

**Prepared Remarks for Anne S. Ferro
FMCSA Administrator
Truck Safety and Education Symposium
New York State Motor Truck Association
Albany, NY
March 30, 2010**

Introduction

Good evening, everyone. It is my pleasure to be here and take part in a conference that serves as a great example of exceptional teamwork and productive public and private partnerships.

We have many great individuals who contribute to the motor carrier safety team. First, I'd like to thank our Division Administrator **Brian Temperine** for his role in helping to bring everyone together. I'd also like to thank **Kendra Adams** for hosting this annual event and the New York Department of Motor Vehicles for initiating this conference over ten years ago.

FMCSA Priorities

FMCSA has a lot on its plate and the list keeps growing.

Our agency's focus is driven by three areas of emphasis that will produce the greatest benefit in our safety mission.

1. Raise the safety bar to enter the industry.
2. Maintain high safety standards to remain in the industry.
3. Remove high-risk operators from our roads and highways.

Everything we do can be looped back to these three priorities. Our State Partners are FMCSA's force multiplier in this equation.

Raising the Safety Bar

Through our partnership, we must continue to raise the bar to entry into the motor carrier industry. We can do this by building on the enhanced review process of new applicants for passenger and household goods authority.

FMCSA is committed to expanding the enhanced vetting program currently in place for all new carriers entering the industry. By implementing a rigorous vetting program, we can ensure that carriers will receive close scrutiny before a new entrant audit is scheduled.

New York State's current practice of not allowing third party testing of Commercial Drivers License applicants is commendable and keeps the bar high for entry.

Maintain High Safety Standards

Our work together makes it possible that all carriers, drivers and service providers who get credentials through FMCSA maintain the highest safety standards.

We are also planning for the launch of CSA 2010 which will provide the “road map” forward for ensuring that anyone engaged in commercial vehicle operations maintain high safety standards.

Once it is up and running, CSA 2010 will provide you with highly focused safety performance information so that you can determine the most appropriate level of intervention. The interventions range from warning letters all the way to comprehensive on-site compliance reviews.

Another issue that speaks to high safety standards is hours-of-service rules. In just the past three months, FMCSA has held five public listening sessions – many in non-traditional venues.

In fact, we just returned from participating at the Mid-America Truck Show last week where we heard from a large audience of owner-operators and other carriers.

All this is in preparation for an hours-of-service rulemaking proposal to be published later this year.

The feedback we receive from drivers, carriers, owner operators, safety advocates, law enforcement, labor and others will give us a better perspective when looking at the research and developing a final proposal for the new rule.

Remove High Risk Carriers/Drivers/Behaviors

Our approach to removing high risk carriers covers many fronts.

Maintaining high standards also requires addressing irresponsible behaviors, particularly driver actions that take their attention from the roads. Led by Secretary LaHood, the entire U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to eliminating distracted driving.

New York State has done a great job in getting ahead on this issue by banning handheld cell phones while driving.

Earlier this year, Secretary LaHood and I announced our decision to use existing FMCSA authority to prohibit commercial truck and bus drivers from texting while driving using any cell phone or other device. We expect a formal rulemaking to happen shortly.

Model of Teamwork

The way I see it, working together is the only way to really make a difference. The state agencies represented here along with the industry and FMCSA are doing very impressive work in sharing information and coming together for maximum impact.

This conference is a very special example of the power of teamwork and the strength of sharing ideas that come from working together for the sake of our safety mission.

Right after this conference wraps up, a committee from the New York State DOT, the Governors Traffic Safety Committee, State Police, State Department of Tax and Finance, State Thruway Authority and the State Motor Truck Association will begin planning for the next symposium. The team effort never rests.

With all these agencies providing input, it is no wonder than these meetings turn out so well. And, FMCSA is pleased to contribute its support for this symposium too.

In the true meaning of partnership, New York State has many examples that serve as good models for others to follow.

More than 5,200 new entry audits are conducted each year in New York State, both off and on-site.

Your assistance helps us weed out start up companies who possess safety issues that must be addressed before they can continue to operate.

The State University's Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research supplies well regarded and reliable data to FMCSA which strengthens the Commercial Vehicle Safety Plan and overall program evaluation for motor carrier safety.

The industry is another important team member. The State Motor Truck Association graciously provides the regular venues for FMCSA briefings on CSA 2010 and other hot topics. Thank you for helping us to get the word out.

E-ticketing and E-accident lead the way in the collection of accident and inspection data. Because of teamwork once again, manual error has been reduced by this system.

Only by acting as a team can the best results come forward. I'm pleased that the data quality generated by your state is considered quite good or "green" by U.S. DOT.

Additionally, household goods carriers who violate consumer protection or safety laws do not have a friend in the State DOT or Attorney General's Office. Working together makes it possible to keep poor performing operators on our radar and off the streets.

Keep up the good work. The model of teamwork is alive and well in New York State. Let's work together to broaden this network to new partners outside our usual cast of characters and continue to improve safety standards for generations to come.

Conclusion

We are measured by the strong partnerships we have formed, built and tested over time. We are measured by our ability to work together with the resources we have. We are measured by the strength in our commitment to safety. By that measure, who we are is something to be proud of.

Thank you for raising the bar for motor carrier safety.

Again, keep up the good work. Thank you.