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**Model Fleet Safety
Program**

**Everest National
Insurance Company**

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Introduction

The success and profitability of your business, to a great extent, is dependent upon the efficiency of your operations. Any disruption in the smooth flow of work caused by accidents or lack of maintenance, that may cause driver injuries and damaged vehicles, will impact operating efficiency and ultimately reduce profits. Therefore, it makes good business sense to prevent accidents. An effective Fleet Safety Program prevents accidents.

This publication is designed to assist policyholder management in developing, refining or strengthening their Fleet Safety Program. Controlling loss is a management priority whether the fleet is large or small. The fleet may be a carrier of goods or passengers, consist of large tractor trailer trucks, buses, box vans or passenger cars, operating locally, regionally or nationwide. Irrespective of the size or purpose of your fleet, Everest National Insurance advocates the implementation of an effective Fleet Safety Program.

Loss Control is a daily responsibility of your individual management. This publication is not a substitute for your own loss control program. The information provided in this publication should not be considered as all encompassing, or suitable for all situations, conditions, or environments. Each organization is responsible for implementing their safety/injury/illness prevention program and should consult with legal, medical, technical, or other advisors as to the suitability of using the information contained in this publication.



Benefits of a Fleet Safety Program

Vehicle accidents continue to be the leading cause of work-related deaths and probably are a leading drain on company profits. Companies with effective Fleet Safety Programs are able to reduce and eliminate most of their accident costs. Those without safety programs may be astonished to learn how large that drain can be.

Reduced Accident Costs

Costs are incurred with any fleet accident. Some of these costs are insured but many are not. The following are examples of both.

Insured Costs include:

- ▶ Vehicle Damage,
- ▶ Cargo Damage,
- ▶ Liability Payments, and
- ▶ Legal Costs.

Uninsured Costs include:

- ▶ Lost sales due to customers who are dissatisfied with late deliveries,
- ▶ Lost production due to vehicle and employee down time,
- ▶ Cost of temporary replacement for injured employee, retraining of injured employee and administrative time for reporting and filing accident reports and insurance forms, and
- ▶ Cost of damage to your company's public image.
- ▶ Insurance premium increases

An effective Fleet Safety Program can markedly impact both insured and uninsured costs by reducing accident activity and its related costs.

Adherence to Legal Responsibilities

An effective Fleet Safety Program can help in meeting the requirements of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR). For affected businesses, these regulations mandate minimum safety regulations that must be met. Most states have also adopted the majority of these regulations for their intrastate operations as well.



Adhering to statutes and regulations is only part of the battle. Employers have a legal responsibility to assure safe drivers and quality vehicles are placed on the road. Lawsuits are unwanted reminders when this legal responsibility is breached.

Lower Insurance Costs

Several factors may affect the availability and affordability of insurance for your company, including your company's individual accident experience. Since a Fleet Safety Program is intended to prevent accidents, your operations should be more resistive to rising insurance rates and ultimately be more competitive.

Improved Productivity

Your Fleet Safety Program is a way of transmitting an honest concern for the safety of your employees. By selecting well qualified applicants, as required in an effective Fleet Safety Program a built-in system for increasing production is established. For example, those businesses involved in delivering commodities or passengers, any delays due to accidents would decline.

Fewer Accidents

In a recent survey by the National Safety Council, over half of the surveyed organizations had effective Fleet Safety Programs in place. Fewer accidents mean lower operating costs, which places your fleet in a more competitive position.

Improved Public Image

It is much more beneficial to your company's public image to appear in a news story because of an accident-reducing safety program and safe driver award presentations, rather than because of a fatal, preventable accident.

Model Fleet Safety Program

This Model Fleet Safety Program is designed to provide management and, more specifically, the fleet administrator with the tools needed to create an effective method of accident prevention. The model can be used for any type or size fleet. To be effective, your fleet safety program must meet your needs.

Your Fleet Safety Program should contain the following elements:

1. Management Direction & Culture - Policy, Written Program, Performance Standards and Administration
2. Driver Selection / Qualification
3. Driver Training and Motivation
4. Driver Supervision
5. Vehicle Selection, Inspection and Maintenance
6. Accident Reporting, Investigation and Analysis
7. Program Development and Evaluation (Audit)

The Appendix contains sample forms and other useful information to assist you.

Your company may or may not already have all of the elements of a Fleet Safety Program. To determine the extent to which these elements exist, an evaluation or audit should be completed. The audit will identify segments of the program that are operational and effective, as well as those areas needing improvement.

Management

Direction and Culture

Senior management support and commitment to the Fleet Safety Program is necessary if the program is to succeed, because:

- ▶ Employees look up to their company leadership. They take behavior cues from the people they respect. Management's attitude and enforcement of the fleet safety program - negative or positive - naturally replicates through the organization.
- ▶ Management has the final say on allotment of company resources - time, money, materials - to the program. Without support on these three fronts, the program is doomed to stagnate or die.
- ▶ Management can delegate authority and responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the fleet safety program.
- ▶ Management must create and maintain a "Safe Driving" culture.

Management's support and commitment can be demonstrated and communicated in many ways. Suggested methods include policy statements, defining management and employee responsibilities and accountabilities for fleet safety performance; regular communication regarding fleet safety issues, performance standards and goals, and a written program which outlines all company policies and procedures regarding fleet safety. The following two pages provide information and direction on a few of these methods.

Safety Policy

Management, if it wants acceptable safety performance, must first write a safety policy. The Safety Policy ought to be a brief and clearly worded statement establishing management's philosophy of safety and the way it expects its managers and drivers to perform within this policy. Points usually covered in the policy statement are:

- ▶ The company's major concern is for the safety of its employees and the general public.
- ▶ Instructions to comply with all safety laws and regulations.
- ▶ Responsibilities of all management and employees to follow safety rules and regulations and actively participate in the fleet safety program.
- ▶ A description of how all managers and employees will be held accountable for the Fleet Safety Program results.
- ▶ Performance standards and goals to be achieved.

The Safety Policy statement must be issued under the signature of senior management, or it will not have the power and authority to positively affect employee's behavior. A sample Safety Policy statement is provided in the Appendix. After the statement is approved and signed, it must be kept current and reflect company goals. A copy of the statement should be posted where all employees can read it.

Fleet Loss Control Administration Responsibilities

A member of management should be delegated the necessary authority, to develop and facilitate the company's Fleet Safety Program and its objectives. Depending on the complexity and size of your fleet operation, this responsibility may create a need for a dedicated administrator. However, the responsibility for implementing the program and accountability for its results rests ultimately with the line organization.

Fleet coordination responsibilities should include:

- ▶ Identify emerging exposures to loss and work on implementing effective controls.
- ▶ Maintain the fleet safety program.
- ▶ Complete safety inspections of vehicles, equipment, and fleet facilities.
- ▶ Specify vehicle safety equipment and help select vehicles and equipment.
- ▶ Coordinate the selection and training of new drivers and retraining of accident repeaters and problem drivers.
- ▶ Coordinate or perform accident investigations.
- ▶ Analysis and reporting of loss data.
- ▶ Participation in accident review meetings.
- ▶ Attend and take an active interest in driver safety meetings.
- ▶ Plan safety award, recognition, and incentive programs.
- ▶ Present management reports regarding fleet safety progress.

Driver Qualification

Establishing effective and realistic driver qualification criteria is vitally important to the successful operation of any fleet, whether it is a coast-to-coast interstate operation or a small incidental fleet. Driver qualifications should exist for both the professional and incidental driver. Incidental drivers are those who do not drive as a primary job function, but do, however, use a vehicle to perform that job. Examples of incidental drivers are delivery persons, public utility drivers, salespeople, and field service personnel.

By placing sufficient emphasis on selecting the best available driver, a company helps to avoid future financial losses resulting from accidents and abuse of the equipment.

Selecting the right driver for the position will depend on how well the selection criteria matches the skills necessary for satisfactory job performance.

Depending on the type of commerce and size of the vehicles used, there are effectively three levels of driver qualification regulations to be considered:

- a. State mandated driver qualifications
- b. Drivers of vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 26,001 pounds or more; designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or used in the transportation of hazardous materials in a quantity requiring placarding under the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR), must have a single, state issued Commercial Driver's License meeting minimum Federal requirements.
- c. Drivers involved in interstate or foreign commerce in vehicles with a GVWR of 10,001 pounds or more; designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including a driver, or used in the transportation of hazardous materials in a quantity requiring placarding under the DOT HMR, are subject to the requirements of the DOT Federal Highway Administration's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR).

A "driver qualification file" should be maintained, for persons hired, to permit review of the driver's record and provide future reference to the driver's qualifications. This file should contain all the documents completed during the hiring process and annual updates as required. Motor carriers subject to the FMCSR must have certificates indicating successful completion of the physical examination and road test. A written exam and certificate are no longer required to be administered and placed in the DQ file. The sections pertaining to the written exam (Sec.391.35 and 391.37) have since been removed from the regulations. You may wish to keep a separate confidential file containing drug test results and related information unless the regulations stipulate differently. For reference purposes, the Appendix contains information on record retention.

The driver selection process includes several steps including:

1. Application Form
2. Interview
3. Driver's License Verification
4. Reference Check
5. Motor Vehicle Driving Record
6. Physical Examination
7. Road Test
8. Written Test (Optional)
9. Substance Abuse and Drug Testing



If these steps are consistently followed, you should know which applicant is the most qualified to fill the position. Applicants who have shown consistently poor results in the selection process are more apt to be problems later. The following suggestions should help you select a driver who will be a valuable asset to your business.

Application Form

The application form should provide information on the applicant's driver's license(s), driving experience, accident record, and traffic violation convictions and forfeitures for the past 3 years, past employment (previous 3 years; 10 years for drivers required to have a Commercial Driver's License), education, and physical history. Motor carriers subject to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations are required to obtain specific information on the application form.

For incidental fleets, you may want to suggest to the human resources department that applications for incidental drivers include the following:

- ▶ *Driving Experience* - Applicant's past driving experience and the type of driving license held and in which state.
- ▶ *Familiarity with specific equipment* - The type of equipment the applicant has driven.
- ▶ *Past driving record* - Past driving record, including convictions,

Interview

Personally interview the applicant to review job requirements and qualifications in detail. The interview should be used to resolve any questions regarding the information obtained or omitted on the application form.

Driver's License Verification

Personally check and review the applicant's driver's license to determine if he/she is qualified and licensed to operate the type of vehicles you have.

Reference Check

A check should be made with previous employers to develop information about the driver's general character and professional ability. Factors such as length of employment; job performed including operation of vehicles; accident record; ability to get along with others; and whether the previous employer would re-hire the individual should be included.

This check can be accomplished by a telephone interview, a letter, or a personal visit. The driver's file should verify that these checks were made with record of the responses received. Motor carriers subject to the FMCSR are required to investigate the driver's employment record for the preceding 3 years.

Motor Vehicle Record

A copy of the Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) should be obtained from each state where a driver holds a license, to ascertain that the applicant has a valid license and to review the driver's past record. A driver required to have a CDL can only be licensed in one state. A history of accidents and/or moving traffic violations could indicate a major problem with the applicant. A MVR should also be obtained annually for each driver and reviewed to determine whether remedial training is necessary. The review is conducted with the driver and becomes part of his/her file. If you operate under the FMCSR, an annual review must be completed in accordance with Section 391.25 of the regulations.

Physical Examination

The physical fitness of the driver must be considered before hiring. Your company should arrange for physical examinations. In addition to checking a driver's physical condition before hiring, periodic physical examinations should be required and arranged for by your company. Reexaminations may indicate the onset of a problem and allow appropriate corrective measures to be taken.

Motor carriers subject to the FMCSR are required to have their drivers successfully complete a required medical examination initially and at least every 24 months thereafter, as well as submit to testing for the use of certain controlled substances. Further information on drug testing programs is included in the Driver Supervision section of the publication.

Road Test

A road test is one of the ways to find out whether drivers can do the job expected of them. The same type of equipment to be assigned the driver should be used in the test and the test should be sufficiently long to cover a variety of situations. The test should not establish a passing or failing grade but should indicate the driver's competent areas and weak points. This will allow you to provide needed training prior to dispatching the driver. Motor carriers subject to the FMCSR are required to verify that each driver has been given a road test. Sample road test forms for large trucks and automobiles/vans are provided in the Appendix.

Written Test

Some companies make use of tests to evaluate a driver's knowledge of driving rules and defensive driving practices. Extreme care must be taken to assure that the tests are nondiscriminatory and clearly associated with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully fill the position. Motor carriers subject to the FMCSR are no longer required to administer a written test to prospective drivers. Even though this is the case, companies still have the obligation to instruct drivers and employees about the FMCS Regulations. A written exam could be used as part of your training program. Under the Regulations, drivers must be conversant with the regulations and the employer must require driver compliance.

Substance Abuse Programs and Drug Testing

Substance abuse is a serious workplace problem. The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports that approximately 68 percent of all illegal drug users are employed either full or part time. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reports that 1 in every 10 people in this country has an alcohol problem. Drivers with substance abuse problems are especially a concern due to the increased likelihood of accidents and injuries to others.

Drug testing should not be performed until a drug free workplace policy and supporting procedures are in place and communicated to all employees.

The U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rules on drug testing regulations were revised in February 1994. The regulations cover several occupations under DOT jurisdiction, including natural gas and pipeline workers, motor carrier workers, aviation workers and railroad workers. Fleets operating with drivers having Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL) operating commercial motor vehicles meeting the following definition are subject to the Federal Highway Administration's regulations on alcohol misuse and drug use prevention and testing programs:

1. Has a gross combination weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds inclusive of a towed unit with a gross vehicle weight rating of more than 10,000 pounds;
2. Has a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds;
3. Is designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver; or
4. Is any size transporting hazardous materials requiring placards.

The rule requires pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, random, post-accident, return-to-duty and follow-up testing. For details on the program, refer to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, Title 49, Part 382.

Driver Training and Motivation

This section of the Model Fleet Safety Program incorporates two activities that the fleet operator should use to enhance the knowledge, skills and performance of their drivers.

Driver Training

Regular training must supplement the driver's selection program. The amount of training that is needed varies directly with the complexity of the job as well as with the knowledge and experience of the new employee. Proper training reduces operational disruptions and minimizes unnecessary costs due to accidents and equipment abuse.

Your company's driver training program should be divided into several levels:

1. Initial training - new employee indoctrination.
2. Refresher training - updates on information, routes, cargo, equipment, regulations.
3. Remedial training - used when there is a problem of substandard performance.

Your company's driver training program should include the following areas:

- ▶ Company rules and policies
- ▶ Equipment familiarization
- ▶ Routes and schedules
- ▶ Defensive driving techniques
- ▶ Government regulations
- ▶ Cargo handling
- ▶ Emergency procedures and warning devices
- ▶ Specific concerns or loss patterns

There are two approaches to training, classroom and in-vehicle. Classroom training can be accomplished using either a one-on-one or group approach. This method is useful for company rules, government regulations, routes and schedules, accident and emergency procedures, basic cargo handling methods and basic defensive driving techniques. In-vehicle training is most effective for equipment familiarization, vehicle inspections, cargo handling and defensive driving. In-vehicle training provides one of the best methods of giving practical instruction to a driver under closely controlled conditions.

To establish a training program or enhance an existing one, several training programs are available from agencies such as the National Safety Council and the American Trucking Association. Additional organizations available to support your comprehensive fleet safety program are listed separately in the Appendix.

Driver Motivation

Some drivers will perform exceptionally for wages alone or the self-satisfaction of accomplishing the task, while others will require additional forms of motivation. One popular motivation technique is the incentive program. Incentive programs can be based on accident-free driving, fuel efficient driving, or whatever else is suitable for a particular operation.

Your program can provide many different types of awards (pins, patches, belt buckles, gift certificates, etc.) and may provide a substantial return on investment if they are administered properly and stimulate the driver's interest. The goal of the incentive program can only be reached if there are established rules and procedures to assure that the drivers and supervisors alike understand the program. Awards should be made promptly, preferably by top management. Publicity should be arranged (company bulletins, local newspaper, etc.) whenever possible.

Driver Supervision

Adequate driver supervision is critical to the successful operation of a fleet. As drivers are "self-supervised" for a significant portion of their time, it is difficult for a supervisor to assure the quality of the driver's work. This section of the model fleet safety program outlines a number of supervision techniques for monitoring and enhancing driver performance. The management of each fleet must tailor its own program to suit the company's particular needs.

Hours of Service

Every company having employees who drive either full-time or part-time, should set maximum limits on the total driving time that can be accumulated by a driver in a day. The rationale for restricting a driver's hours of work is based on the concept that the longer the driver works, the more fatigued the driver becomes, and thus more susceptible to an accident.

Driver fatigue can be avoided by regulating work/rest cycles and limiting the number of hours a driver works. Generally, motor carriers subject to the FMCSR must have their drivers observe the following criteria to minimize fatigue, and drivers are required to comply with these requirements:

1. Maximum hours of driving, 10 hours following 8 consecutive hours off duty;
2. No driving allowed after being on duty 15 hours until the driver has been off duty 8 consecutive hours; and
3. No driving allowed after being on duty 60 hours in any 7 consecutive days, unless, the carrier operates every day of the week, in which case the limit is 70 hours in any 8 consecutive days.

Incidental drivers could operate under similar requirements depending on the work that they perform.

Comparison of the record of duty status with other documentation of the trip, such as fuel receipts, toll receipts, road observation, meal receipts, motel receipts, accident reports and road call receipts, will prove helpful in determining the accuracy of entries.

Routing and Scheduling

Most supervisors will have a fairly good idea of factors such as route the vehicle will be using, number of miles for the trip, average time required to complete the trip, and loading arrangements. These items can be supervised to a limited degree through random checks to verify that the driver is following the prescribed schedule.

Vehicle Location Checks

Depending on the type of operation or commodity value, procedures may need to be established to verify the location of the vehicle. This may include two-way radio or telephone contact, designated check-in stations or by employing communications systems to track the vehicle.

Trip Recorders

Various mechanical and electrical trip-recording devices are available to aid in driver supervision. These include service recorders, which indicate vehicle movement; tachographs, which provide a chart showing events such as when the motor started, idling time, vehicle speed and miles driven; and on-board computerized systems that electronically monitor driver and equipment performance. As with any driver supervision system, trip recorders are effective only to the extent that the information obtained is used by management.

Road Observations

Road observations allow the observer to directly view driver behavior detecting driving faults before an accident. This can be accomplished through periodic check rides with the driver or through use of a road safety monitoring system.

Handling Hazardous Materials

Thorough and ongoing training of your employees involved with transportation and handling of hazardous materials is an important part of any fleet safety program. A program addressing this issue should be tailored to the requirements found in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, Title 49, Part 397.

Your company's hazardous materials transportation program should consist of:

1. Classification of hazardous materials
2. Shipping papers and manifest requirements
3. Marking, labeling and placarding
4. Handling, loading, unloading and dispensing
5. Accident reporting and emergency response procedures.

Vehicle Selection, Inspection and Maintenance

Proper selection and maintenance of equipment are important aspects of a fleet safety program. Reduced operating costs; reduced accidents from vehicle defects; and improved public opinion are the direct results of an effective vehicle selection and maintenance policy.

Vehicle Selection

Your company's maintenance program starts with the selection of its vehicles. Regardless of whether vehicles will be purchased or leased, management must analyze the company's transportation needs to assure that selected vehicles will be able to perform the expected tasks. If the wrong vehicle is used, it will reflect in the vehicle's performance and cost.

When selecting vehicles, management should consider both initial cost and the cost of maintenance. Choosing vehicles solely on lowest initial bid can result in significantly higher operating costs over the life of the equipment. You should find that some standardization of vehicles is advantageous. Vehicle standardization can be by manufacturer, model type, or by components within the vehicle. The advantages of standardization include:

- ▶ Reduced parts inventory.
- ▶ Ability of mechanics to make repairs more efficiently and dependably due to their familiarity with the vehicle.
- ▶ Reduction of inadvertent abuse of vehicles by drivers.
- ▶ Better appraisal of the suitability of the vehicle for the task.

If you restrict buying to one supplier, you may not have the necessary leverage to obtain the most competitive price. Companies who standardize sometimes use two or three different suppliers to assure price competition and parts availability.

Vehicle Inspections

Inspection is the first line of defense in assuring that a motor vehicle is in safe operating condition. In addition to safety, inspection affords many other benefits to a fleet operator. Finding and repairing a defect or deficiency reduces the risk of a mechanical condition contributing to an accident or vehicle breakdown as well as missed deliveries, bad publicity, customer dissatisfaction, on-the-road repair problems, or overtime pay for drivers and mechanics.

A documented program of pre-trip and post-trip vehicle inspection and vehicle condition reports is a critical component of the vehicle maintenance and loss control process. Depending on the type of fleet you operate, different inspection criteria must be used. Included in the Appendix are sample inspection forms that can be used for automobiles, straight trucks and tractor trailer trucks.

Drivers should be held responsible for vehicle inspections, as drivers spend the greatest amount of time with a vehicle.

If your operations are subject to FMCSR, your drivers are required to complete a pre-trip vehicle condition report and have a copy of the report in the power unit. Before driving that vehicle, the driver must be satisfied that it is in good condition and free of any deficiencies. The FMCSR also requires an annual inspection, by a qualified inspector, of all vehicles covered by these regulations including trucks, buses, tractors, full and semi-trailers, converter dollies, etc.

If your operations are not subject to FMCSR, periodic vehicle condition reports should be completed by the drivers for the same reasons as stated above. Your company's management must determine inspection frequency. The laws of the state in which the vehicle is registered will also stipulate the frequency of inspection necessary if not regulated by FMCSR.

Maintenance

Vehicle maintenance can take the form of two areas: preventive maintenance and demand maintenance. While both have their role, the most cost effective is preventive maintenance.

Preventive maintenance (PM) is performed on a mileage or time basis. Typical PM jobs include oil/filter changes, lubrication, tightening or belts and components, engine tune-ups, brake work, tire rotation, hose inspection/replacement and radiator maintenance. A well-defined, consistently applied PM program will result in the lowest total vehicle maintenance cost.

Demand maintenance is performed only when the need arises. Some vehicle parts are replaced only when they actually fail. These include light bulbs, window glass, gauges, wiring, airlines, etc. Other "demand maintenance" items involve vehicle components that are worn based on information from the vehicle condition report. These items could include tires, engines, transmissions, universal joints, bushings, batteries, etc. Since these situations are identified via periodic vehicle inspection, they can be classified within the PM program.

Every good maintenance program includes a thorough and up-to-date recordkeeping program. Management cannot guess about maintenance costs and past performance of vehicles or accessories. To be useful, maintenance records must:

- ▶ Clearly identify the vehicle.
- ▶ Be kept current.
- ▶ Only record meaningful data.
- ▶ Be reviewed on a periodic basis.

Accident Reporting, Investigation and Analysis

Every accident results in a reduction of your company's assets through lost time or money. Any company having a fleet, irrespective of size or type, should consider the elimination of all accidents as a major goal. In order to achieve this, a well-established system of reporting, recording and analyzing the facts surrounding the accidents must be created. The facts collected and analyzed can be used to identify needs for:

- ▶ More intensive driver training and/or refresher training,
- ▶ Improved driver selection procedures,
- ▶ Improved vehicle inspection and/or maintenance activities, or
- ▶ Changes in traffic routes.

Accident Reporting

Driver Responsibility

As the driver will be the first person at the accident scene, the driver's initial actions are often critical to minimizing the end results of the accident. The basic steps which the driver should perform at the accident scene are as follows:

1. Stop immediately (shut off engine and set the brakes).
2. Protect the area by properly placing emergency warning devices.
3. Assist any injured person (the driver should be instructed never to move an injured person unless they are in imminent danger).
4. Notify the police (the driver should not leave the scene of the accident except in extreme emergency situations - if necessary, the driver should write down the accident location and assistance needed and request that a bystander make the call).
5. Provide their name, the company name and their driver's license to those involved (the driver should be instructed not to discuss the accident with anyone except their employer, police or their company's insurance representative).
6. Complete a preliminary accident report.
7. Report the accident to their employer.



The Preliminary Accident Report is an essential document completed at the accident scene by the driver. Specific information should be developed while at the accident scene. A sample Driver's Preliminary Accident Report is provided in the Appendix. These reports can be provided to you, or you can develop a report form of your own.

In any case, a blank Preliminary Report should be in each vehicle before it leaves your premises.

Management Responsibility

When the driver calls to report the accident, the person receiving the information should have a checklist for recording the accident data. This will aid in collecting all vital facts so that it can be determined whether someone should be immediately dispatched to the accident scene. If there are fatalities, multiple serious injuries or extensive property damage, it is normally considered desirable to immediately send someone to the accident scene to initiate an investigation. If the driver is injured or killed, someone should be immediately dispatched to the accident scene to represent the company. Department of Transportation regulations may require the testing of the driver for the use of controlled substances following an accident.

All accidents should be investigated. Management needs to know exactly what happened and why it happened in order to determine what might be done to prevent a similar occurrence in the future. Key personnel should be trained in accident investigation and the investigation should be started as soon as possible, while people's memories are fresh and any evidence is still available. The investigator should determine how the accident occurred, what physical evidence might be available, and any factors contributing to the accident. The investigator should be able to reconstruct the events leading to the accident and record those facts for future reference. Photographs are often helpful for recording conditions at the accident scene and to document damage.

Recording and Record Keeping

Your accident records and investigations will provide a wealth of information to use for fleet safety program monitoring and accident analysis. Accident records should be maintained for later analysis.

Determining the Preventability of Accidents

Soon after your accident data is collected, a determination should be made to whether the accident was a "preventable accident" on the part of the company's driver. The company's accident review board should handle the responsibility of this determination.

Accident Review Board members

The function of the accident review board is to form an opinion about an accident's preventability. To do this, the board members should represent all departments directly involved in the safety program:

- ▶ A representative from the safety department, to serve as chairperson, or someone who is familiar with accident prevention principles, safety supervision, and company safety policies and practices.
- ▶ A representative from the fleet department, familiar with operating rules, schedules, routes, speed limits and related subjects.
- ▶ A representative from the maintenance department, familiar with company vehicle's mechanical abilities and maintenance policies.
- ▶ Two drivers, familiar with traffic conditions and job requirements and hazards.



An odd number of members is needed to break a tie vote. The chairperson usually does not have a vote, but acts as overseer, keeps order and directs the meeting.

Committee Procedures

The chairperson of the board presents the facts about each accident under review. Accidents are referred to by a file number only and the driver's name should never be mentioned, nor should the driver appear in person before the board. The driver is represented by data on the accident report and other factual information.

The accident facts are presented through the following documentation:

- ▶ Driver's accident report.
- ▶ Company investigation reports.
- ▶ Police investigation reports.
- ▶ Insurance company investigation reports.
- ▶ Witness statements.
- ▶ Diagrams, photographs, and other evidence.

After presenting the facts, the chairperson should guide the discussion. The only question before the board is, "Could the driver have reasonably prevented this accident?"

Definition: A Preventable Accident is...."any accident involving a company vehicle that results in property damage or personal injury in which the driver in question failed to exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent the accident. This is regardless of who was injured, what property was damaged, the extent of injury or damage, or where the accident occurred."

The decisions of the accident review board should not be taken lightly. When a particular accident has been declared preventable or nonpreventable, a precedent may have been set which could influence future decisions. To assist the board in determining preventability, a "Fleet Vehicle Preventable Accident Guide" is in the Appendix.

Voting is done by secret ballot. Members simply write preventable or nonpreventable on slips of paper and return them to the chairperson for counting. The driver's supervisor should inform the driver in writing of the board's decision. If the accident was judged preventable, the reasons should be given. A copy of the decision should be placed in the driver's personnel file or in the driver's qualification (DQ) file. Depending on your company policy, a copy may be given to the driver's immediate supervisor or union official.

Analysis

Analysis of accidents can be narrowly focused - one accident at a time, or broadly focused - entire fleet experience. The following is a guide to performing both types of analysis.

Individual Accident

Proper accident analysis involves the gathering of facts, arranging them in a usable format, and analyzing what transpired. A properly developed accident reporting and recording system will allow you to determine not only "primary" causes of accidents but also "contributing" causes which might be otherwise overlooked.

The investigation of each accident should not merely seek the specific act which was involved, but should go further into the conditions responsible to avoid the problems in the future. The investigation must include areas such as:

1. Checking the driver's record for similar occurrences, length of service, and indications of poor attitude or lack of skill.
2. Questioning whether a proper job of selection was done, whether training was adequate, and if the driver was properly supervised.
3. Determining if there were previous indications which should have warned of an impending accident.
4. Evaluating if scheduling or routing could be improved.
5. Ascertain if there was any indication of improper maintenance procedures or if an equipment deficiency was involved.
6. Evaluating any conditions related to the vehicle's cargo.

The information derived from the accident analysis should be used constructively to educate employees or change procedures in an effort to prevent future occurrences.

Fleet Experience

Analysis is used to show changes from one year (or part of the year) to the next. The change might be in the number or severity of accidents or in the costs associated with accidents.



Accident rate formulas that take into consideration variations in fleet size, type, and driving exposure should be used. Through analysis you can monitor the progress of your fleet safety program and use the resulting data in management reports.

There are several formulas that can give you an overview of the changes in your fleet's accident experience. These formulas are in wide use in business and industry and give you the opportunity to compare your fleet against industry accident rates or another fleet's rates. Most importantly, monitor your fleet rates over time to gauge your fleet safety program.

Safety Performance Measurers

Vehicle Accident Frequency Per 1,000,000 Miles. This formula is commonly used to compute frequency per 1,000,000 miles driven by a company's fleet over a year's time:

$$\frac{\text{Annual Number of Accidents} \times 1,000,000}{\text{Annual Miles Driven}} = \text{Rate}$$

Make certain all accidents for the time period, property damage only, injury, and fatality, are given in the Annual Number of Accidents figure.

Rates for portions of a year, such as quarters or months, can be calculated by adjusting annual formulas as shown in this example:

$$\frac{\text{Actual Number of Accidents for Time Period} \times 1,000,000}{\text{Actual Miles Driven During the Time Period}} = \text{Rate}$$

Accident Rate Per Driver can tell you if the fleet safety program is having a positive influence on employees' driving skills and attitudes:

$$\frac{\text{Total Number of Accidents}}{\text{Number of Drivers}} = \text{Rate}$$

Accident Frequency Per Workhour. For fleets having considerable exposure but less mileage, such as local delivery or occupational fleets, formulas based on hours of service may be more useful:

$$\frac{\text{Total Number of Accidents}}{\text{Total Workhours of Drivers}} = \text{Rate}$$

Vehicle Accident-Loss Rate is figured by dividing the total dollar losses (all direct and indirect accident costs) for vehicle accidents by the company's gross revenues for the year (or quarter or month):

$$\frac{\text{Annual Dollar Losses from Vehicle Accidents}}{\text{Annual Gross Revenue}} = \text{Rate}$$



Vehicle Maintenance Cost per Mile rates can tell you, among other things, if a new vehicle inspection and maintenance program is effectively reducing operating costs. The rate is computed using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Total Maintenance Cost}}{\text{Total Vehicle Miles}} = \text{Rate}$$

Maintenance Cost per Mile by Vehicle Type. This formula is used to show costs per vehicle type, such as vans versus automobiles:

$$\frac{\text{Total Maintenance Cost for Vehicle Type}}{\text{Total Miles by Vehicle Type}} = \text{Rate}$$

Maintenance Cost per Mile by Driver formulas can be used to compute maintenance cost rates for individual drivers:

$$\frac{\text{Total Maintenance Cost for Driver}}{\text{Total Miles by Driver}} = \text{Rate}$$

Gauging Your Performance

At regular intervals you will need to determine if the fleet safety program is doing well or poorly, if goals are realistic, and if your rates measure up to similar companies' and industry-wide rates.

To evaluate your fleet safety program internally, use company-generated data to compare: previous to current time periods; individual driver and maintenance employee performance; and departmental performance. Sources of data with which to make external evaluations can be obtained from trade associations or the National Safety Council.

Program Development and Evaluation (Audit)

A careful examination of operating procedures and accident records should identify some possible shortcomings of current operations. To help systematically evaluate the major areas of concern a checklist highlighting those items is included in the Appendix. During the evaluation, note the different conditions which may be responsible for present operating problems or could lead to future problems. This should provide some indication of what actions might solve the most problems and establish priorities for corrective action. Discuss findings with supervisors whenever possible to get their input and to foster a team effort to implement improvements. The following questions should be exemplary of the type of approach to take when reviewing operating procedures. Keep records of what problems exist to justify corrective action and identify new trends as they develop.

Management:

- ▶ Is there a written safety policy signed by management?
- ▶ Is there a written loss control program in effect?
- ▶ Have performance standards been set for the fleet operations?
- ▶ Is fleet administration responsibilities been effectively assigned with adequate authority?

Driver Selection:

- ▶ Does a definite program for driver selection exist?
- ▶ Is it as good as it should be and is it adhered to, or is it mostly on paper and frequently forgotten when busy or short of drivers?

Driver Training:

- ▶ Is there a definite training program or is it on a "hit or miss" basis? Is the driver's past record checked carefully to determine whether reported experience and knowledge are factual?
- ▶ Does the program provide for retraining as necessary when unsatisfactory performance or accidents are identified?

Driver Supervision:

- ▶ Are supervisory responsibilities adequately handled, or is there overlapping and occasional friction?
- ▶ Are there areas where no one is clearly responsible? Can relations with drivers be improved?
- ▶ Can routing and scheduling procedures be improved for greater efficiency of operation and greater safety?

Vehicle Selection, Inspection and Maintenance:

- ▶ Is the equipment adequately designed for the job it is expected to do?
- ▶ Is the physical condition of equipment good or is it below average?
- ▶ Does a well defined and adequate preventive maintenance program exist and is it being followed?
- ▶ Is the spare parts inventory adequate, thus avoiding delays and idle equipment, or is it excessive, thus tying up an unnecessary amount of capital?
- ▶ Could increased standardization of equipment reduce inventory?
- ▶ Is there a definite equipment replacement program?

Accident Reporting, Recording and Analysis:

- ▶ Where, when and why is damage to equipment occurring, as a result of either accidents or other causes?
- ▶ Where, when and why is damage to cargo, other than that caused by highway accidents, taking place?

- ▶ Where, when and why are cargo shortages and overages occurring?
- ▶ Have operating costs been analyzed to the degree that the operating costs for a particular unit can be determined?
- ▶ How do operating costs per unit compare with the fleet average?
- ▶ How do operating costs per unit compare with other similar fleets?
- ▶ If this figure is high, what is the cause?
- ▶ Is a record of all customer complaints kept?
- ▶ Are complaints due to delays, cargo damage, short deliveries, etc.?

Check to see whether the program is accomplishing what it was intended to accomplish. Periodic re-evaluation is the only way to verify that operating procedures are maintained at peak performance levels.

APPENDIX

- I. Sample Safety Policy Statement
- II. Sample Road Test Forms
- III. Sample Vehicle Inspection Forms
- IV. Sample Preliminary Accident Reporting Form
- V. Preventable Accident Guide
- VI. Accident Analysis Sample Form
- VII. Fleet Loss Control Audit Checklist
- VIII. DOT Record Retention Summary
- IX. Reference Sources



I. Sample Safety Policy Statement
Declaration of our Policy on Safety

URA Transportation Corp.

We the undersigned, do hereby declare our full and unqualified commitment to safety in every facet of our business. The safety of all personnel, our customers, and other highway users is of the highest priority. Therefore, safety will be an integral part of operations and the policies, procedures, and programs governing our corporation's business.

We further recognize that it is the responsibility of every level of management from the Chief Executive Officer to the first level supervisor to:

- ▶ Provide a safe working environment
- ▶ Abide by all applicable safety rules and regulations
- ▶ Insist upon an unqualified commitment to safety from all personnel.

In furtherance of this policy, it is our goal to:

- ▶ Maintain our Vehicle Accident Frequency at or below 3.0 Accidents per million miles
- ▶ Maintain our Vehicle Maintenance Cost per Mile below 3 Cents per vehicle per mile.

Adopting and following this safety policy will contribute to the improved efficiency of our operations, enhance the profitability of our corporation and benefit our customers, our personnel and our community.

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

President and Chief Operating Officer



II. Sample Road Test Forms Record of Road Test

Drivers Name: _____ Social Security No. _____

Motor Vehicle Operator's License No. _____

Type of License _____ Issuing State _____

Type of Vehicle _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO EXAMINER:

Check items which the driver performs satisfactorily, mark an **X** where further training is recommended. Any item not evaluated, leave blank. Additional criteria may be necessary to meet your company's specific needs.

PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

- Checks general condition of vehicle
- Checks for proper operation of parking and service brake systems
- Checks steering mechanism
- Checks all lighting devices and reflectors
- Checks condition of tires
- Checks horn and windshield wipers
- Checks and adjusts rear view mirrors
- Checks emergency equipment

PLACING VEHICLE IN OPERATION

- Uses seat belt
- Starts vehicle properly
- Checks air pressure in brake system
- Shifts gears properly
- Checks traffic conditions
- Does not allow vehicle to roll while stopped



- Drives with both hands on wheel
- Steers smoothly
- Maintains proper speed for conditions, within speed limit

COUPLING AND UNCOUPLING COMBINATION UNIT

- Checks that fifth wheel jaws are open
- Lines up properly with the trailer
- Connects brake and electrical lines
- Charges trailer brakes
- Backs slowly
- Visually checks for proper coupling of fifth wheel
- Assures that fifth wheel handle is in locked position
- Raises landing gear and removes wheel chocks
- Applies trailer brakes and gently tries to pull away from trailer

BACKING AND PARKING

- Stops in correct position
- Avoids backing from blindside
- Gets out of vehicle and checks entire area, including overhead, before backing
- Uses mirrors properly

INTERSECTIONS

- Prepares to stop vehicle if necessary, even if traffic signal is green
- Checks in all directions for traffic conditions
- Stops vehicle in proper location when required
- Does not allow vehicle to roll when stopped

TURNING

- Makes sure vehicle is in proper lane for turn
- Signals intention to turn well in advance
- Approaches at proper speed
- Checks traffic conditions and turns only when intersection is clear
- Keeps vehicle in proper lane during turn
- Does not shift gears during turn

RAILROAD CROSSING

- Checks in all directions when approaching crossing
- Comes to complete stop when necessary or required by law
- Stops at a safe distance when necessary
- Does not shift gears when crossing tracks

PASSING

- Only passes in safe location, where legally allowed
- Checks ahead and behind to make sure passing room is adequate
- Warns vehicle ahead of intention to pass
- Uses directional signals properly
- Leaves sufficient space before cutting back into lane
- Does not exceed speed limit

REMARKS:

QUALIFIED: YES NO

Signature of Examiner _____ Date _____



III. Sample Vehicle Inspection Forms

A. Automobiles

Name of driver _____ Vehicle Number _____

Inspected by _____ Vehicle make, model, year _____

Date _____ Odometer Reading _____ Lic. No. _____

Exterior Inspection

Satisfactory

Needs Work

Body - Check for dents, scratches, rust, cleanliness

Headlights- Check for broken lens, burnt-out bulbs, correct angle

Mirrors- Check for broken or cracked glass, correct adjustment

Taillights, Brake Lights, Turn Signals - Check for broken or cracked lens, burnt-out bulbs, proper operation

Tires, Spare Tire- Check air pressure and tread. Look for uneven wear, cuts, bulges

Windshield, Windows - Check for cracks, discolorations, unnecessary or vision-obstructing stickers

Interior Inspection

Air conditioner, Heater, Defroster - Check operation

Horn - Check operation, sound

Instruments, Gauges - Check operation, lights

Interior- Check condition and cleanliness. Look for loose objects, protruding knobs

Rear View Mirror- Check adjustment and condition

Windshield Wipers and Washers- Check for worn blades, level of washer fluid

Mechanical Inspection

Brakes- Check for proper adjustment, even hold. Test parking brake

Engine- Listen for unusual noises. Check for stalling, hesitation, rough starting or running. Look for leaks

Exhaust System- Check suspension, quietness. Look for leaks

Steering- Check wheel alignment- no pulling to right or left. Test for excessive play or shimmy

Transmission- Check operation for slippage, unusual noises. Look for leaks

Accident Reporting Kit- Check glove box for packet with all necessary forms and insurance certificate

Emergency Equipment- Check in trunk for complete kit, including safety flag, fire extinguisher. Check tire jack.

Lap-Shoulder Belts, Air Bags - Check condition and operation of belts. Look for signs of regular use. For cars/vans equipped with air bags or automatic lap-shoulder belts and warning light systems, check lights to ensure the warning system is active.



B. Heavy Duty Straight Trucks

Name of driver _____ Vehicle Number _____
Inspected by _____ Vehicle make, model, year _____
Date _____ Odometer Reading _____ Lic. No. _____

Exterior Inspection

Satisfactory Needs Work

- Body** - Check for dents, scratches, rust, cleanliness
- Headlights**- Check for broken lens, burnt-out bulbs, correct angle
- Mirrors**- Check for broken or cracked glass, correct adjustment
- Taillights, Brake Lights, Turn Signals** - Check for broken or cracked lens, burnt-out bulbs, proper operation
- Tires, Spare Tire**- Check air pressure and tread. Look for uneven wear, cuts, bulges
- Windshield, Windows** - Check for cracks, discolorations, unnecessary or vision-obstructing stickers

Interior Inspection

- Air conditioner, Heater, Defroster** - Check operation
- Horn** - Check operation, sound
- Instruments, Gauges** - Check operation, lights
- Interior**- Check condition and cleanliness. Look for loose objects, protruding knobs
- Rear View Mirror**- Check adjustment and condition
- Windshield Wipers and Washers**- Check for worn blades, level of washer fluid

Mechanical Inspection

- Brakes**- Check for proper adjustment, even hold. Test parking brake
- Engine**- Listen for unusual noises. Check for stalling, hesitation, rough starting or running. Look for leaks
- Exhaust System**- Check suspension, quietness. Look for leaks
- Steering**- Check wheel alignment- no pulling to right or left. Test for excessive play or shimmy
- Transmission**- Check operation for slippage, unusual noises. Look for leaks
- Accident Reporting Kit**- Check glove box for packet with all necessary forms and insurance certificate
- Emergency Equipment**- Check in trunk for complete kit, including safety flag, fire extinguisher. Check tire jack.
- Lap-Shoulder Belts, Air Bags** - Check condition and operation of belts. Look for signs of regular use. For cars/vans equipped with air bags or automatic lap-shoulder belts and warning light systems, check lights to ensure the warning system is active.



C. Tractor-Trailer Trucks

Name of driver _____ Vehicle No. _____ Trailer No. _____
Inspected by _____ Date _____ Odometer Reading _____
Vehicle make, model, year _____ Trailer Type _____
Lic. No. _____ Location _____

Use the Walkaround Inspection Sequence When Completing This Form

Satisfactory Needs Work

Approach The Vehicle: Note general condition

Under The Hood: Check oil level in crankcase, coolant in radiator, belts, wiring, hoses, steering column and gear box

Inside the Cab: Check for emergency equipment. Set parking brakes, start engine, listen for unusual noises. Check instruments, controls, windshield and mirrors. Turn on the parking, clearance and identification lights, headlights and 4-way flashers. Exit the cab.

Left Side of Cab: Check front wheel, tire, hub oil, brake and suspension

Front of Cab: Check condition of windshield and operation of lights and reflectors

Right Side of Cab: Check all items as done on left side

Right Fuel Tank: Check fuel tank and condition of visible engine and drive train parts

Right Drive Wheels: Check dual wheels, brakes, suspension

Rear of Tractor: Check condition of frame, and operation of lights and reflectors

Coupling System: Check fifth wheel and air and electrical lines.

Right Side of Trailer: Check front trailer support, spare tire, lights and reflectors, placarding, frame and body

Right Rear Trailer Wheels: Check dual wheels, brakes and suspension

Rear of Trailer: Check lights and reflectors, cargo securement

Left Rear Trailer Wheels: Check all items as done on right side

Left Side of Trailer: Check all items as done on right side

Front of Trailer: Check air and electrical lines and operation of lights and reflectors

Left Fuel Tank: Check all items as done on right fuel tank plus: drain moisture from air tank; check battery

Return to Cab: Recheck the gauges, turn off all lights and engine; check air brake system by releasing the parking brake, step on the brake pedal- after an initial drop of 10-15 lbs. air pressure should drop no more than 3 lbs. in one minute (tractor only) or 4 lbs. in 1 minute (combination unit)

*Make sure you have all your documents, permits, etc.

Driver's Signature _____ Indicate Needed Work on Back.



IV. Preliminary Accident Report Form

Check all that apply:

Weather Condition: clear, rain, snow, hail,
 fog, other: _____

Road surface: clear, icy, wet, paved, pot
holes other:

	Your Car	Other Car
Travel Direction		
Approx. Speed		
Traffic Signs		
Traffic Lights		

Describe What Happened:

Witnesses:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Officer Present: _____

Badge # : _____

Injured Persons:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

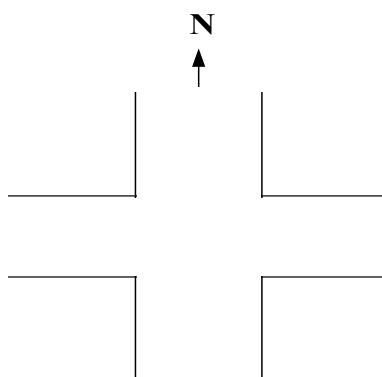


**What to do In Case
of an Accident**

Your Accident Record

Keep this in your car's glove compartment.

**Compliments of:
Everest National Insurance**

Driver's Accident Report	Description of Accident	
<p>When an Accident occurs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Stop, call the police and gather the facts ▶ Seek medical aid for the injured ▶ Get all witnesses possible ▶ Do not admit responsibility for the accident ▶ Do not talk about the accident except to a police officer and insurance claims representatives. ▶ Be courteous, do not argue, keep calm. ▶ Write a complete description of the accident as soon as possible. Use this form to help you document the information. ▶ Beware of the fraud potential from others arriving at the scene such as tow operators and fake investigators. Try to review any paperwork and verify identifications. 	<p>Date _____ Time _____ am / pm</p> <p>Location _____ _____</p> <p>Other Driver Information</p> <p>Other Driver _____</p> <p>Address _____ _____</p> <p>Vehicle Lic. # _____ State: _____</p> <p>Make of car _____</p> <p>Model _____</p> <p>Owner of car _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>Insurance Carrier _____ _____</p> <p>Policy # _____</p> <p>Effective Date _____</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>N ↑</p>  </div> <p>Draw a diagram of the accident showing the direction of both cars and the point of accident. Show street names, location of traffic signs (stop, yield etc.) and traffic lights.</p> <p>Property Damage:</p> <p>Your Car: _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Other Car: _____ _____ _____</p>

V. Determining the Preventability of Accidents

A preventable accident is one that occurs because the driver fails to act in a reasonably expected manner to prevent it. In judging whether the driver's actions were reasonable, one seeks to determine whether the driver drove defensively and demonstrated an acceptable level of skill and knowledge. The judgment of what is reasonable can be based on a company-adopted definition, thus establishing a goal for its safety management programs.

Note that the above definition of preventable accident is focused on the actions of the driver. It is the commonly used definition in evaluating driver performance. A broader definition, which can be used to evaluate the driver's and the motor carrier's actions, is given by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations as follows: Preventable accident on the part of a motor carrier means an accident

- (1) that involved a commercial motor vehicle, and
- (2) that could have been averted but for an act, or failure to act, by the motor carrier, or the driver.

Designating accidents as preventable or non-preventable is important because:

- ▶ It helps establish a safe driving standard for the driver.
- ▶ It provides a criterion for evaluating individual drivers.
- ▶ It provides an objective for accident investigations and evaluations.
- ▶ It provides a means for evaluating the safety performance of individual drivers and the fleet as a whole.
- ▶ It provides a means for monitoring the effectiveness of fleet safety programs.
- ▶ It assists in dealing with driver safety infractions.
- ▶ It assists in the implementation of safe driving recognition programs.

The following examples of situations should assist in the determination of types of accidents which are preventable.

Intersections

It is the responsibility of all drivers to approach, enter and cross intersections prepared to avoid accidents that might occur through the actions of other drivers. Complex traffic movement, blind intersections, or failure of the "other driver" to conform to law or traffic control devices will not automatically determine an accident to be not "preventable". Intersection accidents are preventable even though the driver has not violated traffic regulations. Failure to take precautionary measures prior to entering the intersection are factors to be studied in making a decision. When a driver crosses an intersection and the obvious actions of the "other driver" indicate possible involvement, either by reason of excessive speed, crossing the lane in turning, or coming from behind a blind spot, the resultant accident should be considered preventable.



Vehicle Ahead

Regardless of the abrupt or unexpected stop of the vehicle ahead, a driver can prevent collisions by maintaining a safe following distance at all times. This includes being prepared for possible obstructions on the highway, either in plain view or hidden by the crest of a hill or the curve of a roadway. Over-driving headlights at night is a common cause of this type of collision. Night speed should not be greater than that which will permit the vehicle to come to a stop within the forward distance illuminated by the vehicle's headlights.

Vehicle Behind

Investigation often discloses that drivers risk being struck from behind by failing to maintain a margin of safety in their own following distance. Collisions involving the rear of the vehicle which are preceded by a roll-back, an abrupt stop at a grade crossing or when a traffic signal changes, or when the driver fails to signal a turn at an intersection, should be charged as preventable. Failure to signal intentions or to slow down gradually should also be considered preventable.

Passing

Failure to pass safely indicates faulty judgment and the possible failure to consider one or more of the important factors a driver must observe before attempting the maneuver. Unusual actions of the driver being passed or of oncoming traffic might appear to exonerate a driver involved in a passing accident, however, the entire passing maneuver is voluntary and the driver's responsibility.

Being Passed

Sideswipes and cut-offs involving a driver being passed are preventable when the driver fails to yield to the passing vehicle by slowing down or moving to the right were possible.

Oncoming

It is extremely important to check the action of a driver involved in a head-on or sideswipe accident with a vehicle approaching from the opposite direction. Exact location of vehicles prior to and at the point of impact, must be carefully verified. Even though an opposing vehicle enters a driver's traffic lane, it may be possible for the driver to avoid the collision by slowing down, stopping or moving to the right. Failing to signal the opposing driver by flashing the headlights, or sounding the horn should also be taken into account.

Fixed Objects

Collisions with fixed objects are preventable. They usually involve failure to check or properly judge clearances. New routes, strange delivery points, resurfaced pavements under viaducts, inclined entrances to docks, marquees projecting over a traveled section or road, and similar situations are not, in themselves, valid reasons for excusing a driver from being involved. A driver must be constantly on the lookout for such conditions and make the necessary allowances.

Pedestrians

Traffic regulations and court decisions generally favor the pedestrian hit by a moving vehicle. An unusual route of a pedestrian at mid-block or from between parked vehicles does not necessarily relieve a driver from taking precautions to prevent such accidents. Whether speed limits are posted or the area is placarded with warning signs, speed too fast for conditions may be involved. School zones, shopping areas, residential streets, and other areas with special pedestrian traffic must be traveled at reduced speeds equal to the particular situation. Bicycles, motor scooters, and similar equipment are generally operated by young and inexperienced operators. The driver who fails to reduce speed when this type of equipment is operated within sight-distance has failed to take the necessary precautions to prevent an accident. Keeping within posted speed limits is not taking the proper precaution when unusual conditions call for voluntary reduction of speed.

Private Property

When a driver is expected to make deliveries at unusual locations (e.g., construction sites), or on driveways not built to support the weight of the vehicle, it is the driver's responsibility to discuss the operation with the proper authorities and to obtain permission prior to entering the area.

Passenger Accidents

Passenger accidents in any type of vehicle are preventable when they are caused by the faulty operation of the vehicle. Even though the incident did not involve a collision of the vehicle, it must be considered preventable when a driver stops, turns, or accelerates abruptly. Emergency action by the driver to avoid a collision that results in passenger injury should be checked to determine if proper driving prior to the emergency would have eliminated the need for the evasive maneuver.

Non-Collision

Many accidents, such as overturning, jackknifing, or running off the road, may result from emergency action by the driver to preclude being involved in a collision. Examination of events prior to the incident may reveal speed too fast for conditions, or other factors. The driver's actions prior to involvement should be examined for possible errors or lack of defensive driving practice.

Miscellaneous

Damage to the vehicle, cargo, or other property, or injury to persons are preventable when the driver's action or failure to act are evidenced, such as losses from projecting loads, loose objects falling from the vehicle, loose tarpaulins or chains, and doors swinging open. Cargo damage, resulting from unsafe vehicle operation, is preventable by drivers.

Parking

Unconventional parking locations, including double parking and failure to put out warning devices, generally constitute evidence for judging an accident preventable. Roll-away accidents from a parked position normally should be classified preventable. A properly parked vehicle should be locked, with the engine off, parking brake set, manual transmission in lowest gear, multi-speed axle in low range, and wheels blocked or turned toward curb to prevent vehicle movement (a driver should not use the trailer hand valve or set the emergency braking control to hold a parked vehicle).

Backing

Practically all backing accidents are preventable. A driver is not relieved of responsibility to back safely when a guide is involved in the maneuver. A guide cannot control the movement of the vehicle; therefore, a driver must verify all clearances.



VI. Fleet Safety Program Audit Checklist

AREA OF CONCERN	HAVE	NEED	COMMENTS
Management Leadership			
Written Safety Policy	[]	[]	
Control Written Loss Program	[]	[]	
Performance Standards	[]	[]	
Designated Administrator	[]	[]	
Driver Qualification			
Job Analysis	[]	[]	
Physical Qualifications	[]	[]	
Recruiting System	[]	[]	
Driver Qualification Files	[]	[]	
Application Form	[]	[]	
Interview	[]	[]	
Reference Check	[]	[]	
Road Test	[]	[]	
Written Exam	[]	[]	
Motor Vehicle Record Review	[]	[]	
Driver Training & Motivation			
Initial Training Program	[]	[]	
Company Rules and Policies	[]	[]	
Equipment Familiarization	[]	[]	
Vehicle Inspection	[]	[]	
Routes and Schedules	[]	[]	
Emergency Procedures	[]	[]	
Accident Reporting	[]	[]	
Defensive Driving Techniques	[]	[]	
Regulations	[]	[]	
Cargo Handling/Securement	[]	[]	
Ongoing Training Program	[]	[]	
Incentive Program	[]	[]	
Driver Supervision			
Vehicle Location Check	[]	[]	
Trip Recorder Checks	[]	[]	
Road Observation System	[]	[]	
Logs Checked	[]	[]	



AREA OF CONCERN	HAVE	NEED	COMMENTS
-----------------	------	------	----------

Vehicle Selection, Inspection and Maintenance

Vehicle Specification System	[]	[]	
Preventive Maintenance Program	[]	[]	
Demand Maintenance Program	[]	[]	
Road Repair Plan	[]	[]	
Vehicle Inspection Report	[]	[]	
Maintenance Record System	[]	[]	

Routing and Scheduling

Routing Planned	[]	[]	
Scheduling of Equipment	[]	[]	
Scheduling of Drivers	[]	[]	

Accident Reporting, Recordkeeping and Analysis

Accident Information Kit	[]	[]	
Telephone Reporting System	[]	[]	
Accident Report	[]	[]	
Accident Register	[]	[]	
Accident Review Board	[]	[]	
Accident Analysis	[]	[]	
Accident Follow-up	[]	[]	

Additional Comments

Audit Completed by: (Name) _____

(Title) _____

(Date) _____



VII. DOT Record Retention Summary

Part 382 - Controlled Substances and Alcohol Use and Testing

382.401 Retention of Records

1. Five Years: Alcohol test results with concentration of .02 or greater.
Verified positive controlled substances test results.
Documentation of refusals.
Calibration documentation.
Driver evaluation and referrals.
Annual calendar year summary.
2. Two Years: Alcohol and controlled substances collection process.
Training records (B.A.T. training and supervisor training, 60 minutes of alcohol misuse and controlled use.)
3. One Year: Negatives and canceled controlled substances tests.
Alcohol tests less than .02.

Part 383 - Commercial Drivers License Standards

383.31 Notification of Convictions for Driver Violations

1. Three Years: Notifications of convictions for driver violations.
Notifications of license suspensions (no mandatory time).

Part 387 - Minimum Levels of Financial Responsibility for Motor Carriers

387.7 Financial Responsibility Required

1. Current or Continuous Bond. Proof of financial responsibility Form MCS 90 for Motor Carriers.
Policies of insurance
Proof of financial responsibility Form MCS 82 for Motor Carriers Surety

Part 390 - General

390.15 Assistance in Investigations and Special Studies

1. One Year: Vehicle accident register.
Copies of all accident reports required by State or other governmental entities or insurers.

Part 391 - Qualifications of Drivers

Part 391.51(f) Driver Qualification Files

1. Term of Driver qualification files Employment plus 3 years
2. 3 Years: Medical examiner's certificate of physical qualification 391.43.
Note - OSHA requires medical records to be kept for 30 years.



Annual review of drivers record (391.25)
Certificate of violations (383.31), (391.27)
Letter of waiver of physical disqualification (391.49).
Note - Subpart H record retention requirements are in force for
1995 for carriers with less than 49 drivers.

Part 395 - Hours of Service of Drivers

Part 395.1(e)(5) 100 air-mile radius driver.

1. 6 months: Accurate and true time records.

Part 395.8(k) Retention of Drivers Record of Duty Status

1. 6 months: Driver's record of duty status, with all supporting documents from the date of receipt.

Part 393 - Inspection, Repair and Maintenance

Part 396.3 Inspection, Repair, and Maintenance

1. 1 Year & 6 months after control Identification of vehicles (co. no., make, s.n., yr., tire size).
Nature and date of inspections and maintenance.
Record of inspections, repairs and maintenance, and dates.
Record of tests conducted on pushout windows, emergency doors, and emergency door marking lights on buses.

Part 396.11 Driver Vehicle Inspection Reports

1. 3 months Retain the original copy of each inspection and certification of repairs.

Part 396.19 Inspector Qualifications

1. 1 year Evidence of individual qualification under this section...for the period during which inspections are made, and for one year thereafter.

Part 396.21 Periodic Inspection

1. 14 months Copy in the vehicle and one in the maintenance file.

Part 396.25 Qualifications of Brake Inspectors

1. 1 year Evidence of individual qualification under this section...for the period during which the brake inspector is employed in that capacity, and for one year thereafter. Exception if individual has passed CDL air brake test.

This is a recap and is meant only as a brief summary. The actual Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations must be consulted to identify specifics.

VIII. Reference Sources

The following organizations can provide further information and materials on fleet loss control:

American Insurance Services Group, Inc.

Engineering and Safety Service
85 John Street
New York, NY 10038

American Trucking Associations, Inc.

Safety and Security Department
2200 Mill Road
Alexandria, VA 22314-4677

National Safety Council

444 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611

National Committee for Motor Fleet Supervisor Training

Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1226

National Private Truck Council

1320 Braddock Place - Suite 720
Alexandria, VA 22314

Office of Hazardous Materials Transportation

Research and Special Programs Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Office of Motor Carrier Safety

Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20590-0001