Health & Wellness of Commercial Drivers

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Purposes of H&W Subcommittee (ANB70-3)

• **Raise visibility** of importance of Health & Wellness issues within TRB Research & National Safety Advocacy communities

• **Promulgate** commercial driver health & wellness research findings, highlight research recommendations

• **Foster more research** on Health & Wellness related to Commercial Truck & Bus Safety Concerns
From whence we came

Chapter 4

Health and Wellness of Commercial Drivers

This chapter reviews important health and wellness topics pertaining to commercial truck, bus, and motorcoach drivers, with discussion focused on those factors that directly affect driving safety. Some driver health issues are addressed in less detail here because they are not so obviously connected to driving safety per se. Numerous health and wellness topics to select from include those as far reaching as:

- Epidemiological surveillance of diseases, illnesses, job injuries, and resultant OSHA statistics portraying incidences of commercial vehicle driver injuries and death;
- Proper diet, nutrition, limiting alcohol and tobacco use, maintaining proper weight and physical fitness levels, psychological and physical stress, workload, participating in stress alleviation programs;
- Health and safety consequences of shiftwork, irregular and extended work schedules, missed or broken sleep, circadian rhythm disruption, loss of driver alertness, and driver fatigue;
- Sleep maladies, sleep disorders, chronic partial sleep deprivation, resultant drowsiness, and driver fatigue;
- Whether declining driver fitness and health lead to driving safety risks, e.g., a lack of alertness;
- Whether leading a health-conscious lifestyle makes drivers behaviorally more apt to be safe on the roads; and if so, identifying how to foster healthy lifestyles through general wellness education programs;
- Whether wellness programs advocating healthy lifestyles actually make sizeable differences in driving safety now, while the CMV driver is still employed— or only improve a driver’s quality of life and possibly extend life expectancy; and
- Medical checkups and health criteria used to qualify CDL holders to drive CMVs—determining certification and training for medical personnel who certify drivers on CDL physical exams.

It is the intent of this chapter to dwell on health and wellness topics that have a clear link to driving safety. For example, although chronic tobacco smoking may affect one’s health, it is not so readily apparent that smoking by itself or its accompanying health consequences directly impact driver safety.

At a conference on truck driver occupational health and safety (Saltzman and Belzer, 2003) it was pointed out that in 2001, truck drivers accounted for more than one-eighth of the fatal occupational injuries (799 of 5,900) in the United States, while CMV drivers only accounted for a relatively small percentage of the total of American workers at risk.
From whence we came
From whence we came
ANB70-3 Subcommittee Meeting history

- Formation discussions – annual TRB mtg Jan. 2008
- Subcommittee met annually at TRB 2009-2014 (6 times)

A variety of presentations from 2009-2013, including:

- Survey of Long-Haul U.S. Truck Driver Safety & Health, NIOSH, Karl Sieber (2009-2012)
- Truck & Bus Driver Athlete Health & Safety Interactive System, Occupational Athletics, Susan & Ron Shapiro,’10
- Nat’l Occupational Research Agenda (NORA): Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities (TWU) Occupational Sector, Focus on Commercial Drivers, 2010
Topics addressed at annual TRB meetings

• Noise levels, whole-body vibration, air quality in cabs of heavy-duty diesel vehicles, Joshua Fu of University of Tennessee, 2010
• Atlanta MARTA’s Employee Health and Wellness Programs, Tanya Wiegel, 2011
• Synopsis of symposium on CMV Driver Obesity Issues, at Baltimore Conference, Jennifer Lincoln (NIOSH), 2011
• Overall summary of Int’l Conference on CMV Drivers’ Health & Wellness (Baltimore), G. Krueger, 2011
Research on the Health and Wellness of Commercial Truck and Bus Drivers

Summary of an International Conference

Gerald P. Krueger, Rapporteur

November 8–10, 2010
Baltimore, Maryland

Sponsored by
Transportation Research Board
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

In Partnership with
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

June 2012

Transportation Research Board
Washington, D.C.
2012
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on TRB web site www.trb.org
Additional speakers at annual TRB meetings

- A dietician’s promotion of truck driver health; & the book: “Real Meals on 18 Wheels,” Kathryn Clements, 2012
- Impact of fatigue and sleep apnea on CMV driver safety, FMCSA, Benisse Lester, 2012
Effects of Psychoactive Chemicals on Commercial Driver Health and Performance: Stimulants, Hypnotics, Nutritional, and Other Supplements

June 2011

A Synthesis of Safety Practice

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COMMERCIAL TRUCK AND BUS SAFETY SYNTHESIS PROGRAM

CTBSSP SYNTHESIS 19

Effects of Psychoactive Chemicals on Commercial Driver Health and Performance: Stimulants, Hypnotics, Nutritional, and Other Supplements

A Synthesis of Safety Practice

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Topics Presented Jan 2013

• Schneider National Inc.’s Employee H&W Program, Andrea Sequin & Don Osterberg, 2013
• FMCSA Physical Qualifications for Commercial Motor Driving, FMCSA, Pamela Perry, 2013
• National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners, FMCSA, Benisse Lester, 2013
• Truck & Bus Operator H&W subcommittee look-back-&-a-look ahead, G. Krueger, 2013
Other activities accomplished or monitored

- H&W Research Needs Statements on TRB web site
- Extensive participation in TRB-FMCSA-NIOSH Int’l Conference-CMV Driver Health & Wellness (Baltimore, 2010)
- Monitored meetings on sleep apnea re. CMV drivers (May ‘10; Oct ‘12, etc.) on Amer. Sleep Apnea Assoc., FMCSA et al.
- Participated in NIOSH planning - National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities sector (TWU) [2008-2013]
- Participation in Int’l Conference on Fatigue, Boston Mar ’09
- Fatigue, Wellness and Sleep Apnea Webinar Sept ‘09
- Healthy Trucking Association of America (HTAA) annual meetings (March), Atlanta, GA
A look toward the future - ANB70-3

• Continue to monitor/influence FMCSA initiatives on H&W topics, issues, standards, rules
  – Hot topics: registry of health care providers, OSA screening criteria, revision of health standards etc.

• Encourage a follow-up, 2nd International Conference on CMV driver health & wellness

• Push for more H&W research
  – Where, to whom? Who sponsors & funds such research?

• Continue to promulgate H&W research findings
  – Several ANB70-3 members continue to publish reports, articles, e.g. Helmkamp et al. (NIOSH, 2012), Krueger (ASSE, 2013), & others