

THE ASSOCIATION

Indiana Association of Certified Accident Investigators
www.iacai.com



NHTSA Releases Cellular Phone Policy Statement

A National Highway Traffic Administration Press Release

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recently released a policy statement as to its position on cellular phone use while driving.

The policy statement, simply put, is that "The primary responsibility of the driver is to operate a motor vehicle safely. The task of driving requires full attention and focus. Cell phone use can distract drivers from this task, risking harm to themselves and others. Therefore, the safest course of action is to refrain from cell phone use while driving."

In a press release accompanying the Cellular Phone policy, NHTSA went on to cite several factors in its position on this issue. Included are the following:

- Research shows that driving while using a cell phone can pose serious cognitive distraction and degrade driver performance. The data are insufficient to quantify crashes caused by cell phone use specifically, but NHTSA estimates that driver distraction from all sources contributes to 25 percent of all police-reported traffic crashes.

- Regardless whether the operator is using a hands-free or hand-held cell phone, the cognitive distraction is significant enough to degrade a driver's performance.

This can cause a driver to miss key visual and audio cues needed to avoid a crash.

NHTSA also recommends that as a general rule, drivers should make every effort to move to a safe place off of the road before using a cell phone. They do acknowledge, however, that in emergency situations, the driver must use their own judgment regarding the urgency of the situation and the necessity to use a cell phone while driving.

NHTSA reports that they are conducting more research projects on driver cell phone use and will continue to monitor the research of others on this subject. As they learn more about the impact cell phone use has on driver performance and crash risk, and as wireless technologies evolve and expand, NHTSA will make its findings public.

Also cited in the release was comparisons to which was worse, having a cell phone conversation or having

a conversation with a passenger in the vehicle. According to the report, *any activity* a driver engages in while driving has the potential to distract the driver from the primary task of driving. Some research findings comparing cell phone use to passenger conversations while driving, show each to be equally risky, while others show cell phone use to be more risky. A significant difference between the two is the fact that a passenger can monitor the driving situation along with the driver and pause for, or alert the driver to, potential hazards, whereas the person on the other end of the cell phone is unaware of the driving situation.

Finally, the report states that current research does not provide a definitive answer as to which activity is riskier, eating/drinking, or cell phone use. In a controlled study, comparing eating and operating a voice activated cell phone to continuously operating a CD player, it was found that CD player operation was more distracting than the other activities. Also, they found that manual dialing was about as distracting as grooming/eating, but less distracting than reading or changing CDs.

Issue #4

December 2007

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IACAI Holds Commercial Vehicle Training Bloomington

On October 10, 2007, members of the IACAI attended a training seminar on "Commercial Motor Vehicles" at the Bloomington Police Department. Those in attendance learned about what constitutes a Commercial Motor Vehicle, what the requirements are to license and operate a Commercial Motor Vehicle and the various traffic codes surrounding Commercial Motor Vehicle enforcement. The instructors for the class were

clude duallys which tow trailers for camper dealers, vans that haul 8 or more people for compensation (migrant worker vans, for example) and those vehicles used in the transportation of Hazardous Materials, regardless of size.

The licensing requirements of the various CDLs were explained, as were the exemptions allowed. Another issue addressed was the permitted enforcement of some of the truck laws by officers not

24-6-15, addresses the operation of a CMV with a blood alcohol of .04- .0799. Any driver found between these levels can be cited as a class C Infraction. While on the subject of moving violations, several moving violations were addressed which are considered serious in the CDL world. Violations involving these codes could cost the holder of a CDL dearly. Some of these violations include: 9-21-5-1, Unreasonable speed too fast to avoid collision; 9-21-5-2(1), 15 or more over the posted urban speed limit; 9-21-5-7, Driving too slow and blocking traffic; and 9-21-5-11, Speeding in a worksite.

Two or more convictions within three years for these offenses will result in their CDL being disqualified for:

60 days on the second conviction;

120 days on the third and subsequent conviction.

These penalties are regardless of the type of vehicle the CDL holder was operating at the time of the stop.

Operators found to be guilty of an OWI, Leaving the Scene, and breath test refusal can be disqualified for up to one year. The morning session was also spent going over the various forms that drivers are required to have with them, including the cab card, medical card and shipping papers or bill of lading.

Information was also provided as to what information to ask for when investigating a crash involving a CMV.

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ISP MCO Kim Justice is shown explaining some of the finer points of a Commercial Vehicle inspection. At left is fellow instructor, James Jackson.

Kim Justice, a motor carrier officer with the Indiana State Police, and James Jackson, an Indiana State Police officer assigned to the motor carrier enforcement division. Jackson started the presentation by explaining some of the definitions of a commercial motor vehicle and the correct ways to identify one. This all seemed obvious until he discussed some of the different types of commercial motor vehicles currently out there. These in-

trained under FCMVSA. Most of these laws are mirrored by Indiana code and therefore can be enforced by regular law enforcement. In addition to the regular IC codes, these laws also address length requirements, weight restrictions, and equipment violations. Officers are still not permitted to cite any violation involving a log book.

Moving violations was another topic addressed. The CMV OWI statute under IC 9-

Reminder:
IACAI
Membership
and seminar
rates will
increase
beginning
January, 2008.

More about: Commercial Vehicle Seminar

(Continued from page #2)

This information can include a request to see the driver's log book, however, any action taken would require the assistance of an MCI or MCEO. In a side note to crash investigations, it was also reported that tow truck operators are required under IC 9-19-6-17, to have brake lights/turn signals on

towed vehicles and the light bar on the tow truck should be on, if so equipped. CMVs with excessive loads in violation of Indiana Code can be required to remove the excess before being permitted to operate. The removal and security of those removed items is the responsibility of the owner/operator, and not of the officer ordering the removal.



Instructor James Jackson shows students the brake chamber on a Bloomington City Street Department truck during the afternoon CMV inspection demonstration. Ironically, the truck was found to have an air leak which required repair before it could be legally moved.

The afternoon session was spent outside while instructors demonstrated what is required when performing a CMV inspection. The city of Bloomington was gracious enough to provide a city street truck for the demonstration. All of the vehicle's systems were explained and examined, including the brakes. During the demo the truck was found to have an air leak that would have put it out of service had it been on the road.

Aside from that little snafu, and the traffic related issues heading to the seminar, the seminar itself went without a hitch. The students all gained useful information. The IACAI wishes to thank Kim Justice, MCI, and James Jackson, MCEO, for their expertise and their time in making this seminar worth attending. Members who would like to see additional Commercial Motor Vehicle training should contact their regional IACAI Board member and let your requests be known.



NHTSA Study: Direct Link to Helmet Use & Head Injuries To Motorcycle Riders

A recent study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis reported that among fatally injured motorcycle riders, there is a direct correlation between a head injury and helmet use. The study reported that while 35 % of helmeted motorcycle riders had a head injury, compared to 51% of unhelmeted riders, who sustained a head injury. The study looked at reported motorcycle fatal crashes between the years 2000, 2001, and 2002, covering 8,539 verified motorcyclist fatalities. Verification was made through death

certificates on the fatalities. Also included in the study was an analysis of the number of injuries that each motorcyclist sustained, broken down by the types of head injuries reported, including superficial head injuries; open wounds of the head; fracture of the skull and facial bones; injury of the cranial nerves, injury of the eye and orbit; dislocation, sprain, and strain of the joints and ligaments of the head; intracranial injury; crushing injury; traumatic amputation of a part of the head; and other head injuries.

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More about "Helmet Use & Head Injuries"

(Continued from page 3)

Of the top three injuries listed, only 19% were sustained by helmeted motorcyclists, versus 36% sustained by non-helmeted motorcyclists. The report also included statistics for the motorcyclists reporting multiple injuries in various locations. Of these motorcyclists who sustained multiple fatal injuries, 57% were helmeted versus 44% who were not. A head injury was directly linked to those fatally injured motorcyclists.

Finally, the report covered motorcyclists, fatally injured, who sustained at least two injury locations. Of these reported injuries, 20% of all fatally injured helmeted operators sustained multiple head injuries, compared to 34% of all non-helmeted operators. Coming in second, were those operators who sustained both head and chest injuries. The report showed 15% of all helmeted operators had both head and chest injuries resulting in fatalities, compared to 12% for non-

helmeted operators.

The report concluded that there is a significant correlation between helmet use and injuries to the head among fatally injured motorcycle riders. Slightly more than half of the un-helmeted motorcyclists had one or more injuries to their head as compared to slightly less than a third of the helmeted motorcyclists.

- Taken from "Bodily Injury Locations in Fatally Injured Motorcycle Riders" a NHTSA Traffic Safety Fact report by Rajesh Subramanin.



Just In Case You Needed To Know: While at the Commercial Motor Vehicle Seminar in Bloomington, Students of the class were treated to this, a sign advertising that the Hamster Rental had moved to another location. I'm curious, though; how long is the hamster rented out for and do you need to sign a damage waiver before renting one?

Notice to Association Members: On page 5, you'll note that the membership questionnaire included in the last issue of the Association is once again being published. That is because we've had a limited response from our membership. In order to provide the best service we can to our membership, please complete the questionnaire and send it to President Don Harris. The information contained will be used in the event members are looking for other members with a specific skill or trade which may be useful in a crash investigation. Please help us out!



IACAI Membership Questionnaire

Member Name: _____

Department Name: _____

Contact Information: Dept. TX: _____ Home TX: _____

Please Check Level of Training You Currently Possess:

At-Scene: _____ Technical: _____ Reconstruction: _____

Would You Be Willing/Able To Assist If Called Upon By Another Member?

Yes: _____ No: _____ Dependent On Department Head: _____

Do You Currently Possess Any Advanced Training or Hold Expertise In Any Of The Following Areas? (Please Check Any Area That Applies)

Crash Data Retrieval: _____ Technician: _____ Analyst: _____

Heavy Truck/Commercial Vehicle Reconstruction: _____

Tire Forensics: _____ Lamp Examination Expert: _____

Brake Examination Expert: _____ Hydraulic: _____ Air: _____
Other: _____

Fire/Arson Investigation: _____

Other Crash Investigation/Reconstruction Related Expertise:

Please complete the questionnaire and return to the IACAI. You may email the form back to us @ donhar232@insightbb.com , by fax @ 317-882-2901, or by mail at:

Indiana Association Of Certified
Accident Investigators
P.O. Box 346
Greenwood, IN 46142



IACAI Skill Review

This edition of the IACAI Skill Review has to do with general crash investigation techniques and procedures. The answers will be in the next issue of the Association.

1. Obscured vision is often caused by the normal construction of the vehicle. The three most common forward vision obstructions are:
 - a. The left and right 'b' pillars, and the rear view mirror
 - b. The left and right 'a' pillars, and the rear view mirror
 - c. The left and right 'c' pillars, and the rear view mirror
 - d. The left and right 'a' pillars, and the headliner mounted sun visor.

2. Peripheral vision is the ability to be able to see out of the corners of the eyes when looking ahead. Some examples of poor peripheral vision include:
 - a. A driver who describes an object or vehicle's color incorrectly
 - b. A driver who does not see a sign quickly enough to respond
 - c. A driver who has difficulty picking out directions on signs
 - d. A driver who strikes a pedestrian who is moving into traffic

3. Tire separation is used to describe a condition within the internal structure of a tire when the chemical bonds in structural materials are broken in a localized area. Tire separations can result from which of the following conditions?
 - a. Under inflation
 - b. Excessive Speed
 - c. Impacts
 - d. All of the above

4. Abnormal tire tread where is caused by:
 - a. Exposure to extreme temperature conditions
 - b. Exposure to severe weather
 - c. Under inflation
 - d. All of the above

5. There are conditions in which two vehicles striking each other may have the same type of damage result. In order for this to occur, what must also occur?
 - a. The first contact position of the vehicles must be the same
 - b. The vehicles must be approaching each other from the same direction
 - c. The closing (approaching) velocity must be the same
 - d. None of the above
 - e. All of the Above

Answers to last

issues' Skill

Review:

1. a
2. c
3. a
4. b
5. d

Seminar Announcement

The Indiana Association of Certified Accident Investigators will be sponsoring a seminar on

"Digital Photography"

December 05, 2007 0900-1500 hrs
Hancock County Sheriff's Department
123 East Main Street
Greenfield, IN 46140

Instructor: Steve Neece

This seminar will address the proper techniques for shooting photographs with today's digital cameras. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own digital cameras and equipment.

Cost: \$25 for IACAI members; \$50 for non-members

No advanced registration is required.

Registration begins at 08:30am

Please plan to attend!!

Questions regarding this seminar may be directed to IACAI
President Don Harris

email: donhar232@aol.com



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Contact us at:

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The Association is published quarterly as a service to members of the Indiana Association of Certified Accident Investigators. Articles submitted are the responsibility of the author; the IACAI assumes no responsibility as to an article's content.