



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BENDIX HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR CONTINUED DRIVER TRAINING,
TECHNICIAN TRAINING, AND INTEGRATED SAFETY TECHNOLOGIES TO
HELP REVERSE TRENDS IN LARGE TRUCK CRASHES**

*Latest "Large Truck and Bus Crash Facts" Report Reveals
Collisions Involving Large Trucks Continued to Climb in 2018*

ELYRIA, Ohio – Dec. 14, 2020 – Guided by findings from the latest "Large Truck and Bus Crash Facts" report from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC highlights key takeaways for fleets and drivers when it comes to reducing and preventing large truck crashes, injuries, and fatalities – with an emphasis on combining the use of driver training, technician training, and integrated driver assistance technologies, including air disc brakes.

The report, published in September 2020, includes crash figures from 2018, the most recently published statistics available from the administration pertaining to large truck (Class 3-8) and bus crashes.

Among the findings is that the number of crashes involving large trucks, particularly Class 7 and 8 vehicles, continued to climb. The report also draws a connection between the rising number of crashes in 2018 with more large trucks registered, while miles traveled remained largely consistent. The total number of crashes – including those with fatalities, injuries, or property-damage-only – saw double digit percent increases Year over Year and for the preceding 10 years overall.

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“The trends continue to increase across all types of crashes Year over Year,” said Fred Andersky, Bendix director – demos, sales and service training. “While that’s not what we want to see, this is a trend that can be reversed. We want to help fleets do that by showing how driver-assist safety technologies and air disc brakes, coupled with driver training focused on these systems, can combat some of the most common types of crashes that occur.”

More Trucks, More Crashes

Among the major findings from the report are that in recent years, with more large trucks on the road, there have also been more crashes, including those with fatalities, injuries and property-damage-only (PDO). The number of large trucks involved in fatal crashes increased by 1% in 2018 compared to 2017, while injury crashes were up by about 5%, and PDO crashes were up about 13%.

“It is important to note, however, that in accidents involving large trucks, the report data indicates that more often than not, the other driver, a pedestrian, cyclist, or animal is at fault,” Andersky said. “In fatal crashes, the critical event precipitating the crash was caused by the other vehicle or by other factors beside the truck’s movement in 64% of those crashes, according to the FMCSA report.”

The report shows that large truck registrations continued to grow, with an increase of 22% in 2018 compared to 2008. Over the same period, the number of crashes increased 37%, to almost half a million crashes involving large trucks in 2018. This also represents an 11% increase in large truck crashes from 2017.

In 2008, trucks traveled over 310 billion miles. These numbers dropped during the Great Recession – as did registrations – and have been coming back since about 2015, reaching 304 billion miles in 2018. Looking at crash rates on a per-100-million-mile basis, between 2017 and 2018, fatal crashes dropped about 1%, injury crashes were up about 2%, and property damage crashes increased approximately 10%. When reviewing the data reported for individuals injured or killed in large truck crashes during the same time frame, both these rates dropped slightly between 2017 and 2018 by about 1% and 2%, respectively.

Helping Control the Rise in Rear-End Collisions

In what is a key finding of interest to both fleets and drivers, the FMCSA report indicates that for large trucks, the initial point of impact in most crashes tended to be the front of the truck.

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Over 212,000 – or about 40% – of the crashes started with the front of the truck hitting another car, a stationary post, or something else.

Also important is that over 60% of the fatality crashes, and almost 50% of the injury crashes, are attributed to a collision affecting the front of the truck. More specifically, the number of collisions involving a large truck rear-ending a passenger vehicle was up 15% from 2017, with more than 38,000 such collisions, leading to around 9,100 injuries or fatalities.

“This finding highlights how and why driver-assist safety technology on large trucks – and particularly forward collision mitigation systems – can help, as the technology has been proven to help fleets and drivers reduce front-leading truck crashes,” Andersky said.

Advanced Safety Technologies Call for Comprehensive Training

Part and parcel of reducing large truck crash numbers, and the resulting injuries, fatalities, and property damage, is making changes that help drivers avoid those crashes in the first place.

“Driver assistance safety technologies, along with air disc brakes, are a significant part of those changes, but they can’t be used alone, and are no substitute for safe driving practices,” Andersky said. “The statistics show that crash numbers have climbed even as technology advanced. Therefore, comprehensive driver training on vehicle safety technologies, and exercising safe driver practices, are more important than ever.”

Drivers and fleets who spec driver assistance technology on their trucks will require training on how the technologies work and what to expect. This entails reviewing what the systems will do and how they work, experiencing the technologies in action through a demonstration, and having access to reference tools that allow drivers, technicians, and fleets to reinforce their knowledge and be alerted to updates.

It’s also important to keep in mind that advanced safety technologies, such as those from Bendix, are designed to provide driver assistance, not driver replacement. While the systems assist drivers, they do not replace a safe driver performing safe driving practices.

“Even with these driver-assist technologies, drivers are always in control of their vehicles, and these safety technologies don’t take the place of the driver,” Andersky said. “But safety systems like collision mitigation and stability control, in combination with comprehensive driver training, can effectively complement safe drivers practicing safe driving habits.”

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About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,100 people, Bendix is driven to deliver solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-275) or visit bendix.com. Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at knowledge-dock.com. Follow Bendix on Twitter at twitter.com/Bendix_CVS. Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at brake-school.com. And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit bendix.com/careers.

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