

New Legislation to Improve Safety Training for Truck Drivers

Trucks transport about 80% of total manufactured tonnage in Kentucky or about 500,000 tons per day. Over 89% of communities depend exclusively on trucks to move their goods, according to the Kentucky Motor Transport Association. Unfortunately, truck drivers in Kentucky have one of the highest rates of occupational injury and fatality in the state.



The Challenge

The Kentucky Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation Program (KY FACE) has reported truck driver deaths as a percentage of total deaths varying from 14% to 25% in the years 2004-2011. Motor vehicle collisions involving truck drivers cause most of these deaths which, upon investigation, are found to be potentially preventable with the implementation of particular safety measures.

The Response

In 2005, KY FACE began focusing on the occupational deaths involving truck drivers. These deaths were given priority for investigation and production of detailed reports leading to recommendations for safety improvements. KY FACE personnel began attending meetings of the Kentucky Motor Transport Association (KMTA), which increased staff knowledge and understanding of commercial motor carrier operations. Since 2005, KY FACE has produced numerous reports detailing incidents of truck driver deaths and providing specific recommendations to prevent similar deaths in the future. When several deaths shared a common causal factor, the program produced hazard alerts to bring attention to that particular hazard. These KY FACE fatality reports, hazard alerts, and other associated educational materials are distributed electronically to nearly 3,000 transportation stakeholders in Kentucky and nationwide.

The Impact

KY FACE has received many messages of appreciation from organizations and employers who say they are sharing the program's educational and training materials with truck drivers. KMTA used the information to inform new internal policies to improve the safety of their industry and to advocate for broader safety measures in the motor transport industry. In February 2013, at the request of KMTA, KY FACE personnel testified before the state's Senate Transportation Committee on behalf of a bill to require annual safety training for commercial carriers registering for interstate licenses and intrastate carriers using vehicles over a particular weight. The bill passed through the KY House and Senate with no dissenting votes and was signed by the Governor on March 22, 2013. KY FACE will be an integral part of planning the safety training commercial drivers will receive.

For more information about the KY FACE program and the legislation, visit:

<http://www.mc.uky.edu/kiprc/projects/KOSHS/fatal.html>

<http://www.lrc.ky.gov/record/13RS/sb96.htm>