

Reuss, Vicki A. (CDC/NIOSH/EID)

From: Huntington, Roger [Roger.Huntington@fhr.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 27, 2007 10:22 AM
To: NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)
Cc: Huntington, Roger
Subject: 110 - NIOSH Truck Driver Survey

Ladies and gentlemen,

I was an OTR driver for nearly two years after being permanently (re-engineered) laid off from a career in Occupational Safety and Health. Seems over the age of 55, there are not a lot of employers anxious to hire an individual over 55; however, the trucking industry applauds the older individual for their work ethic and does not discriminate. As a former safety professional, I had the opportunity to review trucking safety programs or lack of them as I traversed this great country week after week.

I read with interest all of the potential concerns with the proposed survey - union vs. non-union, owner operator vs. line haul, local vs. OTR; however, that is only a smattering of the issues. The survey "must" employ a group of trustworthy drivers to assist in the data preparation and collection if there are to be valued results. Fore if you have not sat in the seat of a "big rig" for periods of time and witnessed first hand, what truly occurs on the road and in the truck stops, your questions and answers will be "flawed" from the get go.

In 2002, I sent one of the owners of my employer (a major trucking firm) a QUALCOMM message on how to end the series of "rollover" events dramatically. We were doing well that year with only 42 events within the company vs. 84 the previous year. My first proposal was to "fire" the safety department since they had not set foot inside a truck in years and safety reliance was on mandatory videos. No one within the organization had any idea of the competencies, behaviors or moods of their drivers. How does a safety professional investigate a rollover from a thousand miles away. They take the work of the AI on the scene who can only relate what occurred.

I left the organization and went with a smaller firm with two dedicated runs per week from Michigan to the Northeast. I am happy to say that I drove many miles in over 1.5 years both Injury and accident free. Delivered my loads on time, had no DOT or moving violations and proved that it can be done. But then I had been a safety professional.

There are a lot of good people behind the wheels of our truck fleet, but yes there are a lot of issues. You have the right idea talking to the drivers, but you do need representatives to guide you through the questions and filter out the nonsense. Oh yes, I am now back in Occupational Safety and Health. Thanks for reading my thoughts and I would love to help prevent vehicle related injuries and illness.

Sincerely

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