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## “Are You Truck SMART?” Safety Day



**Top left to right:** A teenage driver checks the blind spots in the big rig. Ron Edwards assists a senior driver on the mobile simulator. Michael Irwin discusses the Truck SMART program with the local media. **Bottom Left to Right:** MRA uses one of their trucks for the “No Zone” display. Teenage son of Michigan Truck Safety Commission Chair, Dr. Jacqueline El-Sayed receives pointers from Erik Jamison while using the simulator. Pat Muinch, FMCSA, Captain Robert Powers, Michigan State Police and Chuck Simmons, MRA discuss safety issues.

The Michigan Center for Truck Safety hosted an “Are You Truck SMART?” Safety Day, July 31 in St. Clair Shores. The main goal of the safety day was “to help educate all drivers – teenagers, older motorists, truck drivers and other professional drivers, to safely share the road and reduce accidents”, said Michael Irwin, Director of MCTS. The Event was held in collaboration with MCTS, St. Clair Shores-based MRA

(Mobility Resource Associates), Faygo Beverages and the the Michigan Teamsters Union. The public was encouraged to join the event at any time during the day to learn how to avoid road dangers and reduce driving accidents. Educational activities held during the day included a “No-Zone” truck blind spot display, which provided tips about truck blind spots. Trucks have large blind spots on all sides of the vehicle, especially on the right side. If you can’t

see the truck driver’s mirrors, the driver can’t see you. Many teen drivers as well as adult drivers attended the open house to try out the mobile simulator and to take the driver's seat in a big rig. The simulator plays a significant role in the Center’s mission of preventing injuries and saving lives. It is a very effective tool for the students and for people who don’t drive a truck. The Center gives special emphasis on educating

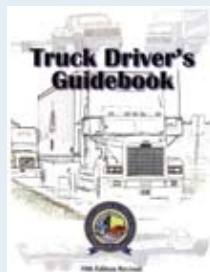
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### Truck Driver's Guidebook Technical Amendments

The Truck Driver's Guidebook is updated and revised each year to keep pace with changes to state and federal trucking regulations. However, regulatory changes often occur between guidebook printings, causing the guidebook to be out of sync with those changes.

To ensure information is as accurate as possible, regulatory changes occurring between

guidebook revisions, will be posted on the Michigan Center for Truck Safety's homepage banner as "Technical Updates".



### Public Welcome at MTSC Meetings

The Michigan Truck Safety Commission meetings are open to the public. The tentative meeting dates for 2008 are as follows:

- September 17, 2008
- November 12, 2008

As of this printing, all meetings are scheduled for 9:00 a.m. (except where noted) at the Michigan Center for Truck Safety office, 1131 Centennial Way, Lansing, Michigan 48917-8250. For more information, please contact the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) at 4000 Collins Road, P.O. Box 30633, Lansing, MI 48909-8133, (517) 333-5301, [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov).

### MCTS Upper Peninsula Office Moving

The Michigan Center for Truck Safety UP office will be moving to a new location on October 1, 2008. The office will be moving from Escanaba to Iron Mountain. The new address for the UP office as of October 1 will be: Michigan Center for Truck Safety, The Plaza Central, 415 S. Stephenson Ave., Iron Mountain, MI 49801-3400. Please continue to use the current toll-free number 800-469-7364. Check the [www.truckingsafety.org](http://www.truckingsafety.org) website for the new UP phone numbers.

### MCTS Free Materials Available

The following materials are available for viewing or download at any time from the Web site [www.truckingsafety.org](http://www.truckingsafety.org) under the Downloads link:

- Homerun for Safety CD
- Sharing the Road DVD (Adult /Teen)
- Truck Driver's Guidebook
- Truck SMART Brochure
- Commercial Motor Vehicle Brochure
- Home Run for Safety Brochure
- Sharing the Road Brochure (Adult /Teen)

The following DVDs are available from the Web site by request only:

- Semi Inspection DVD
- Straight Truck Inspection DVD

To order MCTS materials, please call the order line at 800-682-4682. Leave your name, complete mailing address, telephone number and the items you wish to order.

*\*There is a \$25 fee for out-of-state individuals and companies ordering the inspection videos. If you submit an order, we will invoice you.*

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# Motor Carrier Rules and Regulations Update

By Ron Edwards  
Management Specialist



## COMMERCIAL VEHICLE OPERATOR REGISTRATION (CVOR)

Most motor carriers operating trucks and buses within Ontario are required to register as Commercial Vehicle Operators. The types of vehicles include all commercial vehicles having a registered gross weight/actual weight of more than 4500 kgs. (9900 pounds) or a bus designed to carry ten or more passengers. Trailers are not included. It is a violation to operate a commercial motor vehicle without being registered in CVOR and carrying either the CVOR certificate or a copy in every vehicle operated.

Once application is made, operators are issued a CVOR Certificate. The CVO Registration creates a Commercial Vehicle Operator Record. The operator record tracks licensing and compliance data (accidents, convictions, inspections); similar to our USDOT number registration. The CVOR automated system automatically identifies a carrier for review when poor performance is identified, based

upon the severity and number of events in relation to the carriers fleet size and percent of Ontario travel. At this point a detailed analysis is conducted which verifies the company profile and the need for and type of ministry intervention. Progressive interventions may include:

- warning letter to the carrier’s chief executive officer
- interview with a ministry official
- facility audit/investigation, or
- sanctions (fleet limitation; suspension; cancellation or seizure of plates, permits and/or CVOR certificate)

For more information contact the Ontario Ministry of Transportation at 416-246-7166 or visit their web site at <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/>

## TRAILER TONGUE WEIGHT

National Statistics show over 50,000 highway accidents (annually) involve a car or truck towing a trailer. A common factor in many of these accidents is improper trailer tongue weight. Unfortunately, far too many people towing trailers with passenger vehicles and trucks, are unfamiliar or unconcerned with “tongue weight”.

Tongue weight is the downward weight applied by the towed unit on the hitch ball

of the towing vehicle. Too much tongue weight is hard on the vehicle, reduces gas mileage and can cause steering and vehicle stability problems. If the tongue is too light, the trailer has a tendency to sway and jackknife during braking. In either case, improper tongue weight could be a costly issue . . . one that could be easily avoided by following a few simple procedures:

- Know what your trailer tongue weight is. This information is readily available in the manufacturer’s vehicle warranty material. Tongue weight for most trailers is 6 to 10 percent of the trailer weight.
- Ask your trailer dealer to demonstrate how to determine the tongue weight.
- Train employees to properly load and distribute cargo and equipment on trailers to ensure proper tongue weight.
- Purchase a tongue weight scale. Tongue weight scales are reasonably priced and a real cost saving tool

A small amount of time, training and money can help in preventing costly accidents. ♦



# Regulation Information—Fact or Fiction

By Bob Ramels, CDS, CDT  
Director of Safety

Much regulation information is shared and gained in several ways. Questions and answers are exchanged every day through “CB forums” and “truck stop coffee symposiums.” However, how accurate are the given answers? Let’s look at the questions in this issue of the *Safety Scene*.

**Fiction:** Bob, I’m a safety director and sometimes I feel that I would achieve more if I was to become a janitor for this company. What do you think?

**Fact:** Nothing wrong with being a janitor. Those folks don’t get enough credit either! Just sounds like you’re having one heck of a day. Seeing as this is the last article I’ll be writing, let me focus this article on safety directors. During the past thirteen years, I’ve had the privilege of working with many fine safety directors and I hope this article might be read by some company owners, CEOs, and any other management personnel in this industry. I’ve heard the complaints of you safety directors, your frustrations and concerns.

I know.....

That when you read classified industry employment ads you

wish that you were in sales; there’s a ton of job opportunities in that field. “Wanted, qualified director of safety”...not too many, are there?

I know.....

That when your company cuts the operating budget, your department is the first to meet the axe.

I know.....

That when your company’s crashes and violations are down you’re un-noticed but when that driver of a “hot load” is placed out of service at a scale, all the eyes of management are upon you.

I know.....

That when you talk to your boss about periodic driver training the reply is “let’s talk about it when the economy turns around.”

I know.....

That when you’re trying to follow the regulations on driver hiring procedures and management says “when the heck are you gonna get that driver in the cab?”

I know.....

That when a driver approaches you and says “why ya harassing me on this log book stuff, dispatch says I’m doin’ ok!”

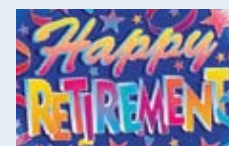
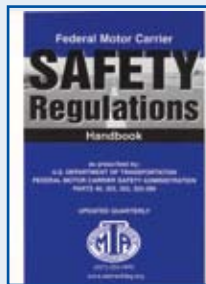
I know.....

That when you leave the office tonight you wonder if you’ll return to a job tomorrow.

I know.....

That you have no idea how many lives you have saved as a result of having your company follow the regulations as much as possible, pushing for in-service training for company drivers and insisting that your maintenance program puts only safe vehicles on the road. My prayer for you is that you work for a company that places an emphasis on safety, realizing that safety is not only a moral obligation to highway safety, it’s good business that increases the ol’ profit margin. I hope you get that well-deserved pat on the back once in awhile but I want to personally thank you for keeping the rest of us safe when your trucks are on the road. Hang in there friend!

I hope to still be involved with this wonderful industry on a limited basis but not opening week of walleye season, certainly not on Thursdays during the summer (golf), not to mention deer season.....well, you get the idea. Speaking of which, gotta go and get packed up for South Dakota pheasant hunting. I wish you all a wonderful life. ♦



## Center Hosts National Private Truck Council Spring Safety Committee Meeting

The Michigan Center for Truck Safety hosted safety committee members from the National Private Truck Council (NPTC) in June. The event took place at the Eaton Corporation, Michigan Center for Decision Driving (skid pads) in Marshall, Michigan. Presentations included: Driver Performance Measurement

Basics, Mobile Truck Simulator demonstration and the MCDD presentation. Each presentation lasted approximately two hours and members rotated throughout the day. Committee members then participated in a condensed practical program on the skid pads. Eaton Corporation provided demonstrations on their latest truck technology which

included the new hybrid engine. Participants were able to ride in the hybrid truck. Executive Director of the NPTC, Gary Petty and 46 other safety members were in attendance. According to Gary Petty, many of the NPTC members are located in the midwest area and will be able to take advantage of the services offered by MCTS. ♦



*Left to Right: Safety committee members were allowed to try their driving skills on the skid pads. Many participants tried out the different scenarios on the mobile simulator. Eaton Corporation demonstrated their new hybrid engine technology to committee members.*

## Michigan Truck Safety Commission to Celebrate 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



To commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Michigan Truck Safety Commission, several special events are planned for October 20-25 around the state. Please watch the Web site for details about exciting events in your area. ♦

## MDOT Trucking Web Site has Useful Info

For information on Michigan's weight restrictions (frost laws), permits, construction sites and alternate routes, or to get copies of the Truck Operators' Map, the Michigan Department of Transportation has it all

available at [www.michigan.gov/truckers](http://www.michigan.gov/truckers). There are also links to licensing procedures for commercial operators, hazmat requirements and MDOT forms. ♦

## MCTS Activities for FY 09

October 1, 2008 begins the new fiscal year at the Center. As everyone feels the pinch of the economy, so has the Center. In a cost saving measure the Upper Peninsula office is moving from Escanaba to Iron Mountain. The Upper Peninsula Decision Driving Course (UPDDC) will be open from May 1 to October 31. Mark your calendar for February 17 & 18, 2009 for the Michigan Truck Exposition and Safety Symposium. For registration information as an exhibitor contact Jill Skutar at

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## Truck SMART

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car drivers on the limitations of big trucks, reminding motorists to safely share the road and reduce accidents. "Road safety is paramount in our business," according to Chuck Simmons, Safety Director for MRA. Grosse Pointe Woods resident Grace Murphy tried out the simulator, "It's given me a new appreciation for truck drivers. It's very difficult to drive those trucks." Educational materials were also distributed to the participants. ♦

## MCTS Activities

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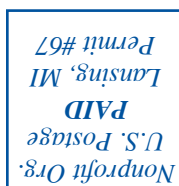
517-321- 1951.

The Center is charged with the goals and objectives from the Michigan Truck Safety Commission's Strategic Plan. Our focus for training and services will change slightly in the next fiscal year. Our principal services will continue to include: Hot Line (toll free), Truck Driver's Guidebook, Share-the-Road videos, Vehicle Inspection videos, Are You Truck SMART? publications, and the Home Run for Safety Award program. Our goals for Fiscal 2009:

- Increasing education, participation, and awareness of fatigued driving

- Strengthen CDL programs through education and training
  - Increase knowledge and education of "Sharing the Road" and the "Are You Truck SMART" programs
  - Increase knowledge and education in heavy truck maintenance programs
  - Promote industry safety initiatives through the use of technology-in-training and industry best practices
- Watch our website for more information and scheduling of programs. Interested in the mobile truck simulator? Contact Erik Jamison at 800-682-4682, ext. 14. ♦

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