

0021 A BEHAVIOUR-BASED SAFETY PROGRAMME FOR NEW ZEALAND TRUCK DRIVERS

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Driving is a dangerous occupation in New Zealand. Narrow, twisting, hilly roads present a spectacular, unforgiving topography. Trucks cover only 7% of the total distance travelled on the 7000 miles of major NZ roadways. Truck crashes account for nearly 21% of the total road fatalities. In most truck collisions, other road users die, not the truck drivers. In 2005–2006, NZ's Accident Compensation Corporation paid out nearly \$7 million for out-of-truck driver injuries. Ongoing expenses paid to previously injured drivers (unable to return to their jobs) totalled over \$10 million. No prior truck driver safety research parallels the conditions faced by NZ truck drivers. Our safety strategy tests the effectiveness of Behaviour-Based Safety (BBS) using agency reports, management buy-in and driver focus groups to determine the hazards of the profession. We created Critical Behaviour Checklists to measure safe practices, and paired these with low-tech black-box units (substitute co-workers). We expect the programme will increase conscientious behaviours and that drivers will become more responsible for their own and others safety. We anticipate reductions in truck crashes, vehicle/property damage and out-of-truck injuries. This unique application of BBS techniques may also prove useful to bus or taxi drivers, subway or railway workers. Our truck driver safety study is currently in its second stage, and is ongoing. In preventing just one truck crash or injury, this BBS programme will prove its worth to increase the safety of all New Zealand road users.