**Spring 2014 Insider Q & A**

Q: I would be curious to know how others are calculating your accident rates. We of course calculate our DOT recordable rate and then we have a total accident rate that is calculated by all accidents, both on-road and off-road (private property type) accidents. When looking at national averages for total accident rates my suspicion is that they are using on-road type accidents only, combining both DOT and non-DOT accidents and do not include off-road type (WHS, parking lot, private property, etc.) accidents.

A: The answers, as you might expect, were all over the board. One fleet responded: “We record all accidents. This would include low speed, maneuvering accidents as well as over-the-road. In addition if a driver has to be towed, it can be considered an accident even without damage or injury.  We exclude animals and struck-bys in our communication.”

Another laid out the following definition:

1. Accidents- any DOT recordable.
2. Incidents- any accident involving other vehicles while driving or hitting a pedestrian, (non-DOT.) Large dollar incidents (generally over $5,000) but not a DOT recordable.
3. Incident under $5,000- an incident occurring with other vehicle or object ex: backing into another vehicle while parked, overhead awning, pole etc.

Another fleet said it had a complete, 21-page, Accident Performance Improvement Policy.  “In it we spell out the three types of accidents that we acknowledge and what the consequences are for each.  Examples are:

* Incident – Contact between our Vehicle and an object, with total damage of less than $350.00
* Non Serious Accident – Contact between our vehicle and another vehicle or property of any type.
* Serious Accident – Any accident that results in fatality, injuries treated immediately away from the scene or requires a vehicle to be towed.

“The discipline is also spelled out, but the overriding factor is anyone experiencing three “preventable” accidents or incidents in a rolling 12 months is terminated.  All accidents determined by the supervisor to be “preventable” can be challenged by the driver and a hearing will be held for the driver and supervisor to present their findings and reasons for said findings.  The hearing will consist of the driver, his investigating manager, two other drivers performing the same type of work who have been accident/incident free for at least twelve months, or fleet manager, our safety manager and me.  After reviewing the evidence and vote is taken with an outcome of the determination is upheld or overturned.  Some have been overturned over the past 12 years of this program.  To this point this program has worked well and has been accepted by our teamster union locals, although sometimes grudgingly.

“As for a driver involved in a fatality, it is also based on the determination of the investigating manager, if it is a preventable accident resulting in death, the driver is terminated.  If it is a non-preventable accident and our driver was not issued any tickets it is on his/her record of a non-preventable accident but he/she continues to drive for us, if they are willing to do so.”

Another fleet defined an accident as any damage to company property or other property done by our equipment operated by our employee. They are classified as preventable or non-preventable. No limits.

Another fleet responded by saying that it classifies its collisions based on DOT recordable or not recordable. “We then subcategorize them as Preventable or Non-preventable. We do not consider cost or severity.”

Another shared the following classification

* + **ATA accident** – Basically and time a truck makes contact with anything they are not supposed to with the driver behind the wheel –with the following exceptions – 1) If the vehicle is legal parked and the driver is hit 2) Low hanging items over a public road 3)Road Debris 4) Animals
  + **DOT Accident** – DOT Criteria
  + **NON ATA or DOT accident** – anytime a vehicle make contact with a item that does not meet the qualification above.
  + **Incident** – Any time CVS looses money for any reason ( fork lift hits trailer unloading, Freight falls on a car, Stolen Fuel)
  + **Injury**- Any injury to a driver during work must be reported if it did not meet the OSHA criteria is just called a injury
  + **OSHA Injury –** Meets the OSHA criteria for a injury
  + **Lost Time injury –** Time away from work is required because the injury

**All are ruled on by Accident review boards as preventable or non preventable.** - At no time does money value or severity come into play, just the actions of the driver – Why we do this? If you backed into a bumper of a 1974 Pinto that was falling apart and the repair cost you $35 dollars or you backed into the bumper of a high end Mercedes and it cost you $3,500 dollars – was the drivers action any different.  NO – remember drivers don’t want to hit either.

Finally, another fleet said its collisions are based on damage amounts.  These are events that are deemed preventable.

* (1 pt) Incident – 0-$750
* (2 pts) Minor - $751-$5000
* (4 pts) Serious - $5001-$10,000 with no injuries
* (8 pts) Major  -$10,001 and higher or any injury incurred