

Fatal accidents involving large trucks and buses have taken over 3000 lives every year for the past several years in the U.S. In 2009, according to federal data, 3,380 people were killed in large truck crashes and another 254 in bus crashes.

What can be done to prevent these terrible crashes in the first place?

Federal efforts to improve trucking safety are based on the Comprehensive Safety Accountability program begun last year. Under the CSA program, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) is attempting to use an electronic tracking tool to better enforce safety standards. The goal is to identify at-risk carriers earlier and take appropriate action to get them off the road sooner.

The issue of bus safety has received renewed attention following last March's deadly crash in New York City and several others around the country, including in Pennsylvania. Congress is considering requiring that busses be equipped with seat belts and have stronger windows to prevent ejection in rollovers.

In Pennsylvania, the safety effort involves collaboration between state law enforcement agencies and the FMCSA to improve inspection of commercial vehicles in highways corridors with high numbers of crashes. Federal officials announced last week that Pennsylvania will receive over \$8 million in grants to enhance its capacity to conduct such inspections and take over safety measures.

The other safety measures slated to be improved include audits of new commercial truck and bus companies, as well as upgrades to commercial driver's license testing facilities that will enable a move from paper to electronic testing.

Federal officials expressed the hope that the grants will help save lives in Pennsylvania through better enforcement of safety standards for both trucks and busses.

Source: "FMCSA awards over \$8 million to Pennsylvania to bolster safety efforts," The Trucker.com, 8-25-11