

**VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY**

Consent to Take Part in a Research Study

**Title of research study: Truck and Bus Maintenance Requirements and Their Impact on Safety, VT IRB# 23-1050**

**Principal Investigator:** Andrew Krum (540-231-0353), [akrum@vtti.vt.edu](mailto:akrum@vtti.vt.edu))

**Key Information:** 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 two primary objectives:

1. Collect information to support the development of an operational definition of “systematic maintenance.”
2. Establish best practices for inspection intervals, mechanic qualifications and training, and certification of maintenance facilities.

**Why am I being invited to take part in a research study?**

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 or because your carrier has received an intervention in the last 24 months. 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 Management Survey.

**Detailed Information:** The following is more detailed information about this study in addition to the information listed above.

**Who can I talk to?**

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to the research team: *Andrew Krum; (540) 231-0353; akrum@vtti.vt.edu*

This research has been reviewed by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB). You may communicate with them at 540-231-3732 or [irb@vt.edu](mailto:irb@vt.edu) if:

- You have questions about your rights as a research subject
- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team
- You cannot reach the research team

- You want to talk to someone besides the research team to provide feedback about this research

### **How many people will be studied?**

We plan to include approximately 289 fleets in this research study.

### **What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?**

- You will complete an online survey.
- The survey is an informal discussion where you will discuss your company's maintenance programs and best practices.
- The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is funding this research.
- The survey is expected to take 45 minutes.
- You may end the survey at any time.
- If you need to take a break or close the survey window, you may continue using the link provided to you to resume where you left off.
- By submitting your responses, you agree to participate.

### **What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?**

You can leave the research at any time, for any reason, and it will not be held against you.

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.

### **Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me? (Detailed Risks)**

The risks associated with this survey may include possible discomfort at sharing your experiences and opinions. The Carrier Maintenance Management Survey does not ask for your name or any other personally identifying information. Your carrier's name and DOT number will only be linked to your survey responses via a randomly assigned participant ID (i.e. P00105). Any information you provide for compensation purposes will not be linked to your survey responses.

### **What happens to the information collected for the research?**

We will make every effort to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information, including research study, only to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete confidentiality. Organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB, Human Research Protection Program, and other authorized representatives of Virginia Tech.

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.

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).

### **What else do I need to know?**

This research is funded by The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

We appreciate your time and attention spent answering the survey. You will be compensated \$50 for completing and submitting the survey. You may complete the survey at your convenience and will be given as much time as you need to complete it. Upon completion, a customized link will be provided that will take you to a separate survey that will ask for your name, address, and contact information. Virginia Tech will send a \$50 check to the provided address.

### **Consent:**

By clicking “NEXT” to continue to the survey, you confirm that you are a current fleet representative from a commercial truck or bus carrier and at least 18 years old. In addition, you acknowledge that you have read the consent information above and imply your voluntary consent to participate in this survey.

Thank you.

NEXT