TRUCK TALK

A Publication of
Continental Western Group®

What do you need to know about SafeStat?

Prior to the mid 1990s, DOT audits and truck inspections were mostly random. The DOT needed a means to focus more of their time on companies that had excessive accidents and compliance problems so they contracted with the Volpe Center to collect and organize data. The Volpe Center came up with SafeStat, or Safety Status. The information in SafeStat comes from the States who report DOT recordable accidents (fatality, injury, and/or tow-away), from DOT auditors who report violations found during company audits, from the scales who report driver and vehicle inspections, and from the State Police (and other agencies) who report all trucks that they stop and the inspections that they perform. Each company's data is then divided into 4 categories: Accident, Driver, Vehicle, and Safety Management. Each category is assigned a score between 0 (best) to 100 (worst) that represents the motor carrier's percentile ranking in the country compared to other trucking companies their relative size. Scores that are 75 or higher are considered deficient. The DOT can now focus on auditing those companies that have 2 or more of the 4 scores above 75.

The Accident, Driver, Vehicle, and Safety Management scores are combined into a single score called the ISS or "Inspection Selection System" number. The ISS number is used at the scales to determine which trucks to inspect. Companies that have high ISS scores will be inspected more often than those that have low ISS scores.

TRUCK ROUTE

WEIGH STATION

Last year the DOT changed ISS so that it includes driver specific information. It is now called ISS-D (Inspection Selection System – Driver). Each driver's MVR information is added to the ISS score every time they are involved in a DOT recordable accident, receive an out-of-service violation, or are stopped for a moving violation. Drivers who have good MVRs do not affect the ISS-D score. Drivers who have poor MVRs increase the ISS-D score which increases their company's chances of scale inspections. This system was first tested in several Midwestern states. The results were that the driver out-of-service rate increased by 10%. This is because scale inspectors were able to focus on the trucking companies that had numerous violations and drivers with poor MVRs, which increased the ISS-D score, which resulted in even more scale inspections.

There is something else you need to know. SafeStat tracks each driver's accidents, out-of-service violations, and moving violations. Not only that, but this information will include all past employers too. The next step is to make this information available to hiring employers. A hiring employer will be able to see an applicant's past DOT recordable accidents, driver out-of-service violations, moving violations, and vehicle out-of-service violations. The next step after that is to give each driver a score that is similar to the ISS number. Each driver's score will be based on their MVR, DOT recordable accidents, out-of-service violations, and moving violations. It can no longer be said that "I was stopped for a moving violation and inspected, but it didn't hurt anything because I did not get a ticket".