

# THE GREEN LIGHT

The official newsletter of ATA Comp Fund



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## STAY FOCUSED. STAY SAFE.

Distracted driving continues to be a leading cause of accidents on the road, putting drivers, passengers, and pedestrians at risk. With smartphones, in-cab technology, and other distractions becoming more prevalent, staying focused behind the wheel is more challenging than ever—especially in the trucking industry. For trucking companies, implementing and enforcing strict distracted driving policies is critical to ensuring the safety of drivers and the communities they serve. Strong company policies can help mitigate risks and promote safer driving practices. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on the road.

# CREATING A LIFE-SAVING DISTRACTED DRIVING POLICY

**Jason Brown** February 3, 2025

*Distracted driving is a significant issue that affects everyone on the road. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death in the United States, with work-related vehicle crashes accounting for 24% of all fatal occupational injuries. Here are some essential steps to help your company create an effective distracted driving policy, that can save lives.*

## **GET AS MUCH INPUT AS POSSIBLE.**

Involving employees, department heads, safety, and human resources representatives in the policy creation process ensures that all types of distracted driving are addressed. This collaborative approach helps identify potential loopholes and areas of concern, making the policy comprehensive and effective.

## **PLAN FOR FUTURE TECHNOLOGY.**

As technology evolves, so do the distractions it can create. Your policy should be forward-thinking, addressing not only current distractions like texting & phone calls, but also potential future issues. This ensures the policy remains relevant & effective over time.

## **IMPLEMENT MANDATORY TRAINING.**

Training is crucial for reinforcing the importance of the policy & ensuring that all employees understand & follow it. Regular training sessions can help keep distracted driving top of mind & encourages safe driving habits.

## **ENFORCE THE POLICY CONSISTENTLY.**

A policy is only effective if it is consistently enforced. Clear consequences for violations should be outlined, & management should lead by example to ensure compliance.

## **REVIEW & UPDATE THE POLICY REGULARLY.**

Regular reviews & updates to the policy are necessary to keep it relevant & effective. This includes incorporating feedback from employees & staying informed about new technologies & best practices in distracted driving prevention.



Click here to discover our Risk Management team's Educational Resources, including safety policy and procedure review.



## NEED SAFETY TRAINING IDEAS? WE'VE (STILL) GOT YOU.

**Abby Greer** February 10, 2025

Coming up with fresh, new content for monthly safety trainings can be tough. Our Risk Managers have been working hard to provide an easy tool that can assist in safety training for our members... and helps to alleviate some of the stress that comes with scheduling these very important meetings. The **MONTHLY SAFETY TRAINING CALENDAR** provides topics for each month and includes a one-page handout, relevant videos from our archives, and a quick game that can be incorporated for prizes!

### JANUARY

A **Roadside Emergency** can happen at any time. If you need to pullover, make sure you have these tips in mind.



### FEBRUARY

**Entering & Exiting the Cab** poses risks if you're not careful. Use these tips to prevent injuries caused by slips, trips, or falls.



### MARCH

Driving in the **Fog & Rain** causes additional hazards on the road. Stay weather aware & follow these tips to arrive safely.



### APRIL

Wearing **Proper Footwear** can make a difference in protecting you throughout your day.



This resource is available exclusively to members of the ATA Comp Fund program and is also available in our [Online Portal](#) under the Resources tab. Contact your Risk Manager today to learn more about how you can incorporate this useful tool in your safety trainings!

## CLAIMS CORNER - ASK THE DIRECTOR

**Suzy Baker & David Balades** February 10, 2025

In this feature, we will highlight some of our most Frequently Asked Questions regarding the claim process. These will be answered by none other than ATA Comp Fund Director of Claims, Suzy Baker (with some help from her Claims, Risk Management, and Underwriting friends)! If you have any questions, please submit them via email [HERE](#).

### CAN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH AN INJURED WORKER BENEFIT THE OUTCOME OF A CLAIM?

For an injured worker, the workers' compensation claims process can be unfamiliar and overwhelming. Employers who provide guidance and support can make a significant difference, helping employees navigate each step with confidence and ensuring a smoother, more positive experience.



Clear and consistent communication is essential for a smooth workers' compensation claims process. A prompt response after an injury can lead to faster medical care, reduced risk of long-term disability, and a quicker return to work. However, these benefits depend on the employer's commitment to keeping injured workers informed and engaged.

Strong communication yields key benefits:

- **Builds trust:** Empathy is the foundation of trust. Engaging the injured worker immediately and routinely helps build trust.
- **Expedites claims:** Injured workers often don't understand the system. Employers should guide them through benefits, processes, and key contacts.
- **Reduces long-term claims:** Ongoing communication prevents feelings of neglect, reducing the likelihood of litigation and fostering employee confidence.
- **Empowers recovery:** A strong return-to-work program, with transparent policies and expectations, helps employees take control of their recovery.
- **Encourages cooperation:** Open communication can reduce the need for legal action, as injured workers are more likely to trust their employer and claims team.



Contact our Claim Management team to learn more about our Claim Management and promoting effective communication with injured workers.



## SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

**Abby Greer** February 7, 2025

*The "Safety Spotlight" feature of The Green Light shines the spotlight on safety professionals to gain insight into their background, and their thoughts and ideas on safety in our industry.*

Meet Mattie Beck Bruner, Safety Director for Beck Trucking in Dobson, North Carolina. Mattie (literally) grew up with a love of big trucks and a dream of helping her father run the family business. And that's exactly what she did...

**How did you get started in Safety? What advice do you wish you had received early in your career in Safety that you would pass on to someone just getting started?**

My Dad started Beck Trucking when I was three years old. He started with just one truck, driving himself. We now we have 30 trucks total. I grew up surrounded by big trucks and loved my dad's

blue Peterbilt. I spent most days after school sitting in the office observing and admiring. I couldn't wait to "grow up" and work alongside him. So, that's exactly what I did. I began working in dispatch and learning daily operations. We then found that the Safety aspect of our business needed more attention. Being in this role full-time has allowed me to help the company grow and expand our knowledge of the regulations to ensure we are in compliance and minimize violations.

**What do you view as the main duties of a Safety Director?**

Staying up to date with the FMCSA and DOT Regulations to ensure your company is in compliance is one of the most important. Then, train and manage the drivers to make sure they stay within those guidelines. Also, I manage insurance policies and claims to get the best coverage in the event we do have an accident.



## **SAFETY SPOTLIGHT** continued

### **What has been the most challenging task in your role/career as a Safety Director?**

As a young woman and the owner's daughter, gaining the respect of others has been challenging. I had to prove I was fit for the job and knew what I was doing, but I was determined. I educated myself with the many resources available. I have had many meetings with Insurance Agents and Safety personnel. We joined the NCTA, and I completed the Mini MBA class, which was extremely informative. Sometimes it is still difficult, but I am thankful to have a team that supports me!

### **What do you find most effective in getting existing and new truck drivers to buy in to safety?**

I find that explaining the end goal is extremely effective. If everyone understands the motives and the reason why, it's easier for them to be on board. Safety benefits everyone but only if you understand it.

### **Why is safety important to you and how do you (or would you) improve your company's safety culture?**

Safety must be at the core, or your business will simply crumble. To satisfy your customers, you have to deliver their products safely. If your customers aren't happy, you don't make money. You also must keep your employees safe while performing their jobs. We purchase new equipment and keep it well-maintained. Our Shop Technicians work diligently to ensure this. We keep our shop organized and clean to provide a safe place for our Techs to work.

### **If you could give any advice or message to the general public about the trucking industry, what would it be?**

Truck drivers sacrifice time away from family and home to move America. There wouldn't be products on the shelves in any stores if it wasn't for the men and women who are willing to pull the load. With that in mind, make room on the highways and give truckers the respect they deserve for the service they provide to our country.

### **What would be your "safety quote" or "safety message" that you want to share?**

Everyone must do their part in being safe to keep the wheels rolling!



# WHAT'S HAPPENING



## ATA'S SMMC FLEET SAFETY AWARDS BANQUET

The Alabama Trucking Association Safety and Maintenance Management Council (SSMC) is proud to host the Annual Fleet Safety Awards banquet. This SMMC-sponsored event demonstrated the extreme importance the trucking industry places on highway safety.

Categories are segregated by operation type and number of miles traveled. In addition, several individuals will be singled out for career safety excellence, including Driver of the Year, Maintenance Professional of the Year, Safety Professional of the Year, and Fleet Manager of the Year. Likewise, the ATA Comp Fund will recognize its top performing members for loss control and safety performance. For more information, contact Brandie Norcross at (334) 834-3983 or email at [bnorcross@alabamatrucking.org](mailto:bnorcross@alabamatrucking.org).

## ATRI SEEKS INSIGHT ON HIRING PRACTICES

The American Transportation Research Institute issued a call for motor carriers to participate in a new survey examining hiring practices for truck drivers with prior criminal convictions. ATRI's study explores underrepresented hiring pathways in the trucking industry, focusing on individuals with criminal histories. It examines motor carrier hiring practices, decision-making factors, and workforce reintegration strategies, with optional follow-up interviews for deeper insights. All responses are confidential. Motor carriers are encouraged to participate in the survey by clicking [HERE](#).



## OSHA FORM 300 POSTING AND FILINGS HAVE BEGUN!

As a reminder, employers are required to post their OSHA FORM 300A, a summary of their injuries and illnesses recorded from the previous year, in a common area wherever notices to employees are usually posted. The FORM 300A must be posted from February 1 through April 30th. Failure to post this summary can result in fines. Also, electronically submitting the FORM 300A to OSHA is due by March 2nd. Per the ruling issued in July 2023, companies with 20 or more employees that are classified within specific industries are now required to submit their data electronically for the previous year. Click [HERE](#) to access the Injury Tracking Application (ITA). For more information on posting requirements and changes to this year's filings, visit the [OSHA Injury Tracking Application](#) page. If you have any questions, please contact your Risk Manager.



# PROGRAM NEWS

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The ATA Comp Fund program is proud to welcome the following new members:

- **Haney & White Enterprise** *Oxford, Alabama*
- **H and S Car Carriers** *Nahunta, Georgia*

## 2024 0% LOSS RATIO CERTIFICATES ARE COMING!

Each year, our team awards certificates to our Members who achieve a 0% loss ratio for the prior year. Safety is always a big deal, so achieving a 0% loss ratio deserves some recognition. We are hard at work prepping and sorting the 2024 0% Loss Ratio certificates. We have over 55% of all eligible ATA Comp Fund Members receiving certificates this year. Be on the lookout for your Risk Manager in the coming weeks to deliver yours... and don't forget to let them snap a photo for social media bragging rights!



## DON'T FORGET TO SCHEDULE YOUR YEAR-END AUDITS

2024 Year-End Audits are in full swing! Your company's designated contact has been emailed with the list of required documents and expectations for this year's audit. Please note the deadlines for having your 2024 Year-End Audit complete is **March 31st**. If you have any questions about the audit process, please contact Rita Golson at [RGolson@ATACompFund.org](mailto:RGolson@ATACompFund.org) or Tameka Sharpe at [TSarpee@ATACompFund.org](mailto:TSarpee@ATACompFund.org).

## 24/7 ONLINE ACCESS IS AVAILABLE!

Our [Online Portal](#) launched in early 2023 and we are encouraging each of our Members and Agency Partners to take advantage of this resource! Access coverage documents, billing statements, [online payment capabilities](#), report monthly payroll, and download safety resources with just a few clicks of the mouse.

If you have not received login information, or need assistance accessing your account, please contact our office at (334) 834-7911 or via email at [Marketing@ATACompFund.org](mailto:Marketing@ATACompFund.org).

A copy of our most recent [Financials](#) can be found on our [website](#).

