

TRANSPORTATION PRACTICE SPECIALTY NEWSLETTER

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ANSI/ASSE Z15.1-2006 Motor Vehicle Operations Standard Approved

Editor's Note: ANSI/ASSE Z15.1, Safe Practices for Motor Vehicle Operations, has received final ANSI approval. Many SH&E professionals are eager to see how this standard will affect transportation safety. In this interview, Carmen Daecher, Chair of the ANSI Z15 Accredited Standards Committee (ASC) on Safety Requirements for Motor Vehicle Operations, and Bill Hinderks, Vice Chair of the committee, explain the structure and intent of the standard as well as its predicted impact on safety rates, vehicle management and driver hiring and training procedures.

TPS: What are your positions within the ANSI Z15 ASC and how have you each contributed to the development of the new Z15.1 standard?

CD: I am the chair of the ANSI Z15 ASC. I was instrumental in forming this committee through ASSE, and I provided the committee with foundation materials to consider in the development of the Z15.1 standard. As chair of all committee meetings, I encourage dialogue among members and lead discussions for consensus.

BH: I presently serve as vice chair of the Z15.1 standard. I was also chair of the subcommittee that developed Section 4 of the standard, Operational Environment.

Lastly, I served on a four-person editorial committee headed by Stephanie Pratt of National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). This group merged the various sections of the standard, made grammatical corrections and brought a uniform "look and feel" to the final document. We reviewed nearly 100 pages of public review comments and made appropriate changes, while we referred comments of a substantive nature to the larger group for action.

TPS: How is the Z15.1 standard different from its predecessor, National Safety Council's American National Standard Method of Recording and Measuring Motor Vehicle Fleet Accident Experience and Passenger Accident Experience (D15.1-1976)? What new requirements, recommendations or features does it include?

CD: The Z15.1 standard differs from the D15.1 standard in that it provides guidelines for implementing a complete management system for motor vehicle operations. The old standard primarily intended to develop means of measuring accidents and

comparing accident rates. The new standard incorporates accident measurement, but it is more robust in providing guidelines for developing and implementing an effective risk management program for motor vehicle operations.

BH: The expired D15.1 standard was narrower in scope and mainly addressed accident recording and analysis. The Z15.1 standard is more comprehensive and provides guidelines designed to help organizations address a wide range of safety management issues related to motor vehicle operations.

TPS: What is the framework of the Z15.1 standard? Does it offer specific guidelines for a safety program?

CD: Z15.1 is developed around a framework of risk elements associated with motor vehicle operations. Basic management structure, driver considerations, vehicle considerations and operational considerations and methods to monitor and measure effectiveness are the foundations of this framework.

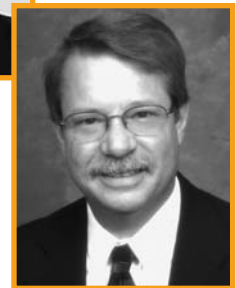
BH: People who have been involved in vehicle safety will find much of the content to be familiar. In developing the standard, committee members (82 traffic SH&E professionals representing a broad cross-section of 35 organizations of all sizes from across the U.S.) introduced material from safety programs used within their organizations as well as ideas derived from state regulations, national safety organizations, traffic safety literature and best practices.

TPS: How do you predict the Z15.1 standard will impact commercial and noncommercial vehicles? How is the standard expected to improve injury and accident rates and to reduce property losses?

CD: The Z15.1 standard should not have a substantial impact on commercial vehicle operations. Most of those operations already have structured risk management programs. However, for noncommercial fleets, the standard can have substantial value. The standard offers guidelines to develop more effective management of motor vehicle operations.



Carmen Daecher (left) is chair of the Z15.1 ASC; Bill Hinderks (below) is vice-chair.



Since motor vehicle accidents are one of the leading causes of occupational injuries and fatalities, a risk management program for motor vehicle operations should positively impact the workplace.

BH: The objective of any standard is to improve performance by "raising the bar," so to speak. For organizations actively engaged in safety management, the Z15.1 standard will be a useful tool to gauge present programs. Where no formalized efforts currently exist, the standard serves as a user-friendly resource that outlines precisely what is needed to develop a program and better manage this significant exposure.

Better management of vehicle operations will lead to improved results. This includes reducing the frequency of collisions, preventing fatalities, injuries, property damage and traffic violations and ultimately lowering costs.

TPS: In what ways will the Z15.1 standard help to streamline vehicle management?

CD: I am not sure that the Z15.1 standard will streamline vehicle management, but it should provide a better process for purchasing and maintaining vehicles so as to produce safer operations for vehicle users and their organization.

BH: There will be a more common understanding of what is meant by a driver safety or fleet safety program. This will undoubtedly make things less complicated for, as an example, organizations that require contractors to have a safety program in place. In the past, these organ-

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izations would have needed to define what that meant from their point of view. Meanwhile, other organizations might have different program requirements of the same contractor. So potentially, a contractor might need to have as many programs in place as it has customers.

With an effective national consensus standard, everyone reads off the same (or very similar) sheet of music. This makes it easier for the customer to hire safer operators and for the contractor to comply with the customers' requirements.

TPS: What criteria does the Z15.1 standard give for measuring vehicle safety performance?

CD: The Z15.1 standard identifies the root-cause analysis of accidents as a primary basis for measuring effectiveness. In this regard, vehicle safety performance should be considered whenever an accident occurs. If any components or maintenance-specific issues regarding the vehicle contribute to accidents, the organization should identify and address them to prevent future occurrences.

BH: The current trend in safety circles is to evaluate whether an organization is doing the right things. One performance measure would be whether or not the organization adhered to all applicable por-

tions of the standard. There is latitude within the Z15.1 standard to account for differences in organizations and their unique operations and exposures. However, in most cases, they are either properly managing a program element or they are not. This is very objective and it should be relatively easy for management to measure.

The standard provides specific information to help organizations analyze their crash results in order to compare themselves to others within and outside their industry. They will also be able to compare their own results from year to year. While these numbers are trailing indicators of past safety performance, this data will be helpful to SH&E professionals in promoting and marketing vehicle safety strategies within their organizations or among their members or clients.

TPS: How can organizations use the Z15.1 standard to improve driver hiring and training procedures?

CD: The Z15.1 standard specifies guidelines for driver hiring and training.



Z15.1 is developed around a framework of risk elements associated with motor vehicle operations. Basic management structure, driver considerations, vehicle considerations and operational considerations and methods to monitor and measure effectiveness are the foundations of this framework.

From a hiring point of view, the applicants' driving behaviors should be considered for employment purposes. Review of their motor vehicle record should also be part of the hiring process. Any new employees should be trained to drive defensively upon employment, and to underscore the importance of defensive driving, they should receive regular refresher training. If employees have accidents, receive tickets or behave in some other unacceptable way, remedial training should be provided.

The standard prescribes the use of a hiring procedure and training procedures as part of the total risk management process for safe vehicle operations.

BH: Organizations can compare their hiring and screening practices to those outlined within the standard. This will allow them to identify shortfalls within their process, and it will guide them in implementing enhancements.

TPS: How will you ensure that state and federal government agencies recognize the new Z15.1 standard? Do you expect to encounter any difficulties?

CD: I do not have any plans to ensure that state and federal government agencies recognize the new Z15.1 standard. The standard has been built as a guideline for organizations that use motor vehicles as part of their business activities. I am not

ANSI/ASSE Z15.1-2006 Safe Practices for Motor Vehicle Operations

ANSI) recently gave its approval of ANSI/ASSE Z15.1-2006 Safe Practices for Motor Vehicle Operations. This standard sets forth practices for the safe operation of motor vehicles owned or operated by organizations, including:

- definitions;
- management, leadership and administration;
- operational environment;
- driver considerations;
- vehicle considerations incident reporting and analysis.

These practices are designed for use by those having the responsibility for the administration and operation of motor vehicles as a part of organizational operations.

This standard has generated extensive interest, and during public review of this document, approximately 80 pages of public review comments and statements were received. The standard was approved on Feb. 15, 2006, with an effective date of April 28, 2006.

This is a very significant standard for SH&E professionals and interest is very high. If you are an SH&E professional with vehicle responsibilities, this is a standard you should have in your technical library. The standard is currently available for purchase at the member prices of \$37.

To order Z15.1-2006, visit www.asse.org/fr3387s.htm.

interested in the standard becoming a regulatory requirement by any agency. I am more interested in having organizations, including governmental entities, use the standard to improve their motor vehicle operations.

BH: Interest in a motor vehicle safety standard originated with fleet operators. When Carmen served as administrator of ASSE's Transportation Practice Specialty in 2000, members approached him about the need for a standard to assist them in their work. Hence, the original impetus for a vehicle safety standard was the transportation industry itself.

The Z15.1 standard was developed to help organizations improve operations and performance. It has not been the objective of our committee to actively promote the standard to federal or state agencies. With that said, I anticipate there will be interest in the standard among regulators and elected officials.

TPS: How do you predict the standard will interact with federal and state regulations?

CD: Currently, OSHA is concerned about motor vehicle accidents in the workplace. The agency has issued guidelines in partnership with the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety for use by all organizations.

I do not believe that OSHA will apply the Z15.1 standard as a regulatory requirement. The agency may consider its use as a guideline for organizations, but it would be difficult to incorporate the standard from an enforcement point of view. Furthermore, OSHA already has guidelines for the use of motor vehicles and other equipment in specific situations such as construction.

The Department of Transportation has regulations in place for commercial operations, and the Z15.1 standard does not offer any additional elements or criteria that are not already embodied in those regulations.

BH: The committee was especially sensitive to this issue. The Z15.1 standard is designed to complement existing regulations. In fact, the standard specifically states, "Organizations shall have a system in place to monitor federal, state and local regulations in order to comply with all regulations and implement any policy/procedure change in a timely manner." In this respect, the standard may further influence organizations to become compliant with existing regulations.

TPS: The Z15.1 standard is the first in

a series of planned safety standards for motor vehicle operations. What subjects will the future Z15 standards address?

CD: It is too early to tell what future standards under Z15 will be addressed. At this point, I am anxious to see how the Z15.1 standard will be used by organizations and what issues arise through its use. I expect that feedback from those who apply it will drive the future evolution of the standard.

TPS: What is the Z15 Committee's agenda for 2006-07?

CD: ANSI fully approved the Z15.1 standard on Feb. 15, 2006, and it will be published in the spring. I also expect that the committee will meet at some point late in 2006 or possibly early in 2007 to review the dissemination and use of the standard.

BH: It remains the responsibility of the committee members to be leaders in promoting the standard once it is published, to be available to interpret the standard and to always think about opportunities for improvement. ■

Carmen Daecher is President of The Daecher Consulting Group, Inc. in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania and a specialist with more than 35 years of experience in the transportation field. Throughout his career, Daecher has worked in multiple aspects of transportation safety. He currently consults with public and private clients, including municipalities, attorneys, insurance companies, commercial motor carriers, national organizations and other professional transportation safety groups.

Daecher has served as Administrator and Assistant Administrator of the ASSE's Transportation Practice Specialty and as Vice Chair of the ASSE's Council on Practices and Standards (CoPS). Presently, he is a member of the society's Government Affairs Committee. Daecher has spoken on behalf of the ASSE for numerous transportation safety issues, and he has contributed to the development of ASSE positions on transportation, worker safety and driver distraction. He has also written white papers on bus and truck security for the society and has made presentations at ASSE professional development conferences, regional conferences and seminars.

He holds a bachelor of arts degree in economics from Franklin and Marshall College and a master of science degree in transportation engineering from Villanova University.

Bill Hinderks is a senior loss prevention specialist with Risk & Insurance Management Company (RIMCO), a risk management and insurance services consulting firm in Bloomington, Illinois.

Hinderks has spent most of his 25-year career providing risk control consulting services to an array of industries and governmental entities. His experience includes ten years in various management roles as well.

A Certified Safety Professional (CSP), Hinderks has also achieved certification as a Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter (CPCU), an Associate in Loss Control Management (ALCM) and an Associate in Risk Management (ARM). He is a Professional Member of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), and he currently serves as Vice Chair of the Z15.1 standard.

He holds a bachelor of arts degree in chemistry from the University of Minnesota-Duluth.



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