a Safety Belt Training Program .....	15
5.0	How to Evaluate Your Program.....	17
6.0	How to Reinforce Your Safety Belt Program .....	19
7.0	Knowledge Tests.....	22
8.0	Two-Minute Pep Talk – “Safety Belts – Habit for Life” .....	27
9.0	Additional Safety Belt Information .....	28
	Appendix A: TRB Synthesis Report on Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver Safety Belt Usage Summary.....	31
	Appendix B: A Message from the CMV Safety Belt Partnership .....	34

## **1.0 THE IMPACT A SAFETY BELT AWARENESS PROGRAM HAS ON YOUR COMPANY**

### **1.1 Safety Belt Use for CMV Drivers is the Law**

A company must consider the legal consequences of not insisting drivers wear a safety belt. Federal regulations and most state laws require drivers to wear safety belts. They also require trucks and truck tractors manufactured on or after January 1, 1965, to be equipped with a safety belt assembly, meeting requirements specified in Federal regulations.

A driver, and the employer, may be subject to State or Federal penalties for violation of the regulations cited below.

#### **Title 49, Section 392.16 of the Code of Federal Regulations states:**

“A commercial motor vehicle that has a seat belt assembly installed at the driver’s seat shall not be driven unless the driver has properly restrained himself/herself with the seat belt assembly.”

#### **Title 49, Section 393.93 of the Code of Federal Regulations states:**

“Every truck and truck tractor manufactured on or after January 1, 1965, and before July 1, 1971, must be equipped with a Type 1 or Type 2 seat belt assembly that conforms to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 209 (§571.209) installed at the driver’s seat and at the right front outboard seat, if the vehicle has one, and seat belt anchorages that conform to the location and geometric requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 210 (§571.210) for each seat belt assembly that is required by this subparagraph.”

“Every truck and truck tractor manufactured on or after July 1, 1971, except a truck or truck tractor being transported in drive-away-tow-away operation and having an incomplete vehicle seating and cab configuration, must conform to the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208 (§571.208) (relating to installation of seat belt assemblies) and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 210 (§571.210) (relating to installation of seat belt assembly anchorages).”

Note: Although the regulation states “seat belt”, the U.S. DOT is using the term “safety belt” as this better reflects the advantage of this piece of safety equipment.

**WHAT ARE YOUR COMPANY’S POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS?**

## 1.2 Not Having a Program is Costly

**Direct costs.** In the United States motor vehicle crashes of all types are the leading cause of lost work time and on-the-job fatalities. According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2004 transportation incidents were the number one cause of on-the-job deaths with 2,460 fatalities out of a total of 5,703 fatal occupational injuries recorded. In 2004, 634 commercial truck drivers were killed in crashes. A total of 761 occupants of large trucks died in crashes.

The average cost to a company for each property damage only truck crash is \$11,020 (in 2003 dollars); per injury truck crash it is \$174,367; and per fatal truck crash it is \$3,469,962. The average cost for all truck crashes per truck crash is \$62,613. (Source: Ted Miller, et al, *Revised Costs of Large Truck- and Bus- Involved Crashes*, at <http://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/CarrierResearchResults/CarrierResearchContent.asp> )

Each work-related employee fatality is estimated to cost the employer well over \$100,000 in Workers' Compensation alone. This figure does not include increased insurance premiums, costs due to the absence of employee services, delays in company operations, reduced employee morale, or recruiting and training replacements. As sobering as these statistics are for fatalities, a permanent disability may cost several times more than a fatality.

As a result of injuries sustained by employees in crashes, companies incur substantial costs including:

- Direct and indirect medical care and disability payments; physical and vocational rehabilitation
- Overtime that may be necessary to cover the work of a missing employee
- Loss of special knowledge or skills that are difficult to replace
- Recruiting and replacing personnel on a temporary or permanent basis
- Reassigning and/or re-training employees
- Lost business due to absenteeism
- Legal fees
- Increase in long-term rates for Workers' Compensation, property, liability, commercial auto, and health insurances.

**Indirect Costs.** In addition to direct costs, injuries and fatalities sustained by employees may result in costs that are not immediately apparent, such as:

- Lost productivity resulting from using less experienced or less specialized replacement personnel, or from time taken by other employees to “fill in” or to train replacements
- Operational delays and losses resulting from the absence of the injured employees’ services
- Diminished company reputation among shippers, vendors, employee recruiting base, as well as with the public, resulting in subsequent business losses
- Decreased employee morale
- Regulatory and enforcement actions
- Inability to attract new employees and retain existing employees.

**Management and Administrative Challenges.** Some of the management and/or administrative challenges that are caused by truck crashes are:

- Redesigning routes and schedules of drivers and shipments
- Interviewing prospective replacements
- Training replacements
- Preparing documentation for insurance claims and worker compensation
- Writing and submitting accident reports in accordance with company, insurance, and government requirements
- Managing and participating in litigation.

Other cost facts to consider are presented on the following page.

**Table. Cost Facts to Consider**

<b>Average Cost Per Crash to Society*</b>			
Cost Per Property Damage Only Truck Crash			\$ 11,020
Cost Per Injury Truck Crash			\$ 174,367
Cost Per Fatal Truck Crash			\$ 3,469,962
Cost Per Truck Crash			\$ 62,613
<b>Average Employer Costs Per Person Involved in a Crash**</b>			
<b>On-the-Job Crash</b>			
Unrestrained	\$27,750	Restrained	\$11,310
<b>Off-the-Job-Crash</b>			
Unrestrained	\$2,980	Restrained	\$ 600

*\*Figures above (based in 2003 dollars) are from Ted Miller, et al., Revised Costs of Large Truck- and Bus- Involved Crashes, available at:  
<http://ai.volpe.dot.gov/CarrierResearchResults/CarrierResearchContent.asp>.*

*\*\*Figures from NHTSA, 2003, The Economic Burden of Traffic Crashes on Employer costs by State and Industry and by Alcohol and Restraint Use. Publication DOT HS 809 682.*

### **1.3 Top Management Commitment is Key**

The success of any company program is dependent upon a core group of supporters. However, without involvement and encouragement from “top management,” the outlook for long-term program success is very promising. It is important for companies to assign a high-level manager at the owner or executive level to maintain support for setting and enforcing a comprehensive driver safety policy. The driver safety policy must include mandatory safety belt use.

Just as front-line supervisors hold drivers accountable, executive management should hold mid-level personnel responsible for using safety belts. This can be accomplished by developing a comprehensive driver safety program that includes on-the-spot surveys of drivers; monitoring company measurements of safety belt use, such as motor vehicle reports and collision analysis reports; regular company-wide training sessions; employer newsletter articles, memos or meetings; and community activities. This will help strengthen the message – that from top to bottom, your company is serious about saving the lives of your drivers and the driving public.

Consider having all personnel, including senior management, sign a pledge to use safety belts and to acknowledge that they are aware of the expected disciplinary action for violation of the company policy.

Most employers know the road is not a closed environment. Although employers cannot control roadway conditions, they can promote safe driving by providing safety information to workers and by implementing driver safety policies. Employers can take steps to protect their employees and their companies by:

- Assigning a key member of the management team the responsibility and authority to set and enforce comprehensive driver safety policies
- Enforcing mandatory safety belt use
- Adopting a structured vehicle maintenance program
- Providing company vehicles/trucks that offer the highest possible levels of occupant protection.

## **2.0 SAMPLE CORPORATE SAFETY BELT STATEMENT AND PLEDGE**

A sample corporate safety belt policy statement and safety belt pledge are presented on the following pages. The conditions in such a policy and pledge should be agreed to by management after input from drivers. It should be distributed and explained to all employees.

## **CORPORATE SAFETY BELT STATEMENT** *(Sample)*

This company recognizes that safety belt use helps to protect our employees, reduce injuries, and control operating costs. Studies show conclusively that failure to use safety belts (lap and shoulder belts) results in increased deaths and injuries. Reducing these costly injuries and deaths protects our employees and can strengthen our effectiveness as a company. Moreover, safety belt use in commercial motor vehicles is required by Federal law. As of January 2006, safety belt use is also the law in 49 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Therefore, we are implementing the following policy:

Safety belts must be used at all times while driving or riding in any company vehicle on company or personal business, or in any other vehicle while on official company business. For sleeper berths, occupant restraint systems installed by the manufacturer must be used, whether the system is at the entry point of the berth or incorporated as a belt-type restraint within the berth itself. This policy applies to all employees and all occupants of vehicles driven by employees on official business, whether in company-owned vehicles (including trucks), rented vehicles, or employees' personal vehicles.

### **Responsibilities**

*All personnel* will be held accountable for using safety belts. All personnel will sign a pledge to use safety belts and to acknowledge that they will be held accountable for compliance. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

*Top management* will ensure that safety belt use programs are established, implemented, and maintained. All managers and supervisors will set an example for others by always wearing safety belts and requiring use of safety belts.

*Line Management:* Supervisors and managers are responsible for ensuring that drivers of large trucks 1) receive initial and follow-up safety belt training and periodic reminders to use safety belts; and 2) regularly inspect their vehicle's safety belts to ensure that they are in good working order. Safety belt use shall be enforced in the same manner as other work rules. Those who violate this policy will be held accountable. Supervisors and managers must set an example by *always* using safety belts, *whenever* they operate a vehicle, including while in terminals and for short distances.

*Drivers:* The driver of the vehicle is responsible for enforcing safety belt use of all occupants. The ranking occupant, if other than the driver, shares this responsibility.

### **Driver Training**

All drivers and line managers will undergo safety belt use training that includes information about wearing lap and shoulder belts. The initial instruction, which will be part of employee orientation and driver training, will include information about the importance of and reasons for using safety belts. Participants will be required to sign a pledge to use them. The training may be supplemented by personal counseling, pep talks, distribution of posters, simple reminders by dispatchers at terminals, and other methods.

### **Enforcement and Evaluation**

Safety belt use shall be enforced in the same manner, and with the same consequences, as other work rules. Disciplinary actions may range from (XXX) for a first offense to (YYY) for chronic offenders. Managers will be asked to evaluate the safety belt use in their department or at their terminal and to submit a report every 6 months. An evaluation of each employee's safety belt use will also be incorporated into performance appraisals.

**SAFETY BELT PLEDGE**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of  
Employee Name

\_\_\_\_\_ safety belt policy. I have read the  
Company Name

company policy and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I fully understand the company's penalty for violation of this policy.

I hereby pledge that I will use safety belts whenever driving or riding in a company vehicle or in any other vehicle when on company business.

I also pledge that passengers of vehicles that I am driving will wear safety belts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature of Employee] [Date]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature of Supervisor] [Date]

cc: Driver Qualification File

### **3.0 WHAT DRIVERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SAFETY BELT USE**

#### **3.1 Rule #1: Wear Your Safety Belt**

Wearing a safety belt is the simplest and most effective way to stay safe, yet many large truck drivers still don't do it. A 2005 U.S. Department of Transportation report found the average safety belt use among all truck drivers was only 54 percent compared to 82 percent of passenger car drivers, and that the number of truck driver fatalities of those not using a safety belt continues to increase.

When safety belts are not used the potential for crash-related injuries and death increases dramatically. Crash-related injuries attributable to not wearing a safety belt can affect a driver's livelihood and they can have a tremendous emotional and financial impact on the driver's family.

The following facts speak for themselves:

- In 2004, 761 occupants of large trucks died in crashes, 634 were the drivers. (Source: FARS 2004)
- Almost half of the 634 commercial drivers killed in crashes were not wearing safety belts. (Source: FARS 2004)
- Of the 168 drivers who died as a result of being ejected from their trucks, almost 75 percent of them were not wearing safety belts. (Source: FARS 2004)
- 51% of truck-occupant-fatalities in large trucks involve rollovers. In a rollover a truck driver is 80% less likely to die when wearing a safety belt. (Source: FARS 2004)
- About 27,000 large-truck occupants suffered nonfatal injuries in crashes; 4,000 were incapacitated. (Source: GES 2004, NHTSA)
- 29% of the truck drivers surveyed reported they had been involved in a truck crash at some point in their career. (Source: IMMI 2004 Mid America Trucker Survey)
- 67% of truck drivers killed, who were not wearing a safety belt, were involved in single vehicle crashes. (Source: FARS 2004)

### 3.2 The Effectiveness of Safety Belts

Why are safety belts, especially lap/shoulder belts, so effective in reducing injuries, fatalities and the costs of operating large trucks? The answer is found in the results of recent studies of vehicle crashes and national crash data.

Here is a summary of why safety belts are effective.

- Safety belts, especially lap/shoulder belts, spread the stress and impact forces of a crash along the stronger and broader areas of the body, such as the hips and shoulders, thereby limiting injuries.
- Safety belts, especially lap/shoulder belts, hold you in place while the vehicle absorbs the impact of the crash and decelerates.
- The safety belt protects your head and spinal cord.
- Safety belts prevent occupants from being ejected from the vehicle or thrown around inside the vehicle, where they can strike objects within the cab.
- Safety belts prevent serious injuries and fatalities by minimizing the possibility of truck occupants striking the steering wheel, shift lever, windshield, dashboard, side doors and windows, roof, other objects, and other occupants.
- In a crash, a safety belt keeps the driver in place behind the steering wheel and in control of the vehicle, thereby avoiding or reducing the consequences of an accident.
- The lap and shoulder belt design has been proven to hold a driver securely behind the wheel in the event of a crash, greatly increasing the driver's ability to maintain control of the vehicle and minimizing the chance for serious injury or death.
- Safety belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escape. Fire or submersion occurs in less than 5% of fatal large truck crashes.
- In 2004, 168 truck drivers died when they were ejected from their cab during a crash.
- In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, an unbelted person continues to move forward at 30 mph causing him/her to hit the windshield at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a three-story building would experience upon impact with the ground.

### 3.3 Does Your Safety Belt Fit Properly?

If you wear your safety belt improperly, both the effectiveness and comfort will decrease. Here are some tips on how to wear your safety belts comfortably and safely.

- **Do not** allow the buckle to be located in the stomach or abdomen area.
- **Do not** wear the shoulder strap under your arm or behind your back.
- **Do not** wear the shoulder belt too snug, or let it rub against your neck.
- **Do not** allow the belts to become too loose as you travel. Sometimes, as you travel, additional slack may occur. For example, when you lean forward the safety belt retractor may leave too much slack when you sit back into your normal seated position. If the lap and/or shoulder belts are too loose, they may not be able to hold you in place during a crash.
- **Do wear** the lap belt low on the hips, two to four inches below the waist, and against the thighs. The strong bones of the hips can absorb the forces experienced in a crash.
- **Do wear** the shoulder strap across the center of the chest and the center of the shoulder.

To correct a shoulder belt that is too snug or rubs against your neck:

- Bring the belt snugly over your body, pull the shoulder belt out at least five inches and let it return to your chest.
- Pull down on the shoulder belt only as far as necessary to ease the pressure and let it go. The shoulder belt will then stay in position.
- Get rid of additional slack, every so often, by pulling the belt out at least five inches and letting go. Slack is automatically removed.
- Check your owner's manual for detailed instructions on the amount of slack considered safe for that model.

### 3.4 Maintain Your Safety Belt Equipment

Just as you perform regular inspections of many equipment items on your truck such as brakes, tires, etc., you should make it a part of your routine to periodically examine your safety belt equipment to be sure it still functions correctly and to be sure there are no worn or broken components that either need repair or replacement.

Be sure to consult the truck operator's manual for safety belt care and maintenance tips. It is a good idea to have the fleet service department inspect your safety belt equipment during each periodic scheduled truck maintenance session.

### **3.5 Myths and Facts About Safety Belt Use**

#### **MYTH 1. Safety belts are uncomfortable and restrict movement.**

**FACT.** Many drivers do not find wearing safety belts to be uncomfortable or too restrictive of their movements. A 2005 Transportation Research Board (TRB) study examined commercial drivers' habits of "wearing or not wearing" safety belts. Sixty-one percent of drivers stated they wore their safety belts at least 95% of the time. Another 11% of drivers reported wearing their belts between 75% and 95% of the time -- this group of drivers cited restrictive movements (e.g., while negotiating sharp turns at low speeds in urban areas or while positioning their truck in a parking lot) as explanations of when they would disengage their safety belts. However, of those drivers who choose not to wear their belts, 38% offered "discomfort of the device" and 34% cited "personal choice and general dislike of safety belts" as their top motivations for never wearing their safety belts.

The TRB study pointed out that very large, and very small-statured drivers often find it difficult to adjust their safety belts for comfort. Ergonomists and design engineers continue to work to resolve that problem. However, the study also pointed out that many drivers do not know how to properly adjust their safety belts to make them as comfortable as possible.

Adjusting the seat once at the beginning of a work day, and then making a simple adjustment to the safety belt at the beginning of each trip can help prevent discomfort. Once they correctly adjust the seat, lap and shoulder belt, most drivers find that discomfort and restrictive movement can be alleviated. It only takes a few seconds to buckle up for each trip; and it is important to do so on every trip, even short ones, because so many crashes occur when you least expect them to, even at low speeds in urban traffic.

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#### **MYTH 2. Wearing a safety belt is a personal decision that doesn't affect anyone else.**

**FACT.** Not wearing a safety belt can affect your family and loved ones. It can also affect other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash. It is also the law. Federal regulations require commercial vehicle drivers to buckle up. Safety belts are a driver's last line of defense in a crash.

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**MYTH 3. Safety belts prevent your escape from a burning or submerged vehicle.**

**FACT.** Safety belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escape. Fire or submersion occur in less than five percent of fatal large truck crashes.

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**MYTH 4. It is better to be thrown clear in the event of a crash.**

**FACT.** An occupant of a vehicle is four times as likely to be killed when thrown from the vehicle. In 2004, 168 truck drivers died when they were ejected from their cabs during a crash.

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**MYTH 5. It takes too much time to fasten your safety belt 20 times a day.**

**FACT.** Buckling up takes about three seconds. Even buckling up 20 times a day requires only one minute. It takes only an instant to die or become permanently injured.

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**MYTH 6. Good truck drivers don't need to wear safety belts.**

**FACT.** Good drivers usually do not cause collisions, but during your career you may be involved in a crash caused by another driver, bad weather, mechanical failure, or tire blowout. Wearing a safety belt prevents injuries and fatalities, reduces the chances of ejection, and helps protect your head and spinal cord from impact damage.

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**MYTH 7. A large truck will protect you. Safety belts are unnecessary.**

**FACT.** In 2004, 634 drivers of large trucks died in truck crashes and 303 of those truck drivers were not wearing safety belts.

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**MYTH 8. Safety belts are not necessary for low-speed driving.**

**FACT.** In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, the vehicle hits an object (another vehicle, tree, etc.) and stops. Unrestrained people and objects inside the vehicle continue to move forward until they hit the windshield, steering column, dashboard, roof of the vehicle, etc. at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a three-story building would experience upon impact with the ground.

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**MYTH 9. A lap belt offers sufficient protection.**

**FACT.** The lap and shoulder belt designed to work together have been proven to hold a driver securely behind the wheel in the event of a crash, greatly increasing the driver's ability to maintain control of the vehicle and minimizing the chance for serious injury or death. Lap belts alone will not prevent you from striking the steering wheel, dashboard or other objects within the cab. In addition, a lap belt will not prevent injuries to the back and neck.

**3.6 Your Family and Community Depend on You**

Refusing to use your safety belt is like refusing a *free* insurance policy. Buckling your safety belt only takes a few seconds and it could save your life or prevent serious injury. If you feel restricted by a safety belt, imagine how you might feel if you were restricted to a hospital bed or wheelchair because you chose not to wear a safety belt.

You should also consider how your family might be impacted if you were unbuckled and involved in a crash. You might ask yourself, “Will my employer’s health and worker’s compensation insurance cover me if I’m in violation of my company’s safety belt policy?” And “in addition to any injuries that I might experience, what kind of disciplinary action will be taken against me?”

In addition to these questions, you should also ask, “What would my family do without me?”

Your community also depends on you. Professional drivers contribute to public safety by setting a good example for other drivers. Drivers of heavy trucks who develop good safety practices are likely to carry these habits over to their off-duty driving situations and to other members of their families and communities.

## 4.0 HOW TO CREATE A SAFETY BELT TRAINING PROGRAM

### 4.1 Everybody Should Know Their Responsibilities

**1. Walk the talk.** Employees are more likely to comply with a safety belt program if their managers take the lead. Managers should be tested for compliance just like employees. Consider setting up a safety belt check at the entrance or exit from company terminals and office locations. If any violations are found, publish the results for all to see. Treat all employees alike. No one should be exempt from the company safety belt policy. For those employees who are wearing their belts, give out small prizes or pins to recognize their good safety practices.

**2. Assign a program coordinator from each department.** Designate a safety belt program coordinator for your company as a “champion” for the effort. Then designate at least one management-level representative in each department, work group, or terminal to coordinate distribution of materials, schedule training sessions, and implement other program activities. Be sure each representative is aware of specific duties and responsibilities.

**3. Employee participation.** When possible, be sure to allow employees to take an active role in safety decisions for the company. Not only does this increase morale, but it can be an excellent source of uncovering innovative ways to implement the program that might have been overlooked.

**4. Implement a basic training program** to include providing initial training for all employees, and then follow up with periodic reinforcement training (see next page for suggestions on such a training program.)

**5. Evaluate your safety belt program** on a regularly scheduled basis, (e.g. perhaps every six months or so). See the section “How to Evaluate Your Program.”

**6. Promote your successes in the community and with your employees,** vendors, and trade associations. Should you reach safety milestones, promote it with the media.

### 4.2 Basic Safety Belt Training Course

Driver training will have two main components: initial training and periodic reinforcement. The initial program will convey the importance of safety belts, proper use of the safety belt, the provisions of safety belt laws, as well as tips for recognizing and resolving safety belt problems. Supervisors conducting training should be provided with the appropriate training materials and supplementary references.

The following are the general topics that should be addressed in a comprehensive training program for drivers (see PowerPoint presentation developed to accompany this manual):

1. Safety Belt Requirements

- Federal
- State
- Company

2. The High Cost of Truck Crashes in the United States and in Our Company

- Fatalities
- Injuries
- Direct costs to trucking operations
- Indirect costs to trucking operations

3. Effectiveness of Safety Belts

- Proper Fit
- Maintenance

4. Evidence Proves Safety Belts Will Save Your Life

5. Testimonies from Drivers Saved by a Safety Belt

6. How Safety Belts Protect Truck Occupants

(Provided is a video showing what can happen when a driver does not wear a safety belt.)

7. Know Your Safety Belt Equipment

- Types of equipment
- Common problems
- Use and maintenance of safety belts

8. Common Misconceptions and Myths about Safety Belts in Large Trucks

9. Knowledge Tests

See Tests 1 and 2 that follow. How much do you really know about safety belts and your truck?

10. Safety Belt Pledge.

## 5.0 HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR PROGRAM

Program evaluation is needed to determine if your program is effective and efficient in improving safety belt use. Specific approaches to monitoring and evaluating the safety belt use program may differ from company to company, or even among different departments within the same company. This fact sheet provides suggestions on how a trucking fleet supervisor or manager can start program evaluation.

### 5.1 Evaluation Criteria

Before implementing your safety belt program, remember to establish evaluation criteria and procedures. For example, if observational surveys are to be used for determining belt usage, how will they be conducted? Will there be comparisons “before and after” or between divisions of the company?

### 5.2 General Approaches to Program Evaluation

All program evaluation efforts should include the following steps:

- Develop initial evaluation measures before implementing the program
- Make periodic measurements to determine program accomplishments
- Calculate program effectiveness
- Report results using a standard format.

Plans for program evaluation may include one or more of the following approaches:

- Evaluations based on crash data analysis. This type of analysis is based on an employee crash data reporting and analysis system. Many firms have found them useful in evaluating safety belt usage and other factors contributing to the occurrence and severity of motor vehicle crashes. Reporting forms and investigation methods should follow those recommended by recognized national sources, such as the National Safety Council ([www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)), the Department of Transportation ([www.dot.gov](http://www.dot.gov)), and the National Transportation Safety Board ([www.nts.gov](http://www.nts.gov)).
- Measurements of the increase in drivers’ knowledge or improved attitudes regarding safety belt use through such measures as the knowledge tests in this guide.
- Documentation of program activity, such as the number of workshop attendees per quarter, the number of educational pamphlets distributed, or the hours of instruction per driver.
- Conducting a safety belt use survey to obtain measurements of change in actual safety belt usage by employees.

### 5.3 Conducting Safety Belt Use Surveys

**1. Develop Initial Measures of Safety Belt Use.** The most accurate way to assess safety belt usage rates is to make unannounced observations of drivers at work. Such observations may be done by supervisors, part-time or temporary personnel, or through cooperative efforts with local or state police. If you use a road safety observation company, make sure their report includes questions dealing with "safety belt worn or not worn, or not-observed."

Make observations from a high vantage point, such as while standing in a terminal, toll booth, overpass, or a building near the company's terminal. This may require using binoculars, so lap and shoulder belts are visible to the observer. Some older large trucks do not have shoulder belts. Observations should be taken at different times of the day and week and should include different types of routes such as pick-up-and-delivery routes as compared to over-the-road routes. To ensure an accurate estimate of safety belt usage, the observations should be repeated several times during the first month. If your company is running a competition between different departments or terminals, enough observations will be needed to allow calculation of usage rates for each group.

For information on determining adequate sample sizes and site selection, refer to the following sources for program evaluation: NHTSA, *Belt Use Survey Guidelines*, April 1990 and Ferber, R., P. Sheatsley, A. Turner, and J Waksberg, *What is a Survey?* from the American Statistical Association, Washington, DC.

**2. Make Periodic Measurements.** After drivers have undergone initial training, repeat the observation process one to three times each year. To ensure consistency of comparisons, make the observations at the same times of day and locations. If there are any operational difficulties that discourage safety belt use, such as the physical condition of the equipment, make note of it and inform the supervisor.

**3. Calculate Driver Usage Rate.** To calculate Driver Usage Rate (i.e., percentage of drivers wearing safety belts), divide the number of belted truck drivers by the total number of drivers observed and then multiply this number by 100 [For example, 65 belted drivers / 85 drivers observed =  $.76 \times 100 = 76\%$ ].

**4. Develop Standard Report Format for Management.** To keep management interested and involved in the program, periodically report the number of drivers observed and the number using belts to management in a standard format. Illustrate comparative data to show trends toward greater or lesser safety belt usage.

## 6.0 HOW TO REINFORCE YOUR SAFETY BELT PROGRAM

To maintain good safe driving practices it is necessary to periodically reinforce past lessons. Your program should include a list of specific activities your company will consider undertaking on a regular basis. Here are a number of options. You might find that some work better than others for your company.

### 6.1 Incentives

Providing incentives for regular safety belt use is a great way to maintain enthusiasm for your safety belt program. Incentives can include awards, which may include safety slogans printed on them, such as:

- Safe driver certificates
- Pens
- Shirt or jacket patches
- Flashlights
- Hats
- Belt buckles
- Recognition at ceremonies, in company newsletters, with the local media
- Cash recognition for exceptional safety performance in which safety belt use is a major part of the evaluation criteria.

### 6.2 Ways to Maintain Safe Driving Practices Among Drivers

**1. Appeal to Professional Pride.** Appealing to drivers' professional pride can produce great results. Ask for a personal commitment to 100 percent safety belt use.

**2. Company Newsletter.** Using information in this manual, develop a file of articles and reminders. Seek out personal stories and testimonial statements or worthwhile stories to tell of successes or failures with safety belt experiences. Every two or three months, print one or two of them in the company newsletter.

When drivers are cited by the police for safety belt violations, write up the circumstances as a "tidbit" for inclusion in the next issue. For example, "Recently a driver received a ticket in Seattle, Washington for failure to use a safety belt. The fine was \$XXX - - a high price for not taking the few seconds to buckle up! By the way, as of January 2006, 49 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have laws requiring safety belt use." Also, make sure to review your company's crash reports for cases where the use or non-use of safety belts made a difference. For example, "A driver at our Hagerstown, Maryland terminal owes his life to a safety belt..."

Sending newsletters home to family members can be a great way to enlist motivation and support for safety initiatives. This is especially true if you publish dollar amounts for

fines paid by drivers for not wearing their safety belts and include stories about drivers lives saved by safety belt use.

**3. Literature for Drivers.** Every three or four months, distribute fact sheets to drivers. Subject matter may be drawn, with little effort, from the following sources:

- This document includes information that can be used to develop fact sheets, which may be photocopied and distributed to drivers
- Provide safety belt stories as inserts for inclusion in paycheck envelopes
- Put safety belt stickers in truck cabs.

**4. Safety and Health Meetings.** Prepare a two-minute “pep talk” for safety and health meetings. Use the materials included in this manual. Any items in the file regarding recent crashes or citations of the company’s drivers may be mentioned. Make sure your safety training programs include safety belt information specific to large trucks.

**5. Posters.** Posters encouraging safety belt use are available from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt> and <http://nhtsa.gov/people/outreach/media/catalog/Index.cfm>.

**6. Collect Materials and Establish a File for Your Ongoing Program.** As a means of maintaining drivers’ awareness of the importance of safety belt use, materials should be collected and kept on file, and be periodically released in varying formats. Examples of materials include:

- Fact sheets
- Peer observation checklist
- Articles for company newsletters on various aspects of safety belt and lap/shoulder belt use
- Notices when someone is fined or has a crash where safety belt use or non-use was an important factor
- Posters in terminals, meeting areas, and on trucks
- Stickers for truck cabs
- Messages inserted in pay envelopes or printed on checks or stubs
- Reminders at safety briefings
- Two-minute pep talk.

**7. Procurement of Safety Belts.** Work with your ordering department, vehicle and equipment suppliers, and vehicle manufacturers to encourage improved safety belt design, and to purchase vehicles with comfortable and recognizable safety belts. Get driver input as to what they like or dislike. Consider equipping all trucks with safety belts in a bright color such as orange. This change, when implemented with a policy that

all drivers extend the belt over the steering wheel upon exiting the cab, can lead to an increase in compliance.

**8. Risk Control.** Work with your insurance company representatives, your occupational safety and health professional, and in-house safety statistical record keeper to identify the number of crashes involving the use or non-use of safety belts. Note changes in trends. Share the information with company management and drivers. If a driver has a crash, especially where an injury or fatality occurred, make sure other drivers in the company know whether or not a safety belt was used and how the use or non-use factored in the crash.

**9. Marketing Department.** Have your Public Relations or Marketing Department create a safety belt communications program for internal and external audiences. Challenge them to be creative and release messages in a variety of ways. New communications every 3 to 6 months will keep the program fresh.

**10. Discussion Groups.** Whenever possible, have employees talk about safety belt use in small discussion groups. Smaller groups usually increase driver participation and commitment.

**11. Company Events.** Company events are a great place to have family members involved in safety belt initiatives. Hand out fliers or brochures to increase awareness of the importance of safety belt use in each employee's family. Have safety belt demonstration devices brought to company picnics or safety days. These devices can usually be obtained through your state highway safety office or possibly through your insurance company.

**12. Pre-trip Inspections.** Add buckling the safety belt to the checklist. Make sure the specifics include checking for clean and operational lap and shoulder belts.

**13. Disciplinary Policy.** Mandatory safety belt use can also be related to employment. The disciplinary policy can be implemented if all other incentives have failed.

## **7.0 KNOWLEDGE TESTS**

The two knowledge tests on the following pages gauge drivers' knowledge about safety belts and safe driving.

## KNOWLEDGE TEST 1

### How much do you really know about safety belts and your truck?

The following test gauges your knowledge about safety belts and safe driving.

1. In a crash, being thrown from a vehicle:
    - a. Increases the chance of death or serious injury
    - b. Decreases the chance of death or serious injury
    - c. Has no effect on the chance of death or serious injury
  
  2. If a vehicle is in a crash and becomes submerged in water, a driver's chances of escaping from the vehicle are:
    - a. Increased by wearing a safety belt
    - b. Decreased by wearing a safety belt
    - c. Not affected by wearing a safety belt
  
  3. Safety belts prevent injury:
    - a. Most often on long trips
    - b. Most often on short trips
    - c. On all trips
  
  4. Safety belts prevent injury:
    - a. Most often in bad weather
    - b. Most often in good weather
    - c. In all weather conditions
  
  5. A driver's ability to control the vehicle in an emergency is:
    - a. Hampered by safety belts
    - b. Improved by safety belts
    - c. Unaffected by safety belts
  
  6. Besides your own safety, not wearing your safety belt can certainly affect:
    - a. Your family and loved ones
    - b. Other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash
    - c. All of the above
-

7. The lap and shoulder belt has been proven to:
- a. Hold a driver securely behind the wheel in event of a crash
  - b. Greatly increase the driver's ability to maintain control of the vehicle
  - c. Minimize the chance for serious injury or death
  - d. All of the above
8. In a frontal collision occurring at 30 mph, an unbelted person continues to move forward causing him/her to hit frontal interior components (such as the steering wheel, instrument panel, or windshield) at about 30 mph. This is the same velocity a person falling from the top of a \_\_\_\_\_ upon impact with the ground:
- a. Thirty-story building
  - b. Three-story building
  - c. One-story building
9. If a passenger fails to wear a safety belt, the driver's chances of being injured are:
- a. Increased
  - b. Decreased
  - c. Not affected

*Answers:* 1.a, 2.a, 3.c, 4.c, 5.b, 6.c, 7.d, 8.b, 9.a

## KNOWLEDGE TEST 2

**How much do you really know about safety belts and your truck?**

**(TRUE OR FALSE)**

1. Good drivers know how to avoid crashes. Only poor drivers need to wear safety belts. (T/F)
2. If the vehicle catches on fire or submerges, the safety belts will trap the occupants inside. (T/F)
3. Wearing a safety belt is a personal decision that does not affect anyone else. (T/F)
4. If you are thrown from the vehicle, your chances of injury will be lower than if you had been wearing your safety belt. (T/F)
5. Safety belts will not protect the driver against injury in the case of a side impact. (T/F)
6. Although studies have shown that safety belts reduce the chances of injury or death in automobiles, they do not apply to large trucks. (T/F)
7. Forty-nine states (as of January 2006), the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have laws requiring safety belt use. (T/F)

*Answers on next page.*

## Knowledge Test 2 Answers

1. FALSE. Even expert and alert drivers have no control over other drivers on the road. Truck driving is third only to farming and mining in the number of fatalities per 100,000 workers.
2. FALSE. Fire or submersion occurs in less than five percent of heavy-duty truck crashes. If you are belted and unhurt, you are more likely to remain conscious and alert. Therefore, you are more likely to be able to escape from the vehicle. If you are not wearing the safety belt, you are more likely to become unconscious or hurt by striking other parts of the vehicle's interior.
3. FALSE. Not wearing a safety belt can certainly affect your family and loved ones. It can also affect other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash. It's the law; Federal regulations require commercial vehicle drivers to buckle up.
4. FALSE. If you are thrown from a vehicle in a crash, the chances of death or serious injury are four times greater than if you remain belted inside. If you are thrown from the vehicle, you may land on hard or sharp objects, be struck by your own vehicle, or struck by another vehicle.
5. FALSE. Side impacts can cause truck occupants to be thrown into each other or into hard interior surfaces of the cab. In addition, safety belts keep the driver in place so that control of the vehicle can be maintained, thereby providing the driver with the opportunity of avoiding a second or third collision.
6. FALSE. According to 2004 Fatal Analysis Reporting System statistics, almost half of drivers of large trucks killed in crashes were not wearing their safety belts.
7. TRUE. Because most of these laws have been enacted during the past several years, many drivers are not yet aware of how committed the States are on the subject. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations also require that safety belts be used.

**8.0 TWO-MINUTE PEP TALK**  
**SAFETY BELTS – HABIT FOR LIFE**  
**BE READY. BE BUCKLED.**

- Good drivers usually don't cause collisions, but it's possible that during your career you will be involved in a crash caused by a bad driver, bad weather, mechanical failure, or tire blowout. Wearing a safety belt prevents injuries and fatalities by preventing ejection, and by protecting your head and spinal cord.
- The lap and shoulder belt design has been proven to hold a driver securely behind the wheel in the event of a crash, greatly increasing the driver's ability to maintain control of the vehicle and minimizing the chance for serious injury or death.
- Not wearing a safety belt can certainly affect your family and loved ones. It can also affect other motorists since wearing a safety belt can help you avoid losing control of your truck in a crash. It's the law; Federal regulations require commercial vehicle drivers to buckle up.
- Buckling up takes about three seconds. Even buckling up 20 times a day requires only one minute.
- In 2004, 634 drivers of large trucks died in truck crashes and 303 of those truck drivers were not wearing safety belts.
- An occupant of a vehicle is four times as likely to be fatally injured when thrown from the vehicle. In 2004, 168 truck drivers died when they were ejected from their cabs during a crash.
- Safety belts can keep you from being knocked unconscious, improving your chances of escape. Fire or submersion occurs in less than 5% of fatal large truck crashes.
- A 2005 Transportation Research Board study on commercial drivers' safety belt usage found many drivers do not find wearing safety belts to be uncomfortable or too restrictive of their movements. Once they correctly adjust the seat, lap and shoulder belt, most drivers find that discomfort and restrictive movement can be alleviated.

## 9.0 ADDITIONAL SAFETY BELT INFORMATION

### **CMV Safety Belt Partnership**

[www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt)

The Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Safety Belt Partnership was created by Secretary Norman Y. Mineta to promote increased safety belt use among the nation's CMV drivers. See statement from the Partnership at the end of this manual.

CMV Safety Belt Partnership Members:

- American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators - [www.aamva.org](http://www.aamva.org)
- American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) - [www.asse.org](http://www.asse.org)
- American Trucking Associations (ATA) - [www.trucking.org](http://www.trucking.org)
- Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) - [www.cvsa.org](http://www.cvsa.org)
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) - [www.fmcsa.dot.gov](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov)
- Great West Casualty Company - <https://ssl.gwccnet.com>
- International Association of Chiefs of Police - [www.theiacp.org](http://www.theiacp.org)
- National Association of Publicly Funded Truck Driving Schools  
[www.napftds.org/new](http://www.napftds.org/new)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration - [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)
- National Private Truck Council (NPTC) - [www.nptc.org](http://www.nptc.org)
- National Safety Council - [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)
- National Tank Truck Carriers - [www.tanktruck.net](http://www.tanktruck.net)
- NATSO - [www.natso.com](http://www.natso.com)
- Network of Employers for Traffic Safety - [www.trafficsafety.org](http://www.trafficsafety.org)
- Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) - [www.ooida.com](http://www.ooida.com)
- Professional Truck Driver Institute - [www.ptdi.org](http://www.ptdi.org)
- Property Casualty Insurers Association of America - [www.pciaa.net](http://www.pciaa.net)
- Truckload Carriers Association - [www.truckload.org](http://www.truckload.org)
- Truck Manufacturers Association - [www.truckmanufacturersassociation.org](http://www.truckmanufacturersassociation.org)

**Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program (CTBSSP) Synthesis Study No. 8: Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver Safety Belt Usage (2005)** [http://trb.org/news/blurb\\_detail.asp?id=5183](http://trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=5183)

This TRB study identifies and documents motivating factors that influence CMV drivers in deciding whether to wear safety belts and reviews research and practices that address CMV safety belt usage. It also offers a review of ergonomic and human engineering factors in the design and use of safety belts in CMVs and outlines approaches to facilitate safety belt use by truck manufacturers.

### **Safety Belt Usage by Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers, 2003**

[www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt)

This study was conducted by The Center for Applied Research, Inc. and Westat for USDOT Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The intent of this study was to design and implement a nationally representative sample survey of safety belt usage among CMV drivers and, based on the data collected, to produce estimates of safety belt usage rates for this segment of the driving population. The study found that only 48 percent of all commercial vehicle drivers wear safety belts.

### **Safety Belt Usage by Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers, 2005**

[www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt)

This study was conducted by Westat for USDOT Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The intent of this study was to design and implement a nationally representative sample survey of safety belt usage among CMV drivers and, based on the data collected, to produce estimates of safety belt usage rates for this segment of the driving population. The study found that only 54 percent of all commercial vehicle drivers wear safety belts.

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

NHTSA's site has up-to-date safety belt and child safety seat use statistics, fatality and injury statistics, Click It or Ticket data, and other information.

### **Department of Transportation (DOT) Vehicle Safety Hotline**

**1-888-327-4236**

Consumers can call the Vehicle Safety Hotline to check complaints related to motor vehicles, child safety devices, and other equipment. Consumers can also find out information about current and past NHTSA investigations; recall campaigns concerning motor vehicles, child safety devices, tires, and related equipment; and technical service bulletins issued by manufacturers.

### **Safercar.gov**

[www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov)

NHTSA's easy-to-use site that provides the most recent crash test and rollover ratings and information on other vehicle safety-related topics, including lists of current recalls for vehicles, vehicle equipment, or child safety seats.

**SaferTruck.gov**  
[www.SaferTruck.gov](http://www.SaferTruck.gov)

Web site created to help truckers easily report potential vehicle and equipment safety defects, as well as access information about recalls, ongoing investigations and other safety-related information. These reports are integral to helping NHTSA facilitate recalls and repairs of defective trucks and equipment.

**Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)**  
[www-fars.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www-fars.nhtsa.dot.gov)

FARS is an online database that allows users to access the most recent automobile reports and statistics compiled by NHTSA. The system allows you to download full reports or create your own data queries using dozens of factors or variables.

**Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign**  
[www.nsc.org/airbag.htm](http://www.nsc.org/airbag.htm)

The Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign, under the umbrella of the National Safety Council, is an intensive education and action campaign that educates the public about air bags and works to increase the proper use of safety belts and child safety seats.

**Buckle Up America**  
[www.buckleupamerica.org](http://www.buckleupamerica.org)

Buckle Up America's online headquarters has materials, statistics, and news items relating to safety belts.

**AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety**  
[www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org)

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is a publicly supported nonprofit organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing injuries by preventing traffic crashes. The Foundation funds research projects, and develops educational materials for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and other road users.

## APPENDIX A

### TRB SYNTHESIS REPORT ON COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVER SAFETY BELT USAGE Summary of TRB Study Results (June, 2005)

In 2003, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) conducted a commercial truck safety belt observation study that determined only 48 percent of commercial truck drivers wore safety belts compared with 82 percent of passenger car drivers. FMCSA then developed a comprehensive program to increase safety belt use among commercial drivers. As part of this program, FMCSA sponsored a Transportation Research Board (TRB) Synthesis study to better understand the motivating factors that influence commercial motor vehicle drivers in deciding whether to wear safety belts, and to identify research and best practices addressing CMV safety belt usage.

The TRB Synthesis study includes a review of literature on commercial vehicle driver safety belt use, results of motor carrier safety manager surveys conducted for the study, results of driver surveys and focus groups, a review of ergonomic and technological factors affecting safety belt use, recommendations on best practices by motor carriers, and identifies further research needs.

**Safety Manager Survey Results.** The Safety Manager Survey included 120 respondents, based on mail distribution and collection at meetings of trucking industry associations. Company safety managers identified several reasons they believe safety belts might not be used. They said: drivers find it to be too much trouble and effort, they just forget, it is a habit, the belts fit poorly, belts are uncomfortable, the belts restrict movement, wearing them infringes on personal freedom, drivers are worried about being trapped in their vehicles, drivers don't believe belts enhance safety, they don't like them, and some drivers only use safety belts part time (e.g., only in bad weather).

With respect to methods that fleet managers use to promote safety belt use, the three top-rated methods were rewards/recognition for observed use, observing driver belt use in vehicles, and punishments/reprimands for non-use. Safety managers use multiple approaches to encourage drivers to use safety belts. The highest rated method involving industry and government programs was showing videos of crash testing with test dummies with and without safety belts.

**Driver Survey.** The principal driver survey, involving 238 respondents, was a structured interview conducted at two truck stop locations. The interview population indicated that the majority wear safety belts all or most of the time. Their choices to wear a belt were primarily because of safety, because it is the law, it is a habit, or they have seen or been in a crash. For those who did not choose to wear a belt, the primary reason related to comfort, personal choice, or because they disliked it. For those drivers who felt that truck safety belts should be more functional, they listed the following issues relating to functionality: Limited range of arm and shoulder motion, the lap belt or shoulder harness

is not long enough/too tight, the shoulder harness position is awkward, and the belts ride too high or too low.

Over 60 percent of drivers had complaints about safety belts, such as: safety belt rubs or vibrates against neck/shoulder, safety belt locks, safety belt is uncomfortable, safety belt is too tight, and safety belt has limited range of motion.

The major reasons drivers gave as to what makes a safety belt easy to use were that it does not fit too tight, does not interfere with driving, is easy to put on and take off, and is easy to position. With respect to carrier and fleet interactions, most drivers who responded to these questions indicated that there is no penalty for non-use, and there are no special incentives that would encourage them to use safety belts.

**Ergonomics and Human Factors Assessment.** The study reviewed ergonomic and human engineering factors in design and use or non-use of safety belts in commercial trucks, as well as approaches to facilitating safety belt use by truck manufacturers. The TRB Synthesis study team examined the interactions of generally used three-point safety belts with a range of drivers and in different types of truck cabs. The team also visited original equipment manufacturers (OEM) to examine installation of current seat and safety belt designs and to study differing approaches used in new large trucks. In general, the assessment was that the majority of safety belts are practical and functional, and that newer belts have comfort-enhancing features that make them more user-friendly. However, current belts are not as comfortable or effective with large individuals and individuals of small stature. The assessment also found that many drivers were not fully aware of the features that make belts both comfortable and easy to use. Additionally the study found the belts generally available have optional features that can make belt use more comfortable and convenient for drivers. Safety belt manufacturers and OEMs are taking steps to further improve convenience and comfort.

**Barriers.** The TRB study cited the following barriers to increasing safety belt use: Many drivers have a cultural or factual misperception about risks of non-use; some fleet managers do not employ proactive and comprehensive approaches to driver use; some operational situations (multi-stop, short distance, and delivery environments) encourage drivers to give in to perceived inconvenience; large and small-stature drivers experience discomfort using safety belts; many drivers are unaware of comfort and convenience features available on modern safety belts; and not all fleets purchase the most advanced safety belts for their trucks.

**Recommendations.** The study recommended that FMCSA continue its plan to use the education and enforcement model established by NHTSA as an effective method to increase safety belt use; and that there should be an intensive educational and technology development effort to –

- Increase driver understanding of the benefits of 100% use, and risks of non-use.
- Ensure fleet managers employ all methods to provide incentives.
- Accelerate installation of full-featured safety belts in all fleet vehicles.
- Focus on eliminating small/large-statured driver issues with non-use of safety belts.

A copy of this 2005 TRB Synthesis report may be obtained by visiting the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership Web page at [www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt).

## **APPENDIX B**

### **A MESSAGE FROM THE CMV SAFETY BELT PARTNERSHIP**

#### **AMERICA NEEDS YOU. BE READY. BE BUCKLED.**

Every year, because they fail to wear their safety belts, thousands of Americans die or are seriously injured in motor vehicle crashes. As professional organizations representing a substantial number of truck drivers and law enforcement officers in the commercial motor vehicle industry throughout North America, we believe our members should set the example for the motoring public. A recent study conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation shows only 54 percent of commercial motor vehicle drivers wear safety belts compared to 82 percent of passenger vehicle drivers.

In 2004, 303 of the 634 commercial motor vehicle drivers killed in crashes were not wearing safety belts. Of the 168 drivers killed who were ejected from their vehicles, almost 75 percent of them were not wearing safety belts. This is a preventable tragedy! In response to this, each member organization of the CMV Safety Belt Partnership has made a commitment to increase safety belt use in the commercial driver community. Here is what they have to say:

#### **AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY ENGINEERS**

Founded in 1911, the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) is the oldest and largest professional safety organization and is committed to protecting people, property, and the environment.

Based in Des Plaines, IL, ASSE has 30,000 members who manage, supervise, research, and consult on safety, health, transportation, and environmental issues in all industries, government, labor, and education. ASSE has 151 chapters, 30 sections and 63 student sections in the United States and members in 64 countries including chapters in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and sections in Egypt and Ecuador. Our members work day in and day out to make sure that the millions of people who go to work each day return home safely.

Every year since 1992 transportation crashes have been the leading cause of on-the-job deaths in the United States. Large truck crashes have declined over the years; however, the majority of those who lost their lives in commercial vehicles were solo truck drivers not wearing their safety belts. Safety belts save lives and prevent injuries. For decades, ASSE and its members have worked to improve roadway safety and increase the use of safety belts through professional education programs, advocacy, ongoing public awareness, and more. The American Society of Safety Engineers is proud to be a part of

the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership in its ongoing efforts to increase the use of safety belts. For more information, visit [www.asse.org](http://www.asse.org).

## **AMERICAN TRUCKING ASSOCIATIONS**

ATA is the national trade and safety association of the trucking industry created to promote and protect the interests of the industry through a united federation of motor carriers, state trucking associations, and national trucking conferences. ATA praises the efforts of the industry and ATA members to promote the use of safety belts to save the lives of their employees and the general public. ATA believes that a person who uses a safety belt maintains better control of a vehicle in a crash sequence and can prevent or minimize the occurrence. ATA fully supports the increased industry and Government action to increase safety belt use and wants to send the message to professional drivers to "Maintain Control-Buckle Up!" For more information, visit [www.truckline.com](http://www.truckline.com).

## **COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SAFETY ALLIANCE**

CVSA is the international association that represents law enforcement and industry organizations dedicated to truck and bus safety and security. Too many truck and bus drivers are being killed because they are not buckling up. It is the single most important safety device in protecting vehicle occupants. We are encouraging our members to educate drivers and motor carriers and to aggressively enforce the federal safety belt law that is already on the books for truck and bus drivers. Our message to drivers is: "Wear Your Safety Belt. Save Your Life. Avoid a Ticket." For more information, visit [www.cvsa.org](http://www.cvsa.org).

## **FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ADMINISTRATION**

FMCSA is a safety agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation. Its primary mission is to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks and buses. The Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership will help achieve this goal. In creating the partnership, Secretary Norman Y. Mineta stressed the great contribution commercial motor vehicle drivers make to highway safety and the economic health and well-being of America. His message to these drivers is, "America needs you. Buckle up." For more information, visit [www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetybelt).

## **GREAT WEST CASUALTY COMPANY**

Great West Casualty Company specializes in insurance products and services exclusively for the trucking industry. The Great West network of independent agents are service-oriented and excellent resources for solutions on the issues truckers face in today's environment. Great West serves 34 states and is headquartered in South Sioux City, Nebraska. Great West believes that having a proactive safety program is the cornerstone of a great trucking company. The company supports safety belt usage and encourages all of their customers to use them. Currently, Great West is working on a variety of projects

aimed at increasing safety belt usage with professional truck drivers. For more information, visit [www.gwccnet.com](http://www.gwccnet.com) .

## **NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION**

NHTSA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation responsible for reducing deaths, injuries, and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes. In fulfilling this responsibility, it serves as a national leader for the promotion of occupant-restraint use for children, youth, and adults. NHTSA is confident that the efforts of the CMV Safety Belt Partnership will contribute greatly to creating a national norm that makes it unacceptable to ride unrestrained in any motor vehicle. The agency looks forward to sharing its research on driver behavior and traffic safety, showing that highly visible enforcement of safety belt laws increases use. NHTSA is optimistic that this strategy, along with others, will help the Partnership realize its commitment to saving lives and reducing injuries among truck drivers throughout the country. For more information, visit [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov).

## **NATIONAL PRIVATE TRUCK COUNCIL**

NPTC is the national trade association dedicated exclusively to representing private motor carrier fleets. These fleets include food, retail, wholesale, construction, and service companies. Our priority interest is SAFETY. We believe that most of our members' drivers share this interest in SAFETY and wear their safety belts, but we won't be satisfied until we reach 100 percent. We encourage all of our members' drivers and the entire professional driving community to wear their safety belts and save lives. In the words of NPTC's President and CEO, Gary F. Petty, "You have to be present to win." We want to "win" 100 percent of the time. For more information, visit <http://www.nptc.org> .

## **NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL**

NSC, the national nonprofit safety and health organization based in Chicago, has long been involved in the workplace, on the highway, and in the community. We strongly support efforts by the industry and government to increase safety belt protection for truck drivers. Our Truck and Bus Safety Symposiums and our Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign are examples of our initiatives in these areas. We look forward to supporting this important effort. For more information, visit [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org) .

## **NATSO**

Headquartered just outside Washington, DC, NATSO is the national trade association representing America's \$42 billion travel plazas and truck stop industry. NATSO's mission is to advance this diverse industry by serving as the official source of information on travel plazas, acting as the voice of the industry with government, and conducting the industry's only national convention and exposition. NATSO endorses the use of safety belts and strongly encourages its members to advertise this message in their facilities. Promoting safety belt use to drivers and carriers will go a long way toward saving lives

and improving the safety and quality of America's roadways. For more information, visit [www.natso.com](http://www.natso.com) .

## **NATIONAL TANK TRUCK CARRIERS**

NTTC has represented the tank truck industry for over 50 years. As the prime carriers of hazardous materials in bulk, safety is our number one priority. We feel that drivers of cargo tanks are among the best trained, prepared, and educated drivers in the motor carrier business. The trucking companies within our membership are proactive in their efforts to ensure that all drivers of commercial motor vehicles wear their safety belts at all times. NTTC promotes the wearing of safety belts among our membership; our collective driver corps should set excellent examples to the motoring public. We value the accomplishments of our drivers. Driver safety is paramount; this association asserts that "buckling up" saves lives. For more information, visit [www.tanktruck.net](http://www.tanktruck.net) .

## **NETWORK OF EMPLOYERS FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY**

The Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) is an employer-led public/private partnership dedicated to improving the safety and health of employees, their families, and members of the communities in which they live and work by preventing traffic crashes that occur both on and off the job. NETS believes safety belts are the best defense against the risky driving behaviors on our roadways and are the most effective means of reducing injuries and fatalities in a crash. To safeguard America's workforce, NETS develops and promotes corporate safety belt programs for all places of business. Employers have a crucial role to play in increasing safety belt use to safeguard employees—their most valuable asset. Our message to America's workers: "Please buckle up. We need employees like you." For more information, visit [www.trafficsafety.org](http://www.trafficsafety.org).

## **OWNER-OPERATOR INDEPENDENT DRIVERS ASSOCIATION**

OOIDA is the international trade association representing the interests of independent owner-operators and professional drivers on all issues that affect small business truckers. OOIDA is active in all aspects of highway safety and transportation policy, and interacts with state, provincial, and federal government agencies; legislatures; the courts; other trade associations; and private businesses. OOIDA considers the membership its greatest asset. The safety, security, and well-being of the members, and that of all truckers, remain foremost on OOIDA's agenda. The vast majority of truckers are true professionals, and wouldn't think of pulling onto the highway without properly securing their load. Unfortunately, too many are failing to secure their most valuable cargo-themselves. OOIDA urges these experienced professionals to be out front, setting the example for other truckers and for all highway users to buckle up. For more information, visit [www.oida.com](http://www.oida.com).

## **PROPERTY CASUALTY INSURERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**

The Property Casualty Insurers Association of America (PCI), with its more than 1,000 member companies, serves as the voice of the property/casualty insurance industry before state and federal policymakers; state and federal courts; key industry, government and business groups; the news media; and the public. The statistics are convincing; lives are saved and the severity of injuries is reduced as safety belt use increases. As a result, PCI has been an ardent supporter of measures to improve highway safety, including efforts to increase safety belt use among all sectors of the driving public. Over the years, PCI has worked with its members insurance companies to promote safety belt use. PCI is proud to be a part of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership in this effort to encourage the use of safety belts. For more information, visit [www.pciaa.net](http://www.pciaa.net).

## **TRUCK MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION**

TMA represents the major medium and heavy duty truck manufacturers in North America, including: Ford Motor Company; Freightliner LLC; General Motors Corporation; Mack Trucks, Inc.; International Truck and Engine Corporation; Isuzu Commercial Truck of America, Inc.; PACCAR Inc.; and Volvo Trucks North America. Our members build trucks with the driver's safety as a top priority. Keeping the driver inside the cab is the only way to benefit from the protection a modern cab offers. Wearing a safety belt in the truck is the best protection against ejection from the cab. Our message to drivers: "Keep in the cab, wear your safety belt." For more information, visit [www.truckmanufacturersassociation.org](http://www.truckmanufacturersassociation.org).

The CMV Safety Belt Partnership extends appreciation to the ***Wexford Group International*** for contributing the services of Dr. Gerald P. Krueger, Ph.D., CPE, Director, Human Factors, Ergonomics, and Medical Research Unit to the Partnership's activities. The Wexford Group International, in Vienna, VA, concentrates its consulting expertise on hard-to-solve problems in human resource planning, economics, technology applications and management for government and private sector business arenas. For more information, visit [www.thewexfordgroup.com](http://www.thewexfordgroup.com)

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