



## **Getting to Know the Hazardous Materials & Investigation Unit**

The Michigan State Police Traffic Safety Division's Hazardous Materials and Investigation Unit (HMIU) consist of seven investigators assigned to various locations around the state. These investigators are responsible for investigating allegations of illegal behavior by trucking companies, which include failure to comply with the federal regulations, hauling for hire, transporting illegal contraband, etc. Complaints are initiated from several sources, e.g., road patrol officers, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), or citizen complaints submitted on-line at [MSPTruckComplaint@michigan.gov](mailto:MSPTruckComplaint@michigan.gov). The unit also conducts investigations on all fatal CMV traffic crashes involving Michigan based companies and serves as the division's experts in hazardous material transportation.

The HMIU is also responsible for conducting New Entrant Safety Audits, a federally mandated audit program required for all new interstate trucking companies based in Michigan. There are four safety auditors that conduct the audits ensuring that new trucking companies adhere to the essential elements of basic safety management, e.g., drug and alcohol testing, vehicle maintenance, and driver qualifications, just to name a few.

For more information on how the HMIU can help please contact Sgt. Susan Fries at 517-241-0583 or Sgt. Tim Byrne at 517-241-0463. A list of investigators and their contact information is included at the end of this publication.

## **Passenger Carrier Safety a Priority**

With the recent increase in passenger carrier e.g., motor coach, crashes and fatalities around the country, passenger carrier and driver safety has been placed on the forefront of commercial vehicle enforcement efforts. The US Department of Transportation (USDOT), in an effort to ensure the safety of passengers traveling by bus, is implementing new, more stringent rules for passenger carrier companies and drivers. These new rules include:

- Anyone applying for a CDL must first obtain a learner's permit.
- CDL testing must meet the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators knowledge and skills standards.
- The use of foreign language interpreters is prohibited.
- Consumers will have the ability to review safety records of bus companies before booking a trip.

## **Sections**

### **Captain's Corner**

Getting to know the Hazardous Materials & Investigation Unit.....1

### **Topics**

Passenger Carrier Safety a Priority.....1-2

UCR Enforcement.....2

Michigan's Low CMV Fatality Rate.....2

STET Operations.....2

Additional USDOT policy changes are being proposed which will raise the bar for passenger carrier safety. Though not yet in effect these proposed changes include:

- New motor coach companies to undergo a full safety audit before receiving USDOT operating authority.
- Revise current law to ensure a driver's CDL can be suspended or revoked for drug and alcohol related offenses committed in non-commercial vehicles.
- Increase the penalty from \$2,000 a day to \$25,000 for passenger carriers that attempt to operate without USDOT authority.

For more information on USDOT's range of passenger bus safety initiatives, please visit the FMCSA Web site at [www.fmcsa.dot.gov](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov).

Officers are encouraged to contact your local motor carrier officer or investigator for questions regarding passenger carrier and driver requirements. The safety of passengers traveling by bus is all of our responsibility.

### **Michigan Recognized for Low Commercial Vehicle Fatal Crash Rate**

Michigan was recently recognized by the FMCSA for having an exceptionally low commercial motor vehicle (CMV) fatality rate for calendar years 2007 through 2009. During this three year period, Michigan's CMV fatality rate was .10 per 100 million total miles traveled, the lowest in the Midwest and one of the lowest in the nation. The commitment to traffic safety through CMV enforcement by state, local and county agencies is a significant factor in achieving the low CMV fatality rate.

### **Unified Carrier Registration Enforcement**

Officers are reminded to take enforcement action on carriers that have failed to pay their 2011 Unified Carrier Registration (UCR) fees. Enforcement action may also be taken for failure to pay previous year's fees. Verification that UCR fees have been paid can be obtained by going to <http://safersys.org>. Go to FMCSA Searches and click on Unified Carrier Registration (UCR). You may enter either the USDOT number or the carrier name. Violations should be issued under MCL479.16, Offense Code 8915.

### **Motor Carrier Officers Conduct STET Operations**

Motor Carrier officers will again be conducting Special Truck Enforcement operations throughout the state during the summer months. Local and county officers interested in participating in these operations are encouraged to contact your local motor carrier district lieutenant or sergeant to set up a time to work an operation. It is an excellent opportunity to learn more about commercial vehicle and driver laws.

### **Haz. Mat. And Investigation Unit TSD Investigators**

<b>Investigator</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Phone number</b>
Inv. William Clark	Bay City Post	989-684-2234
Inv. Paul Oles	Metro North Post	248-584-5769
Inv. Natalie Johnson	Flint Post	810-732-1111
Inv. Charles Phipps	Metro South Post	734-287-5005
Inv. Rick Dill	Grand Haven Post	616-842-2100
Inv. Marcia Linebaugh	6 <sup>th</sup> District HQ (Grand Rapids)	616-647-0811
Inv. Paul Richardson	St. Ignace Post	906-643-7582