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The Friday Safety Brief

Leading the Nation in Risk

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ACCIDENT REPORTING

Your company should have a standard accident reporting procedure in place, to ensure that accidents are handled correctly and immediately. Drivers and managers should then be familiar with the procedures. A short form accident report works well for telephone reports from drivers and should contain the basic information necessary for immediate handling. Information might include: date and time of call, driver's name, location, cargo, description of accident, injuries, fatalities, damage, vehicles involved, whether police have been called, etc. Your procedure should include phone numbers for drivers to call, in case of emergency during weekends and evenings, and briefly how to handle the situation at the scene. Ask your insurance company claims department for additional assistance in this area. Be prepared and ensure everyone involved understands the procedures.

PUT SOME TEETH IN IT

There's something about "putting it in writing" that makes it "official" (and binding). Putting some of your most important policies in written form tells everyone that you mean it. It doesn't need to be lengthy. Put your "Following Distance" policy in writing, as well as your cell phone and texting policy, "backing" policy (GOAL- Get Out And Look), and any other important policies regarding the prevention of accidents. These, along with any operational policies, should be written and reviewed with all drivers. Put these policies into your own driver's manual.

Passenger Transportation – Taxi, Limo, Coach, Mini-bus, Paratransit, Medical, etc

Whether you operate taxi cabs, coaches, paratransit vehicles, black cars, limos or any other type of passenger carrying vehicle, paying close attention to the safety of your passengers is of the utmost importance to both your customers and your business. And, obviously, the two most important factors in the equation are the vehicle and the driver. Top notch vehicle maintenance and inspections are a must. Regarding the driver, careful and thorough driver screening and testing for new hires, and initial and on-going training, are required for both customer service and accident/injury-free trips every time.

If you operate commercial vehicles designed or used to transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver) or 9 to 15 passengers (including the driver), your operation is probably subject to some of the safety regulations. Even if you do not cross State lines, the State you operate in has probably adopted the FMCSR's. And if you operate vehicles NOT subject to these or other safety regulations, you still have a vested interest in the same goals. These rules are not particularly difficult to comply with and are basic "good business practices".

While the methods used might be different for each operation, the desired result is the same; to have the best drivers for your operation and the best equipment for the job. To simplify: 1. The vehicle - a solid maintenance program, scheduled service, frequent inspections, prompt repairs. The vehicle is on the "ready line". 2. The driver - qualified, well trained, rested, physically fit for the job, thoroughly understands any special instructions.

There are many elements that go into attaining the above; too many to be left to memory. Simple checklists will help in some areas, while a more comprehensive program might be needed for others. The good news is that you don't need to develop these entirely before hand; you can develop them as you are utilizing them. Simply start with a list of the elements you can remember for each area such as vehicle inspections. Or, in the case of driver training, make a list of the various issues that affect the driver. Use each list for the appropriate task and make corrections and additions as you go through the process. Eventually, you will have a complete section for each area necessary to ensure both the driver and the vehicle are ready for any task. There are many resources available that could greatly assist you in each of these areas. The Taxicab, Limo and Paratransit Association has many resources as does our website at: www.professionalsafetyconsulting.com.