

Designating a fleet safety manager and establishing a fleet safety committee

Have you allocated adequate staff and resources to managing your fleet safety program?



Vehicle accidents continue to be a significant workers compensation and liability concern for every organization. Auto accidents are the leading cause of worker fatalities in the United States and accident verdicts are skyrocketing.

As an organization's fleet size grows it becomes more important to implement an effective fleet safety program. Designating an individual to lead fleet safety efforts is crucial and establishing a fleet safety committee may be beneficial.

Designating A Fleet Safety Manager

Fleet safety responsibilities and time commitments vary depending on the organization's number of vehicles, types of vehicles and the need to comply with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulation (FMCSR). Small to mid-size organizations typically assign vehicle safety responsibilities to various individuals with little accountability, knowledge or time. This often results in fragmented results as it becomes a low priority for these individuals.

An organization should designate an individual to be a fleet safety manager (FSM) to lead fleet safety efforts and have overall accountability. For small and mid-size organizations, this is often not the individual's full-time responsibility and it is acceptable to assign specific duties to other individuals or outside services as long as there is oversight by the FSM.

Staff in safety, operations, vehicle purchasing or maintenance, and human resources are often selected to carry out the FSM role.

Fleet Safety Responsibilities



Drivers provide a critical perspective to a fleet safety committee. Other drivers are more likely to buy into committee initiatives when they know their peers were involved.

Sample Fleet Safety Manger Duties/Responsibilities:

- Development of fleet safety policies and procedures along with an annual review.
- Establish a driver hiring and qualification process.
- Implement driver safety orientation and ongoing training.
- Coordinate driver supervision:
 - Monitoring of unsafe driving (MVR, complaints, accidents, telematics events, etc.)
 - Driver incentives and recognition
- Approve employee use of their own vehicles and monitoring requirements.
- Ensure inspection and maintenance of vehicles.
- Manage vehicle replacement scheduling and selection of new vehicles (safety ratings/features).
- Manage vehicle recalls.
- Ensure proper registering and licensing of vehicles.
- Accident management: reporting, investigation and corrective action, and causal trending.
- Ensure compliance with local, state and federal safety regulations.
- If DOT regulated, review / handle roadside violation reports and monitor the FMCSA portal for out-of-service percentages, and CSA-SMS scores.
- Chair the fleet safety committee

Establishing A Fleet Safety Committee

For larger fleets, consideration should be given to establishing a fleet safety committee. A safety committee can help bring different perspectives and solutions to organization related challenges. Committees are typically comprised of core members who reside on the committee indefinitely and rotating members who have specific terms; such as two to three years. Core members typically consist of the FSM, a driver trainer, and staff members from human resources, operations, and vehicle purchasing/maintenance. Rotating members typically include two to three drivers and others that interact with vehicles such as dispatch or warehousing.

Fleet safety committees typically meet on a monthly or quarterly basis with a meeting agenda established and meeting minutes recorded.

Sample Safety Committee Responsibilities:

- Review accident investigation reports to determine preventability on individual crashes and discuss corrective measures.
- If DOT regulated, review roadside violation reports, out-of-service percentages, and Compliance Safety Accountability - Safety Measurement Scores.

Fleet Safety Responsibilities

- Establish safe driving incentives and benchmarks for driver performance including telematics incidents for unsafe events such as hard brakes and speeding.
- Review suggestions from drivers and others on ways to improve fleet safety
- Ensure compliance with new driving laws and FMCSR regulations.
- Stay abreast of fleet safety best practices.
- Keep up-to-date on vehicle safety technology and develop minimum safety standards/ratings for new vehicles.
- Establish a schedule of driver training and safe driving awareness campaigns. Identify appropriate content.
- Complete an annual review of the company fleet safety policies, manuals, and procedures to ensure they reflect current requirements.
- Complete an annual accident review to identify trends by accident type and casual factors and implement corrective measures.

Resources for Fleet Safety Managers and Safety Committee Members

It is important to stay connected and stay up-to-date on current fleet safety topics. A FSM and safety committee members can do this by signing up for free e-newsletters/magazines from fleet related media and safety organizations. We have provided a few examples for your consideration.

WEB RESOURCES:

[Insurance Institute for Highway Safety \(IIHS\)](#)

[National Safety Council \(NSC\)](#)

[National Highway Transportation Administration \(NHTSA\)](#)

[Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(FMCSA\) \(Safety Planner\)](#)

[North American Transportation Management Institute \(NATMI\) – Training organization](#)

NEWSLETTERS / MAGAZINES:

FMCSA - [subscribe to updates](#)

NSC - [Focus on the Drive](#)

[Network for Employers for Traffic Safety \(NETS\)](#)

[Bobit Business Media](#) – 10 publications such as Automotive Fleet, Work Truck and Heavy-Duty Trucking

[Commercial Carrier Journal \(CCJ\)](#)

[Nationwide's Loss Control website](#) has numerous tools available to assist fleet safety managers and committees with their responsibilities including sample policies, training materials, regulatory guidance and checklists.



Providing solutions to help our members manage risk.®

For your risk management and safety needs, contact Nationwide Loss Control Services: 1-866-808-2101 or LCS@nationwide.com.