

Transportation Safety

Training ADVISOR

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Cargo securement

Preventing a dangerous situation

Secure cargo, stop hazards

Cargo securement rule
changes may land this year

What are you doing to
recognize your drivers?

Information and resources to help your drivers operate safely



J. J. Keller
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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Your next trainer might be right under your nose!

Looking for a new way to present a reliable training topic that's interesting and engaging? No matter the topic, you need a credible presenter with a firm grasp of the topic and who can keep your drivers engaged.

When searching for this type of expertise, look no further than your veteran drivers! These in-house experts might be just the right fit for your needs.

Why use a veteran driver?

Veteran drivers speak from real-life experience, which brings a certain level of credibility and trust to the instruction. Your drivers know the veteran has seen it all, so they may even ask about more specific situations than normal.

Another benefit is approachability. Drivers who have questions often find it easier to ask another driver than a supervisor or trainer. Also, the veteran may be able to offer practical advice based on personal experience, and maybe even sympathize with the driver's concerns.

How do I choose a credible veteran driver?

First and foremost, the veteran driver must be willing to be a trainer/presenter. Never force a driver to conduct a training session they're not interested in.

Additionally, the individual you select to conduct the training should be comfortable with speaking and presenting in front of others. Make sure the veteran driver is well-versed in the topic and has a strong interest in the subject matter.

If you have more than one topic you want presented in the training session, consider selecting more than one veteran driver. One topic per driver will help distribute the workload evenly and keep your trainees engaged.

What can I do to prepare the veteran driver?

Remember, the individual you select to conduct the training may be well-versed in the subject matter but may need some help presenting the material in an understandable and engaging way. Not everyone is a natural at public speaking, so be prepared to offer some support ahead of time.

This means you may need to allow some time for the veteran driver to rehearse in front of you or another employee. During rehearsal, allow time and space for the correction of mistakes and several run-throughs.

Some positive feedback never hurt, either! ♦



Lucero Truszkowski

Lucero Truszkowski joined J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc. as an Associate Editor in 2022. Lucero edits, writes, and researches content on a variety of topics, including transportation, human resources, and driver training. She is currently earning a Master of Science (MS) in Professional Writing from New York University.



TRAINING BLUEPRINT — CARGO SECUREMENT

Secure cargo to prevent hazards

Proper cargo securement is a make-or-break hazard situation — sometimes literally. Failing to properly secure a load can result in citations, fines, accidents, damages, and even loss of life. It's a professional driver's job to safely and efficiently transport cargo to the customer damage free and on time.



Proper cargo securement is required by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) and addressed in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA's) Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) program.

TIP: Distribute copies of the FMCSRs to your drivers. Review and discuss the applicable sections of Part 393, Subpart I.

General cargo securement requirements

According to Sections 391.13 and 392.9 of the FMCSRs:

- A driver must know how to properly locate, distribute, and secure cargo. The regulations require drivers to be familiar with the proper cargo securement methods and procedures in or on the vehicle.
- A vehicle may not be driven unless the cargo is correctly secured with its weight appropriately distributed.
- The vehicle elements that must be secured include: the tailgate, tailboard, doors, tarps, spare tire, and operational equipment.

Rules for cargo

The vehicle's cargo must not:

- Block the driver's view ahead or to the right/left sides,
- Interfere with the driver's arm or leg movement,
- Prevent the driver from reaching emergency equipment, or
- Prevent the driver or anyone else from exiting the vehicle.

The driver must check the cargo and its securement devices at the start of the day and then again within the first 50 miles of the trip to ensure stability. Following this inspection, drivers must reexamine the load's security after 3 hours, 150 miles, or when making a change of duty status — whichever comes first.

Exemptions

A driver may be exempt if:

- The vehicle is sealed,
- The driver has been ordered not to open or inspect the cargo, or
- The cargo has been loaded in a way that makes it impractical to inspect.

TIP: Provide drivers with a quick-reference card that they can use to determine tiedown needs on the road.

How many tiedowns do you need?

In addition to meeting the standard for the aggregate working load limit (WLL), the minimum number of tiedowns required to secure an article or group of articles in the cargo depends on:

- The length of the article(s) being secured, and
- The weight of the article(s).

Section 393.110 of the FMCSRs specifies the minimum number of tiedowns that must be used.

IF the article is:	THEN use at least:
5 feet or shorter, AND 1,100 pounds or lighter	1 tiedown
5 feet or shorter, AND over 1,100 pounds	2 tiedowns
Longer than 5 feet but not more than 10 feet, no matter the weight	2 tiedowns
Longer than 10 feet	2 tiedowns, plus 1 additional tiedown for every additional 10 feet

When an article is blocked, braced, or immobilized to prevent forward movement, it must be secured by at least one tiedown for every 10 feet of article length. ♦

TIP: End your training with a question and answer session.



TRAINING HANDOUT — CARGO SECUREMENT

Cargo securement is in your hands

Ensure cargo stays safe and secure from start to finish by taking responsibility for your understanding of these three concepts:

1. Cargo loading

- Load cargo so it doesn't
 - Shift
 - Block your view
 - Block doors or emergency equipment

2. Tiedown calculations

- Determine the correct number of tiedowns for your load using the cargo's length and weight

3. Load checks

- Perform your first load check before starting out
- Perform another load check within the 50 miles of your trip
- Continue performing load checks when one of the following occurs, whichever happens first:
 - A change of duty status
 - After the vehicle has been driven for 3 hours
 - After the vehicle has been driven for 150 miles ♦





TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE — CARGO SECUREMENT

1. When is the first time you should perform a load check on your cargo?
 - A. Within 50 miles of your trip
 - B. After 3 hours of driving
 - C. Before you start your trip
 - D. After driving for 150 miles

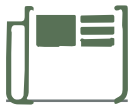
2. You can determine how many tiedowns you need just by looking at the cargo.
 - A. True
 - B. False

3. How many tiedowns do you need for an article that is 8.5 feet long and weighs 2,250 pounds?
 - A. One-half
 - B. Three
 - C. Two
 - D. None of the above

4. The number of tiedowns needed is determined by the length and weight of the articles
 - A. True
 - B. False

5. A driver may be exempt from the load check requirements if:
 - A. The vehicle is sealed,
 - B. The driver has been ordered not to open or inspect the cargo, or
 - C. The cargo has been loaded in a way that makes it impractical to inspect.
 - D. All of the above ♦

NAME: _____ DATE: _____



Cargo securement rule changes may land this year

An alliance of DOT enforcement agencies is seeking significant changes to federal cargo securement rules.

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) has asked the FMCSA to make several revisions that would alter the way tiedowns and friction mats are used. The FMCSA may include at least some of the requested changes this year as it works on updating the cargo securement rules in 49 CFR Part 393, Subpart I.



Unenforceable standards

Calling them “unenforceable,” the CVSA wants the agency to amend the performance standards in 393.102(a), which have long caused confusion for both motor carriers and enforcement officials alike. That section of the rules sets standards for a tiedown’s breaking strength and working load limit (WLL) in relation to the g-forces that may be applied. However, those standards have no practical application for everyday tiedown usage and are rarely cited.

Direct tiedowns

The CVSA also wants the FMCSA to remove the need for drivers to, in effect, use twice as many tiedowns when they’re attached directly to the cargo or only pulling the cargo in one direction rather than crossing over the cargo and pulling down.

When calculating how many tiedowns they will need, drivers currently may count only half of a tiedown’s WLL when it’s attached in a “direct” manner.

By contrast, Canada allows drivers to use the full WLL for direct tiedowns, which means drivers must follow “vastly different cargo securement requirements when moving between countries,” the CVSA noted.

Friction mats

Finally, the CVSA wants a better definition of “friction mat,” currently defined as any “device” placed under or between cargo to increase friction. No matter what material is used as a friction mat, 393.108(g) says it will be assumed to “provide resistance to horizontal movement equal to 50 percent of the weight placed on [it],” unless marked otherwise.

The “vague” definition has led drivers and shippers to use “a wide range of materials ... many of which likely do not account for securement of 50% of the weight placed on the mat,” the CVSA wrote.

The group wants:

- The 50-percent allowance to be removed,
- Friction-mat manufacturers to mark their products in a way that allows drivers and officers to tell how much friction the mats provide (this is something that Canada currently requires), and
- The FMCSA to specify how friction mats should be used.

The only rules that refer specifically to the use of friction mats are those for securing paper rolls (393.122) and metal coils (393.120). Friction mats are optional in most cases, however.

How many tiedowns do you need?

Determining how many tiedowns are required for a given load depends on many factors. Among them:

- The combined (aggregate) WLL of the tiedowns, which must be at least half the weight of the items being secured and depends on how the tiedowns are attached (see 393.106(d));
- Whether the tiedowns are marked with a WLL (see 393.108);
- The cargo’s weight, length, and placement (see 393.110); and
- Whether any commodity-specific rules apply (see 393.116 – 393.136). ♦



Next Month’s Topic: Customer Service

In today’s business world, the professional driver is usually the only representative of the company the customer deals with face-to-face. Because of this fact, your drivers are the “face” of your company. Their conduct, attitude, appearance, and attention to customer service play a part in how your company is viewed by both current and potential customers. ♦

What are you doing to recognize your drivers?

During Driver Appreciation Week, September 10 to 16, it's important to show your drivers you appreciate them. Many successful carriers, however, have realized that "appreciating" drivers once a year is not enough.

These carriers realize that their drivers have very difficult jobs and are their most valuable assets, so they want to recognize their drivers' efforts at every opportunity. Here are some examples of year-round appreciation and recognition programs used by some of the best carriers.

Company anniversary date

Some carriers give their drivers a thank you card or certificate, take the driver to lunch or dinner, or give them a gift (hat, jacket, etc.) every year on their anniversary with the company. A variation of this is giving larger gifts at a ceremony on "benchmark" anniversaries (1 year, 5 years, 10 years, etc.).

Safe driver awards

Rather than just giving drivers cash as a safety bonus, some carriers give their drivers more permanent proof of their appreciation for safe driving, as well. Hats, jackets, gifts certificates, belt buckles, "choice of anything in the company catalog," or a decal for the driver's truck signifying the years of safe driving are all ways to show appreciation for safe driving.

Cookout, Christmas party, golf outing, etc.

In an effort to get all employees more involved in the company and to show appreciation for drivers, many carriers organize social events. These gatherings can be anything from formal events (Christmas party, golf outing) to occasional "whoever is at the terminal on Saturday" events.

Birthdays and wedding anniversaries

Sending drivers birthday cards and/or presents can show them that you appreciate them and that you care. Sending an anniversary card and/or gift (if the driver willingly tells you their anniversary date) can show that you not only appreciate the drivers, but also their families.

Your attention and thanks

Activities such as casually visiting with the drivers, paying attention to their problems and concerns, dealing with (or helping with) their problems when they occur, and simply saying "thank you" when a driver does a good job are all examples of great "driver appreciation programs." ♦

Expert Help: Questions of the Month

Question: Do the rules for protection against shifting or falling cargo apply to commercial motor vehicles with enclosed cargo areas?

Answer: Yes. All commercial motor vehicles transporting cargo must comply with Part 393, Subpart I to prevent the shifting or falling of cargo aboard the vehicle.

Question: Are there any cases when a driver is exempted from the load check requirement?

Answer: A driver may be exempt from this requirement if the vehicle is sealed and the driver has been ordered not to open it to inspect. A driver may also be exempt if the vehicle is loaded in a way that makes it impractical to inspect the cargo.

Question: Is there a FMCSR that states that if the cargo being secured calculations requires 6.5 chains, then a driver would have to round up and add an additional chain?

Answer: The rules refer to using "at least" enough tiedowns to account for the weight, length, etc. Rounding down from 6.5 would mean not having enough to account for the extra fraction of weight or length. The key regulations are 49 CFR 393.106 and 393.110, both of which refer to using "at least" enough tiedowns, as well as accounting for "fractions" of length, all of which points to the need to round up. ♦



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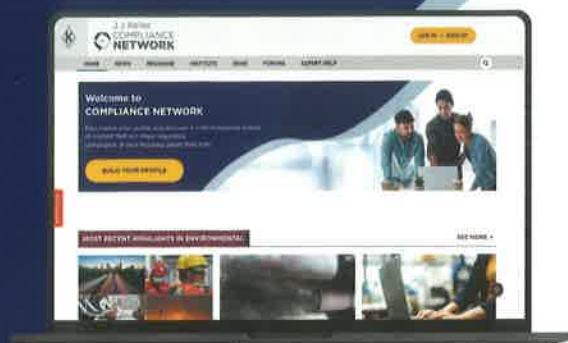
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