

Trucker Reality

By OOFI • Oct 11, 2023

Smart Brevity® count: 2.5 mins...671 words

Academics and regulators often claim to look at the BIG picture by examining the problems in trucking and freight movement from the 30,000 ft. level. The following information looks at the “realities of trucking” through the windshield, 6 ft. up from the pavement, from the driver’s seat.

VIUS is BACK!



Don't drag out your mask that's v.i.u.s. not virus!!

The Vehicle Inventory Use Survey (VIUS) is an extremely useful tool for looking at how all sizes of trucks are used within the U.S. The old VIUS was last published in 2002.

SO What? For those of us that do research within the trucking industry, it provides a much more detailed and granular analysis of the diversity of the tucking industry.

That is important because ? When regulations are issued from the D.O.T. through it's various agencies, or Congress enacts changes in transportation that impact you as a driver and/or owner-operator, it often does so without considering the diversity of the industry.

- While OOIDA often makes this point, there is little available data to show the impact of these regulations on any particular segment of the industry.
- When broad generalizations are made about the industry, it is difficult to show that the problem might be in a small segment of the industry and a broad regulation for the entire industry may not be justified.
- At this time, FMCSA defines anything that is 10,000 lbs. GVRW or more as a “large truck.”
- The statistics for crashes, violations, etc. can be greatly skewed by bundling all trucks into a generalized classification as large trucks.

VIUS data will show:

- **Truck characteristics:** ages, body types, sizes, weights, fuel types, maintenance types, axle configurations, and safety technologies.
- **Use details:** business or personal purposes, driving frequency, miles traveled, and commodities carried.

VIUS is part of the Office of Freight Management and Operations. They work in partnership with the Census Bureau, the Department of Energy, and the Federal Highway Administration.

Here are a couple of interesting trucking facts they shared in their announcement of their revival:

- In 2002, the total number of trucks was 85.1 million compared to 169.8 million in 2022.
- Annual miles driven was 1.1 trillion miles compared to 1.9 trillion in 2022. (70% increase)

Personal conveyance being looked at AGAIN.



The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA), which enforces truck safety, has once again taken on the task to show that truck drivers are improperly using the personal conveyance exemption.

CVSA used highly trained truck inspectors from every state to compile data to try and show that there are a large number of truckers who improperly use the personal conveyance exemption.

WHY: CVSA believes that the language in the regulations is vague and allows drivers to improperly use the exemption.

CVSA has asked FMCSA on two previous occasions to revise the language, and they have been rebuffed because they have not had enough safety data.

- CVSA compiled the data in August.
- Next, they plan to summarize the data and send it to FMCSA.

What we do know: They do not have any evidence, nor do they propose, to equate these violations with crashes.

- They have never had that kind of data nor has it ever been collected.
- How in the world is that considered safety data?

CVSA knows that:

- Truck parking is a huge problem.
- Safe parking is an even bigger problem.
- Truck crashes have increased among new-entrant carriers according to FreightWaves.
- Highway congestion has increased, disrupting efficiency and creating safety concerns.
- FMCSA lists the 10 leading causes of crashes every year, and I have yet to see improper use of the conveyance exemption listed. In fact, it has never been listed anywhere.

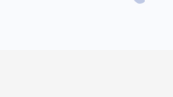
The bottom line: I seriously wonder why CVSA has spent so much of it's resources and time worried about misuse of the personal conveyance exemption.

While VIUS is not going to alter a lot of misguided, but well intentioned, regulations, it will provide researchers like those at the OOIDA Foundation an opportunity to argue that cookie cutter regulations and mandates may not be effective and may in fact be detrimental to the industry.

Feedback

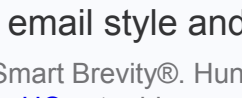
Anonymously tell us what you thought of this newsletter. Your responses will help us create better content for you!

Was this edition useful?



[Click here to unsubscribe.](#)

This newsletter is powered by



Like this email style and format?

It's called Smart Brevity®. Hundreds of orgs use it — in a tool called [Axios HQ](#) — to drive productivity with clearer workplace communications.