

**UMTRI-88-38**

**Consideration of Steps  
to Improve the Training  
of Truck Drivers in  
Michigan**

**A Technical Memorandum**

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<p>16. Abstract</p> <p>An ad hoc examination was made on the possible implementation of a bill that is pending in the 1988 session of the Michigan Legislature concerning the training of truck drivers. The examination included meetings with various persons representing State government and the Michigan trucking industry, review of certain literature and newly available data on the accident record of truck drivers by age, and study of an industry-stimulated program to improve the quality of truck driver training, nationwide. The findings of this examination support a fourfold recommendation, namely, that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) All existing and future schools for training truck drivers in Michigan should be certified to meet minimum standards for program quality.</li> <li>2) A specially dedicated facility should be established in Michigan for modeling and advancing the state of truck driver training. This facility would also provide training for other instructors as well as the examiners who will administer the new Commercial Drivers License tests for truck drivers.</li> <li>3) Steps should be taken to assure that all entry-level truck drivers be certifiably trained.</li> <li>4) Provision should be made for evaluating the effectiveness of Michigan's initiatives in truck driver training, over the long term.</li> </ol>			
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Prompted by a pending bill in the Michigan Legislature, the Office of Highway Safety Planning sponsored a limited examination by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) of the matter of truck driver training. The specific thrust of the pending legislation entails the establishment of a Truck Safety Commission, one of whose primary charges is to improve the state of training for truck drivers in Michigan. This brief report is intended to help guide the specific approach which may be taken toward this improvement.

This examination has been conducted on an ad-hoc basis, with collection of views from agencies of State government, discussion with persons concerned with truck driver training, nationally, and examination of related literature. The views expressed in this report represent a preliminary consideration of the issues rather than the results of an in-depth study.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

Senate Bill No. 703 in the 1988 session of the Michigan Legislature stipulated that a truck safety fund would be expended, in part, to:

- 1) establish truck driver safety education programs, and
- 2) encourage, coordinate, and administer grants for research and demonstration projects to develop the application of new ideas and concepts in truck driver safety education as applied to state, as opposed to nationwide, problems.

The overall thrust of the bill is to enhance the safety of truck operations, with additional provisions for police enforcement, data collection, and analysis of the truck safety problem. The interests of the immediate study, however, were confined to the truck driver education, or training, aspects of the bill.

In this context, there appears to be a very persuasive case for the training of truck operators. Shown in Figure 1, for example, newly developed data from the Center for National Truck Statistics at the University of Michigan shows the fatal accident rate for truck drivers as a function of age. Also, on the same plot is a corresponding set of data [1] representing the fatal accident rate of car drivers vs. the age of the driver. We see, firstly, the well-known, but very sobering illustration of the high lethality of truck accident involvement. That is, the rate at which fatalities are produced per mile of truck travel is at least 10 times that for passenger cars, regardless of the age of the driver. So, whatever the driver's age, it is much more important that the heavy duty vehicle be driven safely.

The age factor shows up most prominently in the magnification of fatal accident rate with the younger driver. The figure shows that the 20-year-old truck driver has a fatal accident rate which is approximately three and one half times that of middle-aged truck drivers. By way of contrast, the 20-year-old car driver has only twice the fatal accident rate of the middle-aged car driver. While we have long acknowledged that young drivers, generally, have a poorer safety record than older drivers, the truck driving task apparently poses special demands which tend to exaggerate the skill and judgement handicaps of the young novice truck driver. (It is interesting to note that the young truck driver has a much poorer safety record than the young car driver even though the alcohol factor, which is so

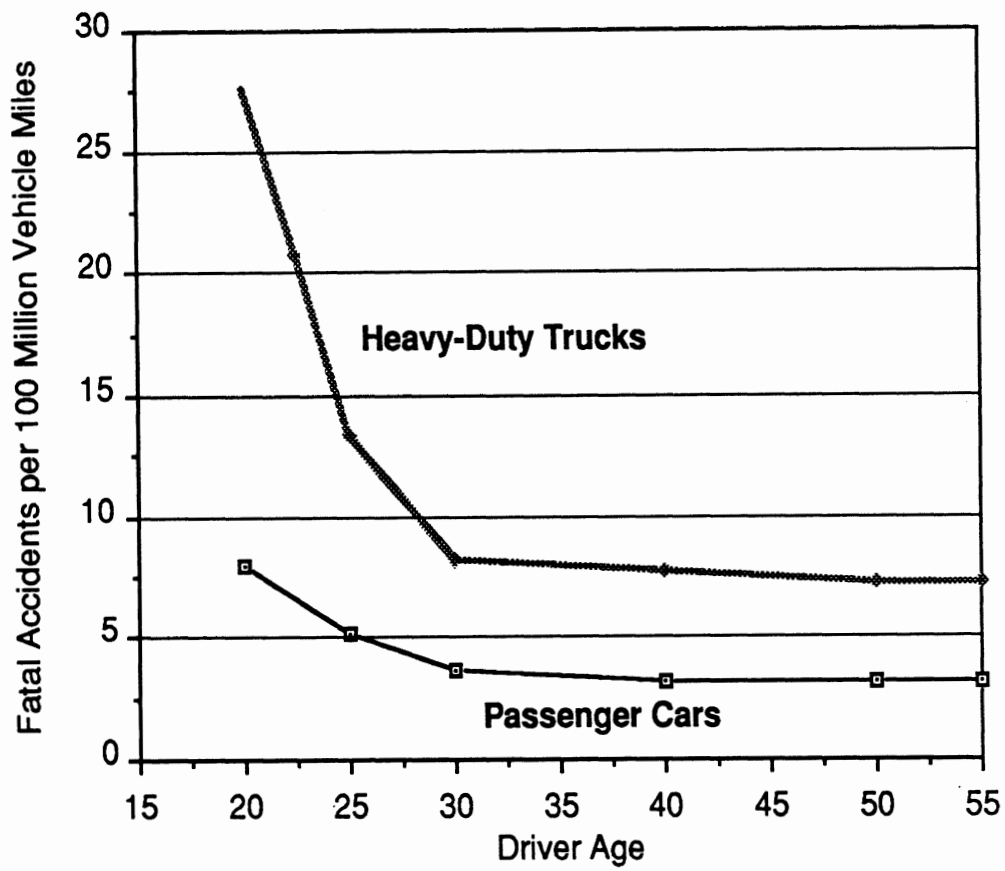


Figure 1. Fatal Accident Rate vs. Driver Age for Heavy-duty Trucks and Passenger Cars.

prominent in explaining the high accident rate of young car drivers, is not much of an issue in truck driving.)

The statistical indications of the problem tend to support a growing conviction within government as well as the trucking industry that specialized training of truck drivers is needed. In a conference-workshop held by the University of Michigan in 1983 [2] it was found that a highly informed cross section of the trucking community rated inadequate training as the third most important safety issue, out of a group of eight commonly cited driver factors. Shown in figure 2, the training matter was placed just under "inexperience" as contributing to truck accidents. In fact, it may be postulated that even the number-one ranked factor, "aggressive driving tactics," would be addressed through a more careful preparation of new drivers for the truck driving profession.

The matter has been escalating in national attention during the last few years in part due to the growing shortage of drivers available to meet the needs of the trucking industry. That is, there is expected to be a major influx of new drivers into the trucking industry in the years ahead. As the trucking industry has considered these developments in the light of heightened concern for truck safety, they have put a special focus on the suitability of truck driver training programs and facilities available in this country. Their general conviction, repeated by Michigan-based trucking operators, is that the quality of truck driver training schools is highly nonuniform, and many are obviously poor.

The only standard of any kind which has applied to truck driver training schools is that established by the U.S. Department of Education as part of its Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL) program (which constitutes the primary source of tuition funds for truck driver training students). This standard for eligibility stipulates a minimum number of class hours for any vocational type program but does not specifically treat the training content nor the truck driver training subject, per se. In the Department's guide for GSL applications, it cautions the student that the eligibility status "does not mean that...the U.S. Department of Education has evaluated the quality or suitability of the education offered." [3]

In response to convictions that training school quality is poor, the national trucking industry has created a mechanism for ratcheting up the quality of such programs offered in the U.S. This mechanism, embodied in the nonprofit "Professional Truck Driver Institute of America" (PTDIA), provides a resource through which Michigan and other states can assure a high level of quality in truck driver training. The evaluation criteria adopted by the PTDIA have been developed through a program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Motor Carrier Safety. The role which the PTDIA resource might play in a Michigan program will be discussed later.

Moreover, the setting in which we find ourselves considering the issue of truck driver training in 1988 is this:

- there are compelling indications that proper training of truck drivers is warranted by the traffic accident problem. Not only is it especially important that trucks be properly driven since they are so lethal to others in collisions, but the evidence indicates that the young, untrained, truck driver has special difficulty in attaining a "professional," or journeyman, level of operational safety,
- the need for addressing the training issue is expected to grow in the future as a much greater fraction of new drivers will take their place in the truck driving population,

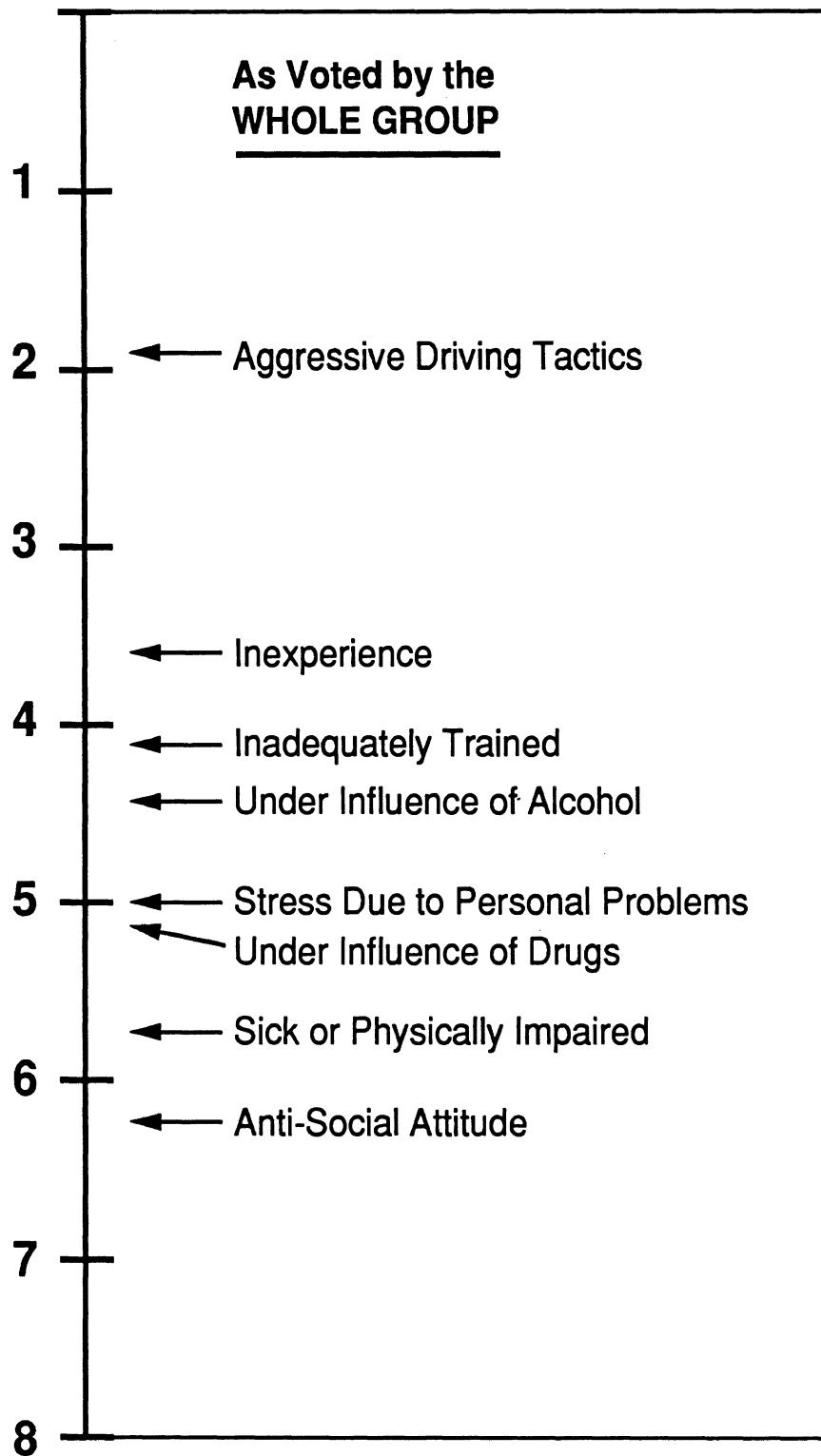


Figure 2. Rank Order of Driver Factors, in terms of their Relative Importance as Contributors to Truck Accidents (2).

- the schools currently in operation for training truck drivers are apparently not of consistently good quality,
- resources are becoming available for evaluating and certifying truck driver training programs, so as to achieve an upgrading of quality.

### **3.0 STEPS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF TRUCK DRIVER TRAINING IN MICHIGAN**

Given the imperatives for addressing the problem, the proposed establishment of a Truck Safety Commission offers a unique opportunity for taking action on the matter of truck driver training in Michigan. The question is, what kind of action would be fruitful? The assessment which has been done here suggests the following:

- 1) Michigan should undertake to certify that at least a basic level of quality exists in the curricula, faculty, and facilities of all schools which train truck drivers in this State.
- 2) An individual facility, perhaps named the "Michigan Center for Safe Truck Driving," should be established with the purpose of:
  - a) conducting a model program for training truck drivers;
  - b) improving the materials and methods used in truck driver training and tailoring them to deal with the peculiarities of trucking in Michigan;
  - c) preparing the means for, and conducting the training of persons who will teach in truck driver training schools; and
  - d) preparing the means for, and conducting the training of persons who will serve as examiners in administering the Michigan test for the new federally-required Certified Driver's License for truck drivers.
- 3) Steps should be taken to assure that all entry-level truck drivers are trained before employment by the trucking industry in Michigan.
- 4) A program of evaluation should be undertaken, as a companion to these initiatives, so that we can assess (a) the effectiveness of the public expenditures to enhance truck driver training and (b) the warrants for an eventual compulsory Michigan requirement for truck driver training.

The discussion below lays out the rationale as well as possible implementations behind each of these suggested steps.

#### **3.1 Certification of Existing Schools**

Assuming that the perceived poor quality level of truck driver training schools, nationally, also applies in Michigan, it seems that a prudent first step would be to assure that truck driver training entities in this state are upgraded to at least a basic level of quality. It is recommended that the Professional Truck Driver Institute of America (PTDIA), a nonprofit organization, is ideally suited to this evaluation and certification task.

Although the certification criteria of the PTDIA are realistically achievable by the better schools now in operation, these criteria are based upon a rigorous, federally-developed curriculum for training tractor-trailer drivers. Thus, these criteria do assure that a comprehensive program of driver training results. Since it is a central element of the



PTDIA mission to certify truck driver training programs, the Institute itself conducts the certification service, essentially at cost.

The evaluation process has been made highly objective, using standardized forms and evaluators who have been trained by PTDIA to conduct the 2-day on-site certification process. The PTDIA also has developed a system of assigning a code number to each graduate of an Institute-certified school and forwarding this code to a national data base. This data base then will directly enable efforts for evaluating the effectiveness of truck driver training in Michigan over the long term.

The use of PTDIA to evaluate Michigan's truck driver training schools and certify those which qualify offers the most straightforward and credible means of accomplishing this task. Since the PTDIA is a creation of the trucking industry, it is pragmatically tuned to the real needs of the industry for good drivers. At the same time, UMTRI recognizes the PTDIA leadership as being of the highest caliber and fully capable of dealing with the evaluation of training quality in a most professional manner. A set of materials outlining PTDIA's certification program is attached to this report as Appendix A.

It has been the experience of PTDIA that substandard schools do not readily apply for evaluation. Thus, if Michigan is to assure that all of the truck driver training facilities registered in the state (approximately twelve in number) become subject to evaluation, it is likely that the state must at least prepare to pay the evaluation fee. It is recommended that the Truck Safety Commission pay the approximate \$3000 fee for evaluation and, if certified, the \$500 fee for certification of each school in the State. The Commission may also choose to pay for the recertification of each school (at the maximum interval of once every 18 months). The total cost for the certification effort would be \$42,000 the first year and then an average of \$28,000 each year thereafter, assuming a constant total of twelve schools.

A given school can, of course, refuse the evaluation altogether, but the lack of certification for such schools would signal to those who hire truck drivers that a substandard level of training may have been obtained. By the State covering these fees, it can be assured that the certification process will be offered uniformly, and kept up to date. The Commission can obtain an annual confirmation from PTDIA on all schools in the State which have satisfied the certification requirement and can disseminate this information to the Michigan trucking community by various means.

### **3.2 A "Michigan Center for Safe Truck Driving"**

In order to provide a focus point for the enhancement of truck driver training over the long term, there is reason to create a specialized program somewhere in the State which continually strives to improve the safety quality of truck drivers in Michigan. Such a program, perhaps formed under a name such as the "Michigan Center for Safe Truck Driving" would serve as a model for truck driver training through its own training curriculum while also carrying out other functions.

Research on new training methods, for example, which may have been conducted elsewhere in the state or in the nation at large, could be subjected to pilot application in this facility to determine its practicality and effectiveness. Training which peculiarly addresses the very large multi-axle Michigan-style truck combinations or which deals with a specific safety problem which has shown up in studies of Michigan's truck accident record could be pilot-tested at this facility. The use of advanced training simulators, while perhaps initially developed by industry or other centers of expertise, could be subjected to methodical evaluation in the suggested Center which benefits from a steady flow of its own truck

driver training students. In this perspective, the model for this Center is not unlike that of research hospitals situated in large universities through which great advancements in medicine have accrued. Medical progress is accelerated in these institutions because innovative care can be given to patients in an environment which is closely monitored and clinically analyzed. Although the technology of truck driver training is at a much lower scale of complexity, the analagous benefits of a model center as a site for method development are striking.

In a manner which corresponds to the use of the research hospital for training medical interns, the suggested Center would also afford an ideal setting for preparing other instructors to train truck drivers. Thus, truck driver training schools in the state which are found to be substandard in the area of instructor preparation could be "brought up" to a certification-worthy level through the functioning of the Center.

Similarly, the Center would offer an ideal setting for addressing another issue which has resulted from recent federal legislation and which the State must deal with in the near future. Namely, the new Commercial Drivers License (CDL) program must be administered by the State and must be implemented with the aid of licensed examiners trained by the State. The initial need to prepare a cadre of examiners and to continually replace those who leave these positions each year could be met as part of the charter of the suggested Center.

The proper site for the envisioned Center would probably be a technical school or community college which would show a strong commitment to the basic mission and be willing to provide at least a substantial portion of the fixed facilities. The Center must be made accountable both to the host institution and to the Truck Safety Commission. Although the Center may receive grants or contracts to carry out specific curriculum development activities, it is preferable that its basic driver training functions be self-supporting so that the Center is not favored by public funds in competing for students with other private truck driver training schools. The Center's activities which provide training to CDL examiners should be completely supported by the State.

### **3.3 The Training of All Entry-level Truck Drivers**

It should be a long-term goal of an enhanced program of truck driver training in Michigan that no new truck drivers are entering the ranks without having satisfied the training requirements in a certified school. On the near term, we do not recommend a legal mandate for the training of entry-level drivers. Before such a mandate would even be considered, it would be necessary to have shown that (a) a suitable level of certified training capacity exists in the State, (b) the curricula are demonstrably suited to the special setting of Michigan trucking, and (c) evaluation efforts have produced compelling indications that truck driver training does, indeed, improve traffic safety in the State.

In the meantime, there is reason to hope that this training goal can be satisfied simply though vigorous collaboration between state government and the Michigan trucking industry. For its part, the trucking industry must step forward to provide the needed squeeze on both training schools and the practice of employing novice truck drivers. This can be done by (a) widely disseminating the message that the State is now engaged in the certification of truck driver training schools, via PTDLA, (b) promoting an industry policy that a new driver is considered to be untrained if not prepared through a certified school, and (c) giving hiring preference and hopefully a higher wage to those who are certifiably trained. A substantial information campaign would be needed to begin such a trend within the highly diffuse trucking industry. Perhaps the Legislature could put the Michigan

trucking community on informal notice that such an initiative is expected as the industry's good faith response to the new legislation.

One potential ally in the quest of promoting certified training for new truck drivers may be the automotive manufacturers who have been looking for re-training opportunities for displaced auto workers, many of whom constitute an economic burden on their former employer while they remain unemployed. Assuming that Michigan could muster a good set of facilities for providing quality training to new truck drivers, unemployed auto workers may find that the prior employer is quite willing to help invest in their retraining as a truck driver. Especially as the truck driver shortage worsens, the prospects for more attractive wages and working conditions as a truck driver seem certain to improve. Again, we could assume that once a steady flow of certifiably-trained truck drivers became available for hire, the employability of new truck drivers who have not had training would diminish, thus achieving the desired goal of entry-level training without the need for a compulsory training law.

### **3.4 Evaluation of the Effectiveness of a Michigan Initiative**

In the context of the training initiatives discussed above, as in so many plans for reducing traffic accidents, it is increasingly clear that new programs should have an evaluation scheme built in from the beginning. Because the training subject is complex and involves a projected long-term appropriation of public funds, we recommend that a commitment be made to evaluate the program periodically and to assure the data structures which will permit evaluation of global effectiveness over the long run.

The data structure issue seems to be assured through the mechanism of the code number assigned to each student who graduates from a PTDIA-certified school. PTDIA delivers the code to the DAC driver registry system, located in Oklahoma, which in turn enters it with the driver's social security number into a nationally-accessible computer file. Since the social security number of each truck driver will be a mandatory part of the Commercial Driver License system mentioned earlier, there will be a means of tracing in the future from (a) traffic accident reports filled out by Michigan police officers to (b) the driver's license information to (c) the social security number of the truck driver to (d) the DAC registry wherein will reside the PTDIA code for certified training of the individual.

Thus, if Michigan chooses to use the PTDIA mechanism for certifying training schools and for coding the drivers who graduate from these schools, it will also have assured that a meaningful evaluation procedure is possible over the long term. That is, it should be possible at some future date to determine the effectiveness of certified training in the reduction of truck accidents.

## **4.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

A Michigan initiative of the type outlined here is thought to have no precedent elsewhere in the U.S. Nevertheless, it is fortuitous that a number of factors argue for this State to take the suggested steps at this time. Most conspicuously, the State Legislature has conducted a vigorous inquiry into the truck safety problem and has shown the will to take on the problem in a meaningful way. Secondly, the national concern over truck safety has led to improved data suggesting that the young and untrained truck driver is imposing especially high risks on the motoring public. It seems clear that these results implicate not simply youthfulness but also a lack of adequate preparation for a demanding job.

The concerns of the national trucking industry, itself, over the driver training problem has led to the creation of a highly credible service, the PTDIA. This institution

offers the Michigan program with a means to immediately deal with the issue of training school quality. It also offers the bonus of a data trail from which we can eventually assess the effectiveness of our training program on the accident record.

The prospect of establishing a Michigan Center for Safe Truck Driving offers a means to make the training programs exceptional over the long term while providing a practical means for dealing with other training needs, forthwith. Such a Center can serve as a "test facility" at which to refine improvements in the curriculum and special training features tailored to trucks in Michigan. Continual improvement of this Center will be facilitated through progress that will be made in the other established research units in Michigan. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the U.S. Department of Transportation has recently announced the formation of a Great Lakes Center for Truck Transportation Research which, though centered at UMTRI, involves a coalition of the University of Michigan with Michigan State University, Wayne State University, and Michigan Technological University.

Moreover, Michigan stands out as having an unusual level of research activity in areas related to trucking and truck safety. Thus, the suggested Center for Safe Truck Driving will be ideally situated for applying the results of Michigan research by directing them into the preparation of new truck drivers and those who train them.

## REFERENCES

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**APPENDIX A**

## PROFESSIONAL TRUCK DRIVER INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

THE VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION PLAN:POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The PTDIA works to advance tractor-trailer driver training, proficiency, safety, and professionalism by promoting high quality truck driver training programs, and by verifying and publicly attesting to their quality.

Voluntary certification is the PTDIA process which grants public recognition to institutions whose programs for training tractor-trailer drivers meet or exceed established qualifications and criteria as determined through initial and periodic evaluation by the PTDIA . Certification is voluntary in that the institutions request evaluation of their programs for PTDIA certification.

The purposes of the certification process are to provide a professional judgment of program quality, to encourage continuing program improvement, and to increase industry use of tractor-trailer driver training programs.

PTDIA certification of tractor-trailer driver training programs is intended to:

- o Verify their quality.
- o Promote their improvement.
- o Assure employers, potential enrollees, governmental agencies and offices, trucking industry, truck safety advocates, official bodies, and the public of the quality of specific programs.

Definition and Scope

A tractor-trailer driver training program is defined as all the operations and entities of an organization that are designed and structured to provide qualified students with a course of instruction in the safe and responsible operation of tractor-trailer vehicles.

"Organization" refers to any entity that provides a program of training and/or testing to tractor-trailer drivers, including: for-hire and private motor carriers; colleges, universities, and vocational schools; and business organizations devoted to training or testing.

"Course of instruction" refers to curriculum--instructional content, methods, and/or materials.

Tractor-trailer driver training should: be capable and responsibly managed; offer a well-organized and up-to-date curriculum; be conducted by qualified instructional personnel; use effective instructional materials, equipment, and methods requiring active involvement of learners; and utilize a well defined system for (1) assessing outcomes and achievements of stated objectives, and (2) improving instruction.

The PTDIA provides voluntary certification opportunities for tractor-trailer driver training programs of (a) organizations primarily concerned with vocational education, and (b) trucking firms and commercial institutions whose primary activities are other than education. PTDIA certification is available to training programs offered by branches or at locations other than at the main headquarters of an organization. The PTDIA will also provide certification services in cooperation with other standard-setting agencies.

The PTDIA certifies tractor-trailer driver training programs throughout the United States and may certify programs in other countries. Organizations are eligible for program certification without regard to their organizational form, sources of financial support, or size of enrollment. Tractor-trailer driver training programs eligible for PTDIA certification include those from:

- o Proprietary truck driver training schools
- o In-house motor carrier training programs
- o Nonprofit public-education institutions
- o Government agencies, both civilian and military
- o Trade and professional associations
- o Labor unions
- o Corporate training divisions
- o Educational corporations and partnerships.

### Eligibility

To qualify as an applicant for PTDIA certification, training programs must:

1. Meet applicable local, state, and/or federal licensing requirements.



2. Have operated successfully for at least one uninterrupted year, unless applying for precertification status.
3. Express the amount of training offered in clock hours or other clearly defined quantitative units of measurement.
4. Have an identified body of individuals actively involved in learning. Programs consisting of only lectures, broadcasts, audio-visual presentations and other one-way communication are not eligible.

### Certification Board

The Certification Board is the final authority to determine whether or not a candidate program meets PTDIA Criteria for certification. The Board may recommend changes in Criteria but may not adopt separate standards or criteria. The functions, membership, meetings, and actions of the Board are defined in Document F.

### Appeal

All candidate programs which are denied certification or for which a certification decision is suspended, delayed, or deferred have the right to appeal the decision of the Certification Board.

The appeal must be based on the information and documentation submitted to and considered by the Board.

## The Certification Process

### Inquiry

Initiation of voluntary certification proceeding typically involves a verbal or written inquiry from an official of the tractor-trailer driver training program seeking PTDIA evaluation.

### Application

Certification begins with formal application supported by sufficient information to provide the basis for determining eligibility. Questions of eligibility are discussed at the time of inquiry and verified by documentation submitted with the application.

### Preparation For Evaluation

Upon acceptance and approval of the application, the PTDIA provides the applicant organization with documents and materials needed to prepare for the on-site evaluation. These documents and materials:

1. Describe the scope, nature and procedures of the on-site visit and evaluation.
2. List and define information (records, copies of documents, etc.) which the PTDIA will request and/or require during the on-site evaluation.
3. Provide appropriate forms and examples of how the information should be prepared, structured, or exhibited for evaluation purposes.

PTDIA certification does not require the organization to prepare and submit a self-study or self-evaluation report prior to the on-site visit and evaluation. Instead, the organization agrees to make available the data, documents, records requested by PTDIA Document D1.

Insofar as possible, the organization is expected to have the information ready for use by the evaluation team when they arrive for the on-site visit. If difficulty is experienced in complying with a request or if technical assistance is needed, the evaluation team will provide the information and assistance necessary to complete the requested materials during the on-site visit.

Upon completion of its "preparation for evaluation" assignments or when satisfied it is ready for evaluation, the organization notifies the PTDIA that it is ready for on-site visitation. With this notification, scheduling and other arrangements for the on-site visit are finalized.

### On-Site Evaluation

On-site evaluation is conducted by a team comprised of at least two persons. Members of the on-site team are chosen with particular regard to their truck driving and education expertise.

The on-site evaluation is an information gathering and fact-finding mission. The team studies the entire program operation to determine the scope, nature, and quality of the program and its course offerings. All program data and course material are examined during and, in some cases, after the visit. In addition, the team inspects the training vehicle fleet and observes instructional practices, procedures, and activities at points of delivery.

A one and one-half day visit is usually sufficient for most evaluations.

The team prepares a report of the visits. This report along with the data collected during the evaluation forms the basis for a Program Evaluation Report (PER). When all, informational requirements are completed, the PTDIA finalizes the PER and submits it to the Certification Board for action.

The PER, team report, and other information collected during the evaluation process are considered confidential and are used by the PTDIA and Certification Board only for evaluation purposes.

### Certification Board Action and Appeal

The Certification Board meets periodically and may certify, deny certification, or defer certification pending further evidence or required changes. The Board provides the applicant with a written report of its actions. If the application is deferred or denied, a letter stating the reasons is sent to the applicant together with an outline of appeal procedures.

### Time Schedule

Within one month after the application is accepted by PTDIA, an evaluation team will be appointed and an on-site evaluation scheduled. Action by the Certification Board will take place at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Generally, the certification process will require a six to nine month time frame.

### General Policies

1. Each program is evaluated within its own context and not in comparison with other programs. Certification means that a program has worthwhile goals, satisfactorily achieves its instructional objectives and meets or exceeds PTDIA criteria.
2. An applicant program is reviewed and judged as a total entity. Minor remediable weaknesses may be offset by major significant strengths. A major weakness in any significant area may prevent certification despite strengths in other areas. The criteria for certification is defined in Document A1.
3. The burden of proof rests on the applicant. The applicant is expected to prove any claims made for its course(s). Certification is a public testimony that the program can be relied upon to meet or exceed PTDIA standards.

4. Initial certification is granted for eighteen (18) months. Upon certification, a tentative time shall be set for partial or complete reevaluation. The minimum period for reevaluation is 18 months.
5. A list of certified programs is published annually.
6. An organization which administers and conducts all aspects of its programs at one location is certified as an entity. Programs which are conducted at several locations or branches are certified as separate entities. When programs offer more than one course, each course is evaluated as a separate entity.
7. The PTDIA Criteria for voluntary certification are under constant review and receive special scrutiny no less often than every four years by the Certification Board, PTDIA membership.

PROFESSIONAL TRUCK DRIVER INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION

Certification by the PTDIA signifies that a course of study for the training of tractor-trailer drivers has been evaluated and meets or exceeds the following criteria without exception:

1. Each student receives at least 44 clock hours of behind-the-wheel training time.
2. The organization offering the training actually provides the course as claimed and is able to meet its obligations to students, employees and others.
3. Instructors are thoroughly oriented and trained to teach the tractor-trailer driver curriculum and are carefully supervised to ensure high quality instruction.
4. The number of instructors available is appropriate for the number of students, the training time scheduled, and the desired student/instructor ratios.
5. The number of tractor-trailers available is appropriate for the number of students, the portion of their time spent in a vehicle, and the desired student/vehicle ratio.
6. Behind-the-wheel instruction is conducted under various roadway and traffic conditions. During at least 50 percent of street instruction, the trailer is loaded to a minimum of 15,000 pounds of payload.
7. Road or on-street tests involve routes that permit a broad range of observations which are planned in advance and recorded on an examination checklist. These tests are conducted in traffic.
8. To qualify for graduation, a student must satisfactorily complete and perform all aspects of course work.

9. All tests used to meet Graduation Criteria are based on education and training objectives rather than solely on state license test requirements. This standard does not preclude the inclusion of state license test requirements in the final examination test battery.
10. All training time (hours of instruction) evaluation standards of the PTDIA as stated in Document D2 (Standards I1 through I9) are met or exceeded.
11. The course of study achieves a level of quality rating of 2.75 or more. This rating is the average value (score) of the standards (Document D2) assessed during the evaluation process. It is the sum of all rating scores divided by the number of standards assessed.

#### SUMMARY OF CRITERIA

To be certified, a tractor-trailer driver training course must receive an evaluation rating score of 3.0 or higher for all standards designated as critical. These items are identified in the criteria above as numbers 1 through 10.

In addition, a rating score of at least 2.75 must be achieved when the ratings of all standards (Document D2) used to assess the course of study are averaged.

#### REEVALUATION

Upon certification, a tentative time shall be set for partial or complete reevaluation. The minimum period for reevaluation is 18 months.

VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION OF  
TRACTOR-TRAILER DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAMS  
PROFESSIONAL TRUCK DRIVER INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

CERTIFICATION FEE SCHEDULE

The following schedule governs the fees associated with PTDIA program certification and related services.

Application and Certification Fee

An application fee of \$500 and a \$500 certification fee are payable with the application for Certification (Document A5a.) The application fee pays for processing the application for certification or precertification status. The certification fee covers reimbursement of PTDIA for costs including functional expenses for the Certification Board. If upon initial review, the application is determined to be ineligible for consideration, the \$500 certification fee will be refunded.

When a school requests certification for more than one site and the program of training and curriculum are essentially the same as the principal training site, no additional certification fee will be charged. However, a \$250 application fee per additional site will be assessed to cover processing and on-going service functions.

An application and its fee expire if the file remains inactive for more than 12 months.

The fees specified are due again when application is made for recertification at the end of a certification period (Document A2).

On-Site Evaluation Fee

The on-site visit fee is \$250 a day for each member of the team (normally two persons) plus \$150 per diem per member for each calendar day the team is on-site. In addition, the actual cost for all travel expenses (air carrier, taxi/rental cars, etc.) will be paid by the applicant.

NOTE: The least costly mode of travel practical will be used by team members. The total fee will vary with the size

of the team and the number of days spent on-site. When multiple sites for the same school are visited, the same schedule of fees in relation to the actual number of team members and the days of site visits will apply.

After receipt of the application, the organization will be notified of the team size, length of visit and an estimated cost for the on-site evaluation fee. Payment of the estimated site fee must be received by the Institute prior to the on-site evaluation. Following the on-site evaluation actual costs will be established. A refund of overpayment, or billing of the applicant for additional costs in excess of the original estimates, will be made within 30 days.

If the Certification Board requests a special revisit to the program site, or if the organization requests a consultive visit, the above fee schedule applies.

#### Appeal Expense Fee

An Appeal Expense Fee of \$2,500 is payable within thirty days of the receipt of the Certification Board's action. The fee covers the organization's portion of the cost of convening the Appeal Board to consider the appeal.

The fee is refundable if a written withdrawal of appeal is received by the Board at least five business days prior to the date the Board is scheduled to consider the appeal.

#### Annual Sustaining Fee

The organization pays its share of continuing certification costs with an annual sustaining fee. The fees are a \$1.00 assessment for each student successfully completing a course certified by the Institute.

Payment of the fees will be on a per capita basis as required student PTDIA course graduation certificates are purchased by the organization. The \$1.00 assessment is in addition to the charges for the certificates and all other charges or costs otherwise expressed in the PTDIA documents and criteria.



PROFESSIONAL TRUCK DRIVER INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

Organizations seeking certification of their tractor-trailer driver training programs are requested to fulfill these application requirements by submitting to the PTDIA:

1. One copy of Document A5a: Application Form
2. One copy of Document A5b: Verification of Eligibility Form
3. One copy of Document A5c: On-Site Visit Consent Form
4. Three copies of the current Program Catalog. A copy of the Program Catalog Checklist (Document A6) must accompany each catalog.

A catalog is defined as printed publication that is designed to convey an accurate, complete, and dignified definition of the program and all its components. The catalog is considered complete in that it provides all the information identified by Document A6: Program Catalog Checklist. If the catalog does not contain all the required information, equivalent materials or supplements may be attached to catalogs submitted.

Information gained from the first three documents (A5a, b, and c) provides the basis for determining program eligibility. The fourth submittal is intended to provide the Institute with definitive descriptions of the program to be certified.

In review, the organization must submit these items to fulfill application requirements:

<u>Number of Copies</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	Document A5a
1	Document A5b
1	Document A5c
3	Program Catalogs (current issue)
3	Document A6 (one for each catalog)

The submission and acceptance of these items completes the application process. The PTDIA does not require the organization to submit any other documentation or self-study report prior to the on-site visit and audit.

### Preparation For Certification

Upon acceptance and approval of your application for certification, the PTDIA will provide your organization with the documents needed to prepare for the on-site audit. These documents will:

1. Describe the scope, nature, and procedure of the on-site visit (Document D).
2. List the questions which will guide the on-site team's information gathering process (Document D).
3. List and define information (records, material copies of documents, etc.) which the PTDIA will request from your organization during the on-site visit (Document D1). Insofar as possible, you should have the requested information ready for use by the PTDIA On-Site Audit Team when they arrive to audit your program.
4. Provide appropriate forms and examples of how the information should be prepared, structured, or exhibited for auditing purposes.

Upon preparation of the requested information for auditing, the organization notifies the PTDIA that is ready for the on-site visitation.

During the on-site visit, the PTDIA Team, with your assistance, will begin preparation of your organization's certification report. The report will be completed by the PTDIA when all information and certification requirements have been satisfied.



**Our program is currently accredited or certified by:**

Agency or Institution	Accreditation/Certification (list one)	Date
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In applying for certification, we understand a \$500 application fee and a \$500 certification fee must accompany the application. Further, if the application is not accepted, it is understood the \$500 certification fee will be refunded but the application fee of \$500 will be used by PTDIA to cover administrative costs of application review and processing. However, if reapplication is made within 12 months, our initial \$500 fee will be credited for the purpose of reapplication. We also understand if we request certification of sites in addition to our principal place of training, appropriate additional charges as specified in PTDIA Document A4, Certification Fee Schedule, will be assessed.

This application is made in full understanding and agreement with the various financial requirements upon applicants for certification as contained in PTDIA Document A4 (copy attached).

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of our knowledge. We agree to make no promotional use of our application prior to granting of certification by the PTDIA or thereafter, except as authorized in the Memorandum of Understanding between our school and PTDIA.

In signing this application, we specifically authorize the PTDIA to publish information indicating that our school has been certified. If the school is not certified, we hereby authorize PTDIA to state the fact that the school applied for certification, that certification was not granted, and the date of decision only upon inquiry. PTDIA may not disclose any other information regarding our school.

Corporate Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Certification Board  
Professional Truck Driver Institute of America  
8788 Elk Grove Boulevard  
Elk Grove, CA 95624

For additional information, call 916/686-5146