

UNDERSTANDING TRUCK INSPECTIONS

**INSIGHTS TO HELP TRUCKERS
BE PREPARED AND SAVE MONEY**



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TRUCK INSPECTION

In a recent live video chat, agents told us they want to learn more about the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) truck inspections. We heard you, and reached out to Ohio State Highway Patrol staff members to observe a mock truck inspection.

Led by Commercial Motor Vehicle Trooper Matt Mossor and Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector Ed Adkins, we captured details on inspections and hours of service, along with insight into what truckers are faced with day-in and day-out.

INSPECTION LEVELS IN 3...2...1

DRIVER-ONLY INSPECTIONS ARE THEIR FOCUS

"Every inspection we do starts as a Level 3 inspection," said Trooper Mossor. "They're quick, and we're checking on the source of the most problems, since driver factors—including driver errors—are by far the biggest contributing factor in traffic crashes. If concerns become apparent, we progress to deeper levels."

EXAMPLE: HOW A LEVEL 3 INSPECTION CAN END UP BEING A LEVEL 1

"If they're going fast, we'll pull them over and check their credentials, which is a Level 3," Mossor said. "But, if we see a flat tire, we move to a Level 2 inspection. If we hear air leaks, etc., we go to a Level 1 ... this eats into the driver's time."

LEVEL	TYPE	WHAT'S INCLUDED	APPROXIMATE TIME FOR INSPECTION
3	Driver inspection	A review of the trucker's paperwork, credentials, driver's license, and hours of service.	10 – 20 minutes
2	Walk-around	In addition to everything listed above, all driver credentials are reviewed; trooper walks around the vehicle to assess items in clear view, including turn signals and all required lighting, tires, and load securement, including dunnage.	20 – 30 minutes
1	Full inspection	In addition to everything listed above, a Level 1 inspection involves getting equipment out, looking at every brake chamber, hose, hose fitting, and connection.	45 minutes – 1 hour

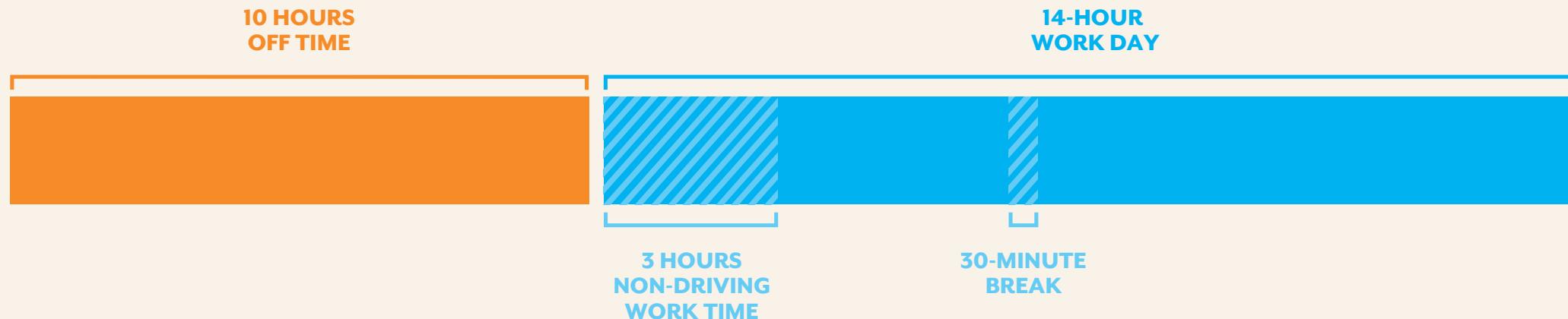
About the troopers

Commercial Motor Vehicle Trooper Matt Mossor (right) has worked with the Ohio State Highway Patrol for almost 20 years. Motor Carrier Enforcement Inspector Ed Adkins (left) was awarded the Cleveland District Motor Carrier Inspector of the Year. Both are certified motor carrier inspectors who specialize in trucks.



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AN EXAMPLE OF A TRUCKER'S WORKDAY



HOURS OF SERVICE RULES

To keep drivers alert and the roadways safe, the FMCSA has strict ‘hours of service’ (HOS) rules in place for commercial vehicle drivers. The HOS rules cover driving and non-driving time (dock time, etc.)—and even rest time—for drivers’ workdays, as well as their workweek.

Mossor explained, “There’s so much responsibility to be a safe operator when taking something that big on the road. These rules are in place to keep everyone safe—so drivers don’t overdo it and fall asleep or have that deer-in-the-headlights look. A 70,000- to 80,000-pound truck can do a lot of damage.”

MAKING THE MOST OF A WORKDAY

Truckers are limited to 11 hours of drive time during a work shift, and cannot drive after the 14th hour of a shift (which includes driving and non-driving time). They also must take at least a half-hour break every eight hours of a shift. To reset their work shift, a trucker must be “off duty” at least 10 hours.

WORKWEEK LIMITATIONS AND ‘RESETTING’

For companies that operate seven days a week, truckers cannot drive after being on duty for 70 hours in eight consecutive days (that includes their non-driving work time). Truckers working for companies with a shorter workweek are not allowed to drive after being on duty for 60 hours in seven days.

If a driver reaches their on-duty maximum, they must take time off before driving again. One way to do this is to reset the workweek by taking 34 consecutive hours off. Needless to say, keeping track of all this can be complicated.

INSIDE THE CAB—WHAT THE HOURS DON’T SHOW

“It takes a special person to drive a truck,” said Mossor. “They drive a vehicle that weighs 40 tons and work 14-hour days, working weekends and holidays and spending weeks or months away from their families, far from home. They sleep in their truck, and eat in their truck or at a truck stop, typically by themselves. They have incredible jobs and don’t get enough credit.”

MOST COMMON VIOLATIONS

According to Trooper Mossor, common violations seen by the FMSCA include the following:

- Lighting/reflective material violations—required headlights, turn lights, or marker lights not working
- Brakes—defective, not working, or out of adjustment
- Tires—tread depth is worn, deflated below 50 percent of their ratings, or off the rims
- Hours of service (HOS)—driver logs and hours of service violations
- Operator has an expired or no medical certificate showing they are fit to drive

ELDs bring good news!

According to Mossor, HOS violations have declined approximately 50 percent since summer 2018, due to the electronic logging device (ELD) mandate.

Naturally, a decrease in violations means lower insurance rates. In addition, truckers can save money with Progressive by participating in the ELD-based **Smart Haul program**.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A TRUCK IS PUT OUT OF SERVICE

When a trucker gets an out of service (OOS) violation, the vehicle must be parked where it is put out of service until repairs are done and paperwork is signed off by the person who did the repairs. The trucking business must keep documentation of the repairs.

TROOPER TIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNER CUSTOMERS

Trooper Mossor and Inspector Adkins offer tips you can share with your truck customers to help them be safe, avoid unnecessary inspections, and keep their insurance rates down.

DO A QUALITY PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

“While pre-trip inspections are required by regulations, a good inspection keeps drivers alive,” said Mossor.

WALK AROUND THE TRUCK

“Whenever you stop to get fuel, walk around the truck,” said Mossor. “If I can see a violation when you’re going down the highway, it’s something you can certainly see when you walk around your truck.”

DRIVE WITH COMMON SENSE

“Avoid minor traffic violations, like speeding, not using turn signals, and following too close,” said Mossor. “When you’re running 40 tons, you need more room to stop.”

HIRE GOOD DRIVERS

“A good driver is going to inspect their equipment to make sure it’s safe,” said Inspector Adkins. “They’re not following too close or breaking laws, and they’re anticipating other drivers. These drivers are going to help business owners save on their insurance rates.”

Choose the #1 truck insurer for products and service that match your best business

When you run a quote with us for your preferred truckers, we’ll use their USDOT data to get you our very best rates. Then, offer the option of **ELD-based insurance** to help safe drivers save even more.

In addition to great rates, we offer the full package of truck coverages,* and additional features like unlimited towing**, financed value, and pet coverage, along with a single deductible at no additional cost when Physical Damage coverage is purchased.

And we’re still a great choice for your new ventures and all drivers, with pricing that matches the risk.

Get more valuable truck insights

For truck information and stories, visit truckerterritory.com, a site dedicated to the hard-working, long-hauling men and women who keep America running.