

# The ExtraMile

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## CHOOSE THE PATH OF MOST PERSISTENCE

**H**ow do you climb a mountain? The answer: One step at a time. Whether it's losing weight, building a successful motor carrier, or any other goal worth pursuing, persistence is key to success. From a safety standpoint, one performance goal that is put on a pedestal is achieving zero preventable incidents over a given timeframe. This may seem like an unattainable goal due to the high-risk nature of the trucking industry, but it is not. In reality, working a day, week, month, quarter, or calendar year without experiencing any type of preventable incident is achievable depending on the path you choose for your company. That's right, you, the leader of the organization. Everything runs downhill, especially your company's culture. Employees follow your lead, mimicking your actions, carrying out your orders, and adopting your values. If zero preventable incidents is your company's goal, then you have to walk the walk and talk the talk to make that happen. Your employees will adopt whatever culture you create, and if incidents are acceptable—including the behaviors that lead to incidents—then you need to choose a different path for your organization.

Successful motor carriers understand that the path to zero preventable incidents requires persistence: a dogged determination to continuously improve. If you have gone a month or a year without an incident, ask yourself why. Was it because you had the management controls in place to achieve those results, or can it be chalked up to good fortune? Persistent leaders will analyze performance data on a regular basis to identify opportunities for improvement. One tool to help in this area is the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Safety Measurement System (SMS). Persistently monitoring your company's results on a monthly basis may bring to light a negative trend in unsafe driving, maintenance issues, and Hours-of-Services violations. These red flags are also known as leading indicators, behaviors that commonly lead to incidents. They are also signs of systemic issues in your organization, and if you do not take corrective actions, these issues pose a serious risk to your company.

Another act of persistence is to conduct incident investigations. While the goal is to prevent incidents from happening, sometimes you must look back to go forward. Analyzing past incidents and identifying the root causes may shed light on operational issues you were not aware of. For instance, loose hiring standards, ineffective training, and poor communication could have been factors in past incidents. They might also be the source of future problems if gone unchecked.

Remember, as the late, great Albert Einstein said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."<sup>1</sup> Be persistent in your pursuit of zero preventable incidents and make the changes necessary to achieve this goal.

### CALL TO ACTION

- **Monitor SMS results regularly for negative trends.**
- **Set measurable safety performance goals and track your progress.**
- **Integrate safety into every aspect of the organization.**
- **Investigate all incidents and near misses.**

*Submitted by:*  
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<sup>1</sup>Retrieved from <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/einstein-s-parable-of-quantum-insanity/>.

## WHY FRONT-LINE MANAGEMENT MUST SUPPORT SAFETY

**B**uilding an organizational culture that supports safety is no easy task. This is especially true in the trucking industry, where there is little or no direct supervision or everyday personal contact with a significant portion of the workforce.

Certainly, a culture that supports safety begins with top management. However, supporting safety within the organization is the responsibility of front-line supervisors and managers. An employee's behavior is strongly influenced by the way management performs and acts towards safety. Workers are more likely to exhibit safe behavior if they recognize that management is firmly committed to safe work practices. Management must demonstrate this commitment by ensuring safe work practices are a core value of the organization. Management is responsible for the efficient operation of all systems within the organization. How these systems are managed influences safe behavior. Thus, safety and minimizing risks associated with any operation must be considered in every business decision.

To be highly effective, front-line managers must be proactive and facilitate employee safety and health training. This opens the door for getting employees involved in problem-solving and improving safety within the company. By becoming actively involved in incident investigation, front-line managers can uncover hazards associated with the operations of the company. These hazards can be eliminated or controlled, allowing the organization's systems to function smoothly and profitably. Actively listening to employee's complaints about unsafe conditions and taking corrective action to eliminate or control the hazard demonstrates strong leadership.

Supervisors and managers should be encouraged to take every opportunity to discuss safety issues with employees. Talking about safety every day, rather than in weekly or monthly meetings, will help ensure at-risk behavior is eliminated. An excellent time for supervisors and managers to discuss safety is when they can praise employees for using proper safety procedures in completing a task.

Management's effectiveness should be measured by the prevention of motor-vehicle collisions and personal injury incidents. However, using trailing indicators as a measure of success should be supplemented with leading performance metrics. This is probably better illustrated by Dr. Robert Long, who said, "Measuring safety performance by the number of injuries you have is like measuring parenting by the number of smacks you give." Consider successful measures which may include: number of safe behavior incidents recognized, total workers' compensation costs, the average cost per claim, incident investigations completed on time, action plans implemented, safety meetings held as scheduled, management

safety participation, resolution of suggestions and/or complaints, job safety analysis, policies and procedures updated on time, wellness program participation rates, emergency drills conducted, percent of employees trained in CPR, First Aid, training conducted as scheduled, and many more.

Top management of any organization should invest in its manager's future by supporting them in developing the necessary skills to become world-class safety leaders.

For additional information on why front-line management must support safety, please contact one of the Safety Representatives from the Old Republic Canada Safety Services Team for any questions or concerns.

*Submitted by:*

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# TOWING AND STORAGE SAFETY AND ENFORCEMENT ACT

You will be interested to know that Ontario is in the process of enacting the [Towing and Storage Safety and Enforcement Act](#) (“TSSEA”). While this Act has yet to come into force, it will attempt to legitimize towing and storage operators by increasing provincial oversight and transparency by providing support for legitimate towing operators, thereby mitigating behaviours such as fraudulent billing practices, collision chasing and high-pressure sales tactics. Once in force, the TSSEA will have requirements respecting estimates and invoices, rules regarding amounts towing and storage operators may charge for services, and prohibitions on coercion and misrepresentation. These are just a few of the welcomed changes.

In summary, the TSSEA will provincialize the regulation of towing and storage.

*Submitted by:  
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## WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL SPILL

**Safety first! Check to make sure that you are not at risk from other vehicle collisions.**

1. Inspect the vehicle for any potential signs of smoke or possibly fire. If present, remove yourself to a safe distance.
2. Call dispatch immediately, and/or Old Republic’s 24/7 Claims Reporting Centre 1-800-228-8046.
3. Inspect the tractor and trailer for signs of leaking fuel, oil or cargo.
4. Do not attempt to stop the flow of leakage if you believe the conditions to be unsafe!
5. If conditions are considered safe, please proceed with the following.
6. If a towing company arrives, immediately instruct them that they are not to retain an emergency response contractor without approval from dispatch.
7. Instruct the towing company that retaining unapproved contactors or doing unapproved remediation work will not be reimbursed by either your trucking company or by your insurers.
8. Instruct the tow company and/or the attending police that qualified responders have been dispatched and will arrive shortly.
9. If the towing company attempts to mobilize an unapproved remediation contractor, call your dispatch immediately.
10. If an emergency response company does arrive, inform them not to conduct any activities and if they do, they will not be paid by your trucking company or by your insurers. Record what firm arrived and any conversations.

**While waiting for the approved emergency spill responders to arrive, the following actions can help with reducing the potential impacts.**

- If there is leakage from the saddle tanks or reefer tank, place absorbent material or available container(s) under the leak.
- If safely accessible, attempt to plug the hole with putty or dowels that may be in the spill kit (if available).
- Inspect the area for potential surface water courses or sewer catch basins that may be at risk of receiving leakage. If possible and with what is available block off or prevent flow from entering the catch basin.
- Use a shovel and soil or sand, if possible, to divert the flow.
- Record who is at the scene and what they are doing.
- Take pictures of the scene and any equipment that has been mobilized to conduct the recovery or other activities.
- Call dispatch if you need further clarification or guidance.

**Remember, safety first, do not do anything that you believe is unsafe!**

*Written by:  
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## WHAT ARE THE SAFETY ADVANTAGES OF USING AIR DISC BRAKES?

Air disc brakes (ADB) are now standard for many new trucks built after 2018 and can be ordered on either the steer or drive axles, or both. ADB can also be ordered for most trailer types. From a safety standpoint, ADB can help reduce the risk of rear-end crashes. According to Fleet Equipment Magazine, “The main strong point for disc brakes (over drum brakes) is reduced stopping distance. With disc brakes, that distance can be anywhere from 17% to 33% shorter than drum brakes, depending on speed.”

Other advantages of using ADB include:

- No brake fade caused by heating up the brakes due to excessive usage.
- Generally less maintenance, although not maintenance-free.
- No slack-adjuster-related “out of adjustment” violations from roadside inspections.
- Longer life before replacement.
- Use of a caliper/pad mechanism, compared to the lining/drum/S-cam mechanism found on drum brakes.

Consider the type of operation you run before choosing the equipment to best fit your needs.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO TRAIN MY DRIVERS ON BRAKE-RELATED VIOLATIONS?

Try Old Republic’s Learning Library. Here are some short videos to help you address this topic:

Other advantages of using ADB include:

- CSA Minutes > Failure to Conduct a Pre-trip Inspection
- CSA Minutes > Inoperative/Defective Brakes – 393.48(a)
- Equipment & Maintenance Violation Prevention > Pre-Trip Approach and Maintenance
- Equipment & Maintenance Violation Prevention > Pre/Post-Trip Component Inspection
- Equipment & Maintenance Violation Prevention > Roadside Vehicle Inspection Cheatsheet

Note: This list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

*Submitted by:*

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### CALL TO ACTION

- Assign drivers Learning Library training videos on brake inspections.
- Measure the number of preventable equipment violations and take corrective actions.
- Hold drivers and mechanics responsible for preventable equipment violations.

Retrieved from <https://www.fleetequipmentmag.com/hard-braking-considerations-disc-or-drum/#:~:text=The%20main%20strong%20point%20for,drum%20brakes%2C%20depending%20on%20speed.&text=Compared%20to%20disc%20brakes%2C%20drum,replacements%20in%20a%20given%20period.>

## GIVE SAFETY A SEAT AT THE TABLE

One mistake any person in a leadership role can make is to ignore or fail to realize the value each department brings to the organization. This can be especially true in siloed organizations where barriers exist that limit the effectiveness of communication between co-workers and departments. Barriers can be physical, cultural, or personal in nature. A physical barrier refers to being geographically separated, either across the country or even in the same building. Cultural barriers can include misunderstandings due to language or customs that may create communication breakdowns. However, this article speaks to company cultures that create barriers. As mentioned earlier, siloed organizations impede interdepartmental communication, whether intentionally or not. Finally, personal barriers involve individual attitudes and biases. A person may be reluctant to receive feedback or input from others for personal reasons. Whatever the case may be, a motor carrier's leadership team cannot afford to make mission-critical decisions without input from every affected department.

Whoever manages your safety and regulatory compliance efforts should have a seat at the table in every operational meeting involving department heads. Because transportation is a highly regulated, high-risk industry, who better to help department heads achieve their organizational objectives than safety? Preventing losses and managing risks should be top of mind in every business decision. If a motor carrier cannot operate safely, it is losing money. If it is losing money, the company cannot compete, and if the company cannot compete, it cannot survive. So, regardless of fleet size and organizational structure, senior management should view safety as one of the most important keys to the company's long-term success. Here are two examples that show how safety can contribute to the discussion of trucking-related issues that motor carriers face on a daily basis.

### DRIVER SHORTAGE/RETENTION

Screening and selecting drivers requires due diligence. Making a bad hiring decision can cost a motor carrier in terms of the dollars associated with crashes/injuries, repairs, hiring a replacement driver, and training that person. Involving your safety team in discussions pertaining to the company's hiring and

retention standards and road tests can help identify an applicant's performance or knowledge gaps that could lead to problems down the road if the applicant were hired.

### NEW BUSINESS

Before bringing on new business, consider having someone from your safety department analyze the risk first. There could be hazards present that need to be addressed up front. For instance, what if the truck has to be backed into the facility, requiring a spotter or traffic control? How good is the location's physical security? Is the driver expected to manually handle freight?

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## CALL TO ACTION

- **Include a safety representative in management-level operations meetings.**
- **Develop a new business checklist that includes a hazard analysis by safety.**
- **Conduct road tests on all drivers.**
- **Partner with safety to develop the company's hiring and retention standards for drivers.**



# USE BACKGROUND CHECKS TO PREVENT DRIVER THEFTS

**T**rusting an expensive piece of company equipment and the valuable cargo inside is an act that should not be taken lightly. Motor carriers that do not give driver screening and selection due diligence are at an increased risk of having a newly hired driver abandon the truck and cargo or aid in their theft. For this reason, motor carriers should consider conducting background checks to verify an applicant's history and identify red flags. Below is a list of background checks that give employers much-needed information to make an informed hiring decision. Read each description and consider how it can aid your loss prevention efforts.

You should also consult with your attorney prior to conducting any of the following checks. State law may require you to obtain express permission from the prospective employee in addition to meeting other requirements.

## CRIMINAL HISTORY

Verifying that an applicant has a criminal past may not eliminate the candidate from consideration, but it certainly raises a red flag. Running a criminal background check and comparing it to the application or resume is a good way to see how forthright and honest the applicant is being with you.

## PAST EMPLOYMENT

An applicant's history of job hopping is another red flag to watch out for. If he or she has demonstrated a pattern of quitting jobs every few months, chances are the applicant will do the same with you.

## SAFETY PERFORMANCE

Running the applicant's Pre-Employment Screening Program (PSP) report provides an employer with five years of the driver's crash history and three years of roadside inspection data. PSP is a valuable tool to learn if the driver tends to exhibit unsafe driving behaviors, even if those behaviors have not led to a crash.

## DRUG AND ALCOHOL

Motor carriers must verify a current or prospective employee's drug and alcohol violations before permitting him or her to operate commercial motor vehicles on public roads. Carriers are required to use the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse to conduct queries.

## CIVIC HISTORY

Similar to past employment, verifying an applicant's previous addresses and looking for gaps can raise red flags. For instance, if a gap of more than one month exists, ask why. Perhaps the applicant was incarcerated or has another reason.

## CREDIT HISTORY

An applicant's credit history can shed light on any debt or collections issues. If the applicant has money problems, this should raise a red flag.

## CALL TO ACTION

- Conduct criminal background checks on all applicants.
- Register for the FMCSA's Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse.
- Subscribe to the FMCSA's PSP program.

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