

Potential Alternative Compliance Subcommittee

The Question

Should the ANB70 Truck and Bus Safety Committee form an Alternative Compliance Subcommittee?

Background

In 2004, the Truck and Bus Safety Committee sponsored two program sessions at the TRB Annual Meeting on Carrier Self Evaluation and Certification, featuring approaches in Australia, Canada, and the United States. Following that session the Committee decided to form a Carrier Self Evaluation Committee to monitor certification and self evaluation programs and recommend related research.

In early 2007 TRB published a follow-on CTBSSP Synthesis Report on Certification and Self Evaluation. The conclusions of that report are attached. In summary, the Report found that there is generally a common understanding of the appropriate elements for self evaluation and certification, but before such programs could become the basis for alternative compliance approaches, additional validation of the effectiveness of these programs in reducing safety incidents is needed.

Also in early 2007, TRB published a companion CTBSSP Synthesis Report on the Role of Safety Culture in Reducing CMV Crashes and Incidents. This report included discussions of Best Practices in Safety Performance, outlining those practices which could be the foundation of a carrier self evaluation or certification program.

As a follow-on to these and related studies, the American Transportation Research Institute has identified a research focus to organize and develop a method to identify components of a new safety performance and measurement system that goes beyond the minimum compliance required by regulations. The research will encompass an exploratory framework comparing various alternative compliance programs for enhancing safety. The ATRI Research Statement is also attached.

Case for Establishing An Alternative Compliance Subcommittee

While there appear to be positive ongoing efforts to explore the benefits and approaches to Alternative Compliance, the following values might be achieved through a subcommittee effort to monitor and report on various projects relating to self evaluation, certification and alternative compliance:

- An ongoing inventory and reporting of international efforts and research could provide an informed basis for considering and comparing US efforts
- An independent overview of all programs and projects could provide a credible basis for evaluating program effectiveness

- An assessment of research results and gaps could aid FMCSA and other organizations in developing research agendas relating to self evaluation and alternative compliance

Recommendation

That the ANB70 Truck and Bus Safety Committee establish a Subcommittee on Alternative Compliance (with appropriate liaison with the Trucking Industry Research Committee) to conduct the following information gathering and advisory activities:

- 1. Monitoring and Reporting on New Programs and Projects within the United States and internationally relating to Carrier Self Evaluation, Certification and Alternative Compliance. Maintain an annotated inventory of ongoing programs*
- 2. Consideration of approaches for evaluation of the effectiveness of ongoing programs*
- 3. Making periodic recommendations for research, Pilot Testing and demonstration projects relating to Alternative Compliance and Self Evaluation*
- 4. Serving as an information clearinghouse on carrier self evaluation and alternative compliance programs.*