

Transport Topics **Online**

Updated: 1/4/2010 8:50:00 AM

Trucking Companies Focus on Educating Drivers to Meet CSA Requirements

*By Daniel P. Bearth and Rip Watson
Staff Reporters*

This story appears in the Jan. 4 print edition of Transport Topics. [Click here to subscribe today.](#)

Even before the first stage of the new federal Comprehensive Safety Analysis begins next summer, some freight companies are stepping up efforts to educate drivers and management about the new ratings and are taking steps to reduce the risk of violations.

That [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration](#) program will introduce safety ratings for all carriers and drivers that for the most part don't exist for fleets and not at all for drivers. The first step will be replacing the agency's [SafeStat](#) database based on compliance reviews with a new system based largely on actual safety performance by fleets and drivers.

At Freymiller Trucking, a refrigerated truckload carrier based in Oklahoma City, drivers receive \$50 for every violation-free roadside inspection and a \$250 gift card if no violations are found in more than four inspections during a month.

Harry Kimball, vice president of risk management, said clean inspections "drive my numbers down" and the ability to see safety data on individual drivers will help rid the industry of unsafe drivers, leading to "rapid improvement" in crash rates.

"For the first time, I see the emphasis on holding drivers accountable," he said.

Kimball said Freymiller also is replacing paper logbooks with electronic onboard recorders to improve driver compliance with hours-of-service regulations.

Drivers "understand this is their ballgame and they are going to play by FMCSA rules or they aren't going to play at all," Kimball said. "This is an opportunity to help ourselves."

Don Osterberg, senior vice president of safety for [Schneider National](#), said, "We already have a

very rigorous pre-hiring process.” The company believes CSA 2010 will be another measurement tool. “It will become more focused on identifying the most qualified drivers.”

Schneider now has a driver-tracking system that includes measurement of driver behavior through a scoring system that measures both safety performance and behavior — noting, for example, impatience, which is not characteristic of a safe driver.

The company is preparing drivers for CSA 2010 with special presentations about the program as part of its training, which includes videos, newsletters and in-person events, Osterberg added.

Stephen Renshaw, safety director at Megatrux, said driver ratings will “give us the ability to review both good and bad drivers. Our concerns are based on drivers’ awareness and education about CSA 2010 to make them know how it will affect their careers.”

Like others, Renshaw said the company is educating drivers with events and information through onboard telematics. The programs focus on logbooks, maintenance and cargo securement, he said.

The biggest change CSA 2010 will bring is the relationship between carrier management and drivers, said Tom Bray, a transportation management specialist for J.J. Keller & Associates, Neenah, Wis., which offers a range of CSA 2010 training materials.

Right now, Bray said, most companies don’t get overly concerned about minor violations. “Their attitude is: ‘That’s between the driver, God and DOT.’ Now, suddenly, it all matters.”

Bray said that reactions from carriers range from having “heard the term” CSA 2010 without understanding it, to being “well-educated” on the topic.

Brian Howard, general manager of Trillium Driver Solutions — a company based in Bolingbrook, Ill., that provides between 300 and 400 leased drivers to fleet operators — said he intends to use the information on drivers’ safety performance to help fleet operators make “educated hiring decisions.”

“The smart guys are grabbing talent and eliminating drivers who could present a liability,” Howard said.

Steven Bryan, chief executive officer of Vigillo LLC in Portland, Ore., said his firm offers a program that can use a carrier’s current safety performance to predict how it would fare under the CSA 2010 system.

Other firms, including Vertical Alliance Group and J.J. Keller, have set up dedicated Web sites to provide information about CSA 2010 to carriers and drivers.