Enhancing The Accuracy and Uniformity of Roadside Inspection Data

CSA 2010 Listening Session
October 16, 2008

Roadside Inspection Program – Eyes and Ears of CSA 2010

Inspections (3.3 million annually) determine:

- Results of the Safety Measurement System (SMS) for carriers and drivers

- Enforcement resource allocation of interventions and future inspections

- Specific behaviors that need to be corrected by carriers and drivers

- When corrective action has been made by carrier/driver (monitoring)

Quality of roadside inspections is more important than ever!

Enhancing Data Uniformity and Accuracy

- FMCSA and state initiatives have made significant progress in improving overall data quality

- Discussions regarding data quality must include uniformity of inspection and violation data

- Recognition we can enhance the uniformity and accuracy of our roadside inspection data

Uniformity of Roadside Inspection and Violation Data

- ***Why is this important from the state's perspective?***

  - How can the quality of roadside data or poor/ inconsistent data impact the motor carrier safety improvement programs such as MCSAP?

    - Strategic planning

    - Resource allocation-misdirected resources

    - Program effectiveness-lost time

    - Program integrity

    - Data reciprocity agreements

# Uniformity of Roadside Inspection and Violation Data

Discussion is being framed around three key points…

1. Consistent documentation of roadside inspection and violation data

2. Standardized processes for challenging data

3. Increased awareness and understanding all inspections (good and bad) must be uploaded, and uniform inspection selection processes
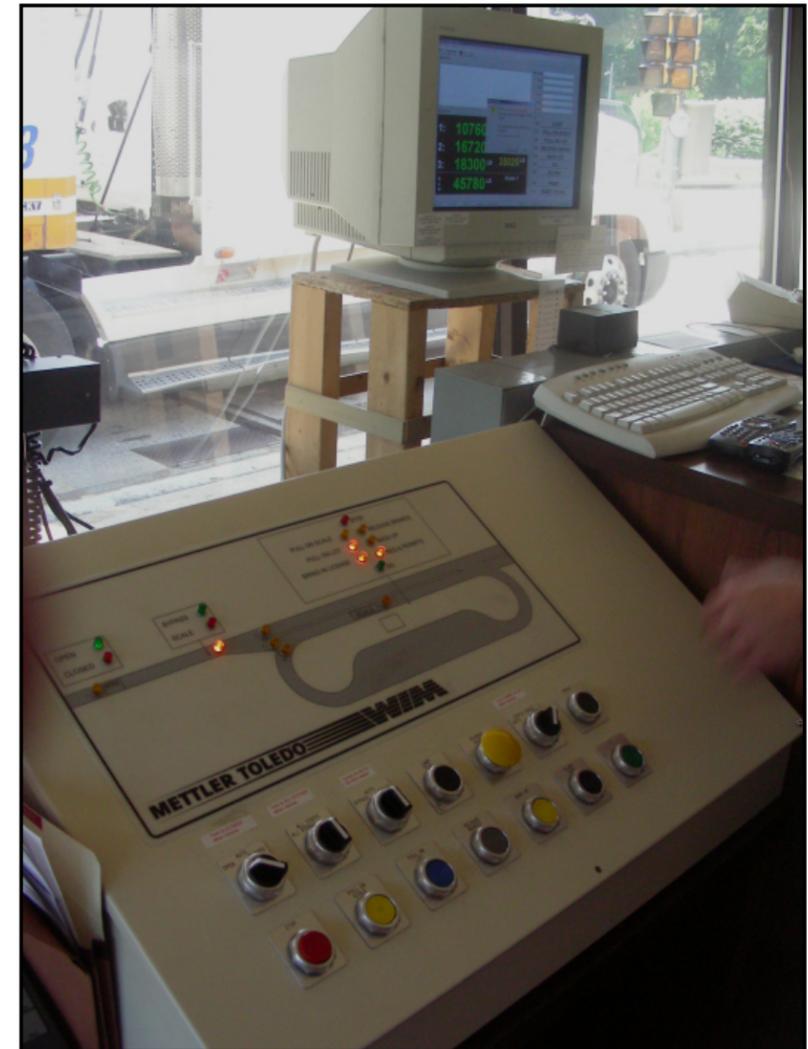
1. Consistent Documentation of Roadside Inspection and Violation Data

Specifically the following are some of the questions we are asking…
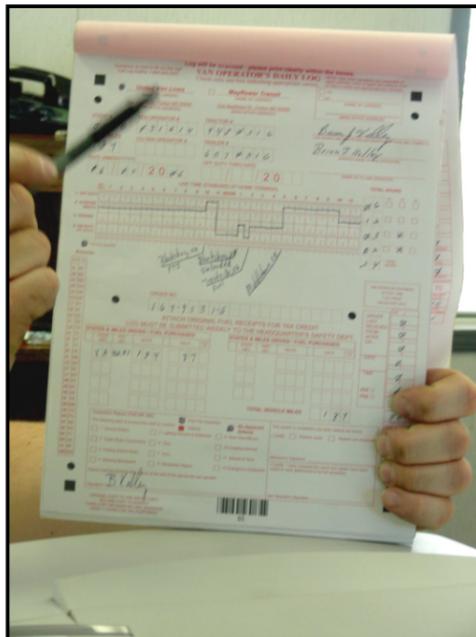
- – Are violations documented consistently?

- – Do enforcement agencies have written policies that describe how violations are to be recorded on an inspection report?

- – How many agencies within a state are conducting inspections?

- – Are all the jurisdictions documenting violations consistently?

2. Standardized Processes for Challenging Data

We do not have a national/international set of guidelines for how data challenges should be handled

- Not talking about a policy that dictates how specific challenges should be decided

- Policy should include a public statement that clearly defines the process. Point is that everyone should know the process. No mysteries.

- Due process must be afforded

- Appeals process

- Challenges should be handled consistently

- Data Q's is the tracking system for challenges

2. Standardized Processes for Challenging Data

Data challenges

- – What are the most common challenges?

- – Are we monitoring the types?

- – Are agencies connecting challenges to training?

3. All Inspections Must Be Uploaded and Uniform Inspection Selection Processes

- Clean inspections <u>are just as valuable</u> as inspections with multiple violations
  - Documents carrier improvement
  - Impacts resource usage and carrier SFD

- Management of Inspectors
  - Most law enforcement agencies have an organizational culture that is outcome oriented. While this is a positive orientation some of the time it can be taken too far. Do the ends justify the means? Revenue generation?

3. All Inspections Must Be Uploaded and Uniform Inspection Selection Processes

- Promote integrity of our processes throughout the inspection from initial contact to completion.

  - Use ISS and follow thru with an inspection regardless of whether it "looks" like there are no violations

- For traffic stops follow policies or guidance.

- As lead agencies we should be promoting consistent and uniform inspection selection processes. If not we could be faced with bad case law or civil liability.

Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

- CVSA is an international not-for-profit organization comprised of local, state, provincial, territorial and federal motor carrier safety officials and industry representatives from the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

    – Target audience for our discussion on the uniformity and accuracy of roadside enforcement data.

- CVSA has convened an ad-hoc committee to start raising awareness on the accuracy and consistency of roadside inspection and violation data.

  – The group will examine current obstacles and issues and report back to CVSA in approximately one year.

  – The goals and objectives are to deliver concrete recommendations to enhance the accuracy and uniformity of roadside inspection data by doing the following specific tasks...

- Specifically the goals of the committee are to…
  - Identify shortcomings in the collection and documentation of roadside inspection and enforcement data
  - Develop and promote solutions that improve the uniformity, reciprocity, accuracy and timeliness of roadside data
  - Develop suggested standardized processes for handling challenges to roadside inspection and enforcement data

- Committee goals continued…

  – Improve awareness and understanding of the need for consistent driver/vehicle inspections and inspection selection policies

  – Examine possible metrics for measuring roadside data accuracy and uniformity.

  – Monitor and provide input to progress on safety rating reciprocity between the US and Canada

Conclusion

- Data-driven traffic safety programs are the future and will be the standard of effectiveness that other programs are measured against

- Additionally, as citizens we should expect that our government would develop the most effective traffic safety improvement initiatives possible so that lives can be saved

- Effective, accurate and uniform data is critical to our success and the foundation for effective crash reduction strategies that will result in saving lives on our highways

Discussion Topics

- **From your perspective what else do you think the CVSA group should address?**

    – Consistent documentation of inspection/violation data

    – Standardized processes for challenging data

    – Importance of both good and bad inspections and uniform inspection selection