

# TRUCK TALK

## REFRESHER COURSE ON PSP

### Pre-employment Screening Program

Do you remember PSP? Of course you do! It's the online program that allows a motor carrier to obtain pre-employment screening information on a driver applicant. This program, which was initiated in 2010, allows large and small carriers to obtain information that relates to the performance of an applicant under CSA standards. This information is available from no other source.

The PSP program is administered by an outside provider and, for very reasonable prices, can offer this information with a quick turnaround.



**How much does it cost?** Initially there is a \$25.00 registration fee (\$100.00 if you have over 100 vehicles). Individual driver reports are \$10.00 each.

**What information do I receive?** Each report contains the crash history for the previous five years and the inspection history for the previous three years. This information can be used to quickly make a hiring decision with important information that may not be included on a traditional motor vehicle report.

#### **We are a small company, why do we need this information?**

This information gives a very concise history of the performance of a driver based on highway inspections and vehicular accident involvement. This is real world information that can be used to help all carriers hire the best available applicants. In the CSA world, small carriers' scores can be adversely affected by just a few negative highway checks.

Here is an example: Our carrier, "Pfred & Pfrank's Grain and Feed Relocation Service LLC," has had a few problems with drivers who have not followed regulations. They travel just far enough for the Hours of Service regulations to apply and several of their drivers have had trouble remembering when they need to complete a "Drivers Daily Log" form. As a result, their Hours of Service basic scores are above the threshold of 65 percent by a significant margin.





Business is good and Pfred has decided they need to hire another driver. He has used PSP to help screen for the best possible candidate. Two drivers apply, applicant A is a grizzled, old veteran who has worked for just about every carrier in the state and seems to change jobs every six months or so but has 23 years of experience. Applicant B has three years of consecutive over-the-road experience with a well-known coast-to-coast van carrier but needs to be home more often due to his growing family. Initially, experience seems to tip the scale in the favor of applicant A because he knows the type of work. He also knows many of the customers and stops.

However, Pfrank is a big believer in PSP and runs a check (after getting the appropriate release signed) on both of these drivers. Within 30 minutes of receiving the report, Pfrank finds that applicant A has a lot of experience. Unfortunately, he also has several accidents that he neglected to include on his application. Applicant A has also consistently received violations in the Hours of Service BASIC at most of his previous companies.

The report for Applicant B reflects that he has received quite a few checks but very few violations and no accidents, as he has stated on his application. In addition, applicant B has worked in the electronic log environment so he has had no Hours of Service violations during the past three years.

At this point with the PSP information in hand, Pfrank and Pfred are in a position to make a much more intelligent decision about who to hire as asset to their company rather than a 'CSA liability'. One could even hope that applicant B might be a positive influence on their other drivers since he knows and understands the rules and how they apply to his daily work.

Certainly, the 'facts' in the above example have been exaggerated – but it is true that due diligence when obtaining safety performance histories can, and should, be more extensive than a quick MVR and a call or two to former employers which may or may not be cooperative in providing accurate information. Many times, accidents do not show up on MVR records and sometimes violations of the FMCSR are not reported to state authorities. PSP is just another tool that can help make hiring decisions that will benefit SMS scores and your company's bottom line.

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