

## Online Informed Consent Information-Recommended Practices

### **Truck and Bus Maintenance Requirements and Their Impact on Safety**

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**Sponsor:** The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

This research is focused on the FMCSA's vehicle maintenance requirements. Proper and regular preventative vehicle maintenance (i.e., systematic maintenance programs) among carriers should be the primary maintenance inspection activity applied to ensure safe vehicle operation. There is currently no supporting definition for what "systematic maintenance" refers to in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations and, as this term is subjective, it is likely to vary from one carrier to another. This survey will provide important information that will be used to fill gaps in the common meaning of the term (i.e., "systematic maintenance"). Thus, this survey has three primary objectives:

1. Develop an operational definition of "systematic maintenance."
2. Evaluate whether current regulations are sufficient to address: (i) preventative maintenance intervals, (ii) preventative maintenance inspections with adequately trained/equipped mechanics, and (iii) motor carriers' maintenance facilities.
3. Gather information to assist in establishing minimum standards for inspection intervals, mechanic qualifications and training, and certification of maintenance facilities.

You are being asked to participate as a current fleet representative from a commercial truck or bus carrier that has been identified with **low vehicle maintenance violation rates**. We ask that you respond to questions to the best of your knowledge about recommended truck and bus maintenance practices and be willing to express your honest opinions when completing the Carrier Maintenance Survey. There are no direct benefits to you. You may enjoy the ability to share your knowledge, experiences, and opinions, and help fill gaps in FMCSA's understanding of the effectiveness of maintenance requirements and to facilitate a common understanding of the critical term, "systematic maintenance."

We appreciate your time and attention spent answering the Carrier Maintenance Survey. If your company policy allows, you will be compensated \$50 for completing and submitting the Carrier Maintenance Survey, which will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. You may complete the Survey at your convenience and will be given as much time as you need to complete it. The risks associated with this Survey may include possible discomfort at sharing your experiences and opinions in a survey. The Carrier Management Survey does not ask for your name or any other directly identifying information (i.e. carrier name or DOT number). Your carrier's name and DOT number will only be linked to your Survey responses via a randomly assigned

participant ID (i.e. P00105). All information that could be used to identify you will be kept confidential and will be stored indefinitely on secure access-restricted servers at VTTI.

One set of de-identified survey data will be permanently housed at Virginia Tech under the supervision of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, the organization overseeing the data collection for the entire study. It is possible that after data collection is complete one copy of de-identified survey data will be transferred to the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or other secure locations as directed by the U.S. Department of Transportation or the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute for permanent storage and oversight. Finally, the de-identified survey data will be posted online for public use after the data collection is complete.

Completing this survey is voluntary. Your participation or non-participation will not affect your employment in any way. If after opening the survey you decide that you do not want to answer the questions, you may simply choose not to participate by closing the browser, instead of submitting the survey. However, compensation will be limited to participants who complete the survey.

If you have any questions prior to starting this survey, you may contact the investigators, Andrew Krum ([akrum@vtti.vt.edu](mailto:akrum@vtti.vt.edu) or 540-231-0353) or Richard Hanowski ([rhanowski@vtti.vt.edu](mailto:rhanowski@vtti.vt.edu) or 540-231-1513).

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. If you should have any questions about the protection of human research participants regarding this study, you may contact the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, telephone (540) 231-3732; email: [irb@vt.edu](mailto:irb@vt.edu).

By clicking “NEXT” to continue to the survey, you confirm that you are a current fleet representative from a commercial truck or bus carrier with low vehicle maintenance violation rates. In addition, you acknowledge that you have read the consent information above and imply your voluntary consent to participate in this survey.

Thank you.

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