

MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT

program of driver selection, training, and supervision, and that vehicle failure can be reduced by systematic preventive maintenance

Cost of Vehicle Accidents

Experience has proved that the unsupervised fleet will have a higher accident frequency rate than the supervised one. Also, the total cost of a vehicle accident far exceeds the amount recovered from the insurance company.

Control of accidents in the large motor transportation fleet is especially desirable because its insurance premiums fluctuate with its accident frequency and severity rates (see Chapter 9, "Accident Records and Injury Rates"). The small fleet, however, is usually not rewarded with lower insurance rates in return for good safety performance. The cost of insurance for the small fleet will fluctuate little, if at all.

The cost of insurance, however, is not the only cost which accidents levy against a company. There are indirect costs, also. Some experts calculate these costs to be from three to four times that of insurance. They may be listed as follows:

- 1 Loss of service of the company employee injured in an accident. Loss of a key salesman or company representative at a critical time could be incalculable.
- 2 Added workmen's compensation costs resulting from an employee having been injured in an accident.
- 3 Loss of use of the vehicle while it is being repaired.
- 4 Cost of supervisory time spent in cleaning up after the accident.
- 5 Cost of repairing the company vehicle.
- 6 Cost of repairing or replacing other property.
- 7 Poor customer and public relations resulting from a company vehicle's having been involved in an accident.

The most telling argument for controlling accidents, however, is that the company has a moral obligation to the employee and to the public to do so. The employer through his authority to hire, supervise, discipline, and discharge employees enjoys a high degree of control over their driving performance. He has only to exercise that

control by employing the simple and proved techniques of driver safety education and supervision.

Vehicle Safety Program

A vehicle safety program should provide for

- 1 A definite safety policy, originated and emphatically enforced by top management, with delegated responsibilities.
- 2 A safety director (full or part-time).
- 3 A driver safety program, including driver selection procedure, driver training, and interest-sustaining activities.
- 4 An efficient system for accident reporting, investigation, analysis, and follow-up.
- 5 Preventive maintenance procedures.

Delegating responsibility

The first requirement of a good driver safety program is that management, from the president to the immediate supervisor, must accept its responsibility for the safe operation of company vehicles. As in the case of other desirable qualities of job performance, management must first demand safe operation, define standards of acceptable performance, and then organize means for the inspection and correction of job performance to meet these standards.

Management must evolve and enforce the policy that accident prevention is a primary activity for drivers, as well as for in-plant personnel, and that due regard for safe operation of vehicles is a condition of employment.

A capable and responsible person in the organization should be designated safety supervisor or safety director and should be made responsible for the safe operation of all automotive equipment. In the ordinary industrial concern, this may be a part-time assignment.

The job assignment of safety supervisor should entail the following duties:

- 1 Develop and promote safety activities and accident prevention measures throughout the fleet.
- 2 Study and recommend safety fleet policy in relation to equipment and facilities, personnel selection and training, and other phases of fleet operation.