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**Contact: Steve Keppler
Phone: 202-775-1623**

Roadcheck 2004: Promoting Truck and Bus Safety and Security in North America

The seventeenth annual International Roadcheck will take place throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico during 72 continuous hours from June 8 through June 10. Approximately 10,000 CVSA certified truck and bus safety inspectors will be on the job at inspection sites along major highways. Roving patrols will inspect commercial vehicles traveling other highways.

During last year's Roadcheck, 55,784 inspections were performed on commercial vehicles by 9,471 state and provincial personnel at 1,097 locations throughout Canada and the United States. Another 4,816 inspections were performed by 378 Federal personnel at 140 U.S. locations.

The annual 72-hour Roadchecks focus on the year-round commercial vehicle and driver roadside inspection program and draw the public's attention to the continuous and combined efforts of law enforcement and the truck and bus industries to save lives on North American highways. Roadside safety inspections are an everyday occurrence, with more than 3 million roadside inspections conducted in North America by CVSA-certified inspectors during 2003.

Evidence of the success of inspectors and the truck and bus industries is demonstrated by the fact that fatalities from crashes involving commercial vehicles have declined over the years. In the United States, the rate of fatalities from large truck-involved crashes per 100 million vehicle miles in 1985 was 4.6. By 2002, it had dropped to 2.3 — a 50 percent decline. In Canada, from 1997 to 2001 the number of fatal crashes involving commercial vehicles dropped from 1,032 to 951 — and the corresponding fatalities decreased from 664 to 548 — a 17.5 percent decline.

Roadcheck also provides an opportunity to distribute educational information to commercial vehicle drivers. This year, drivers will receive a reminder of the importance of wearing a safety belt while driving, as well as information regarding the North American Standard Inspection Program. Other emphasis areas this year include commercial vehicle security, intermodal equipment safety and cargo tank inspections.

CVSA's President, 1st Lt. Paul Claunch, Assistant Commander of Special Services with the Arkansas Highway Police, says "Roadcheck provides the motoring public with a snapshot of commercial vehicle safety enforcement activities being conducted daily by highly trained state and provincial personnel throughout North America. It also gives the motor carrier industry an opportunity to showcase successful safety programs and their commitment to safety on our highways for all travelers."

"During the 2004 Roadcheck, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration will be conducting their annual National Tank Check project, emphasizing inspection of cargo tanks transporting hazardous materials. It is the time of the year that we and our State partners place special importance on the safety of vehicles transporting large amounts of hazardous materials," stated Administrator Annette Sandberg. "Our goal is to communicate to the cargo tank industry that safety takes the complete package--properly maintained equipment, properly trained and physically alert drivers, and a management team committed to making sure their employees practice good safety."

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance sponsors the annual Roadchecks, with participation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Transport Canada, the Research and Special Programs Administration and the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (Mexico). CVSA's members include the enforcement agencies and industry representatives in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

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