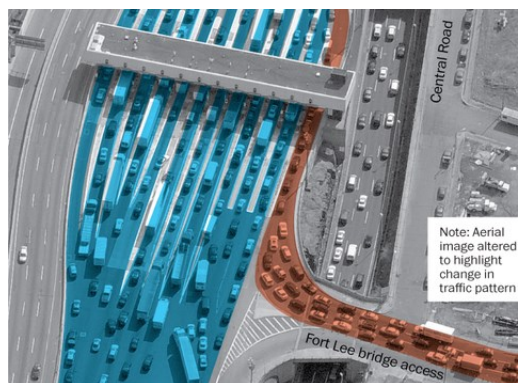




## 2021 Top 10 Truck Bottlenecks

For the fourth year in a row, the intersection of I-95 and SR 4 in Fort Lee, New Jersey (aka the George Washington Bridge onramp) has been identified as the #1 worst chokepoint for truckers in America. What likely comes as no surprise to our members, the other Top-10 freight bottlenecks were:



2. Cincinnati: I-71 at I-75
3. Houston: I-45 at I-69/US 59
4. Atlanta: I-285 at I-85 (North)
5. Atlanta: I-20 at I-285 (West)
6. Chicago: I-290 at I-90/I-94
7. Los Angeles: SR 60 at SR 57
8. Dallas: I-45 at I-30
9. San Bernadino, CA: I-10 at I-15
10. Chattanooga, TN: I-75 at I-24

Each year, the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) uses GPS data from over one million commercial vehicles to quantify the impact of traffic congestion on truck freight at more than 300 specific locations. ATRI publishes the list to assist truck operators in better planning their routes and hours, where possible, to avoid peak congestion times. For the complete list of the top 100 freight bottlenecks, click the button below.

<https://truckingresearch.org/2023/02/top-100-truck-bottlenecks-2021/>

## Use of Off-Site Compliance Reviews Grows

According to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) data covering its 2021 compliance audit activity, more than 40% of all carrier audits last year were conducted off-site, that is, away from the carrier's place of business. FMCSA had begun to transition its safety audits more toward off-site reviews prior

to the pandemic, but with the onslaught of COVID-19, the agency began further limiting in-person contact between trucking company personnel and federal and state investigators.

In addition, 52% of audits conducted during 2021 resulted in a Conditional rating, if any rating was issued at all. While the Conditional rating may have been justified, carriers who have experienced a Conditional rating often face an uphill battle trying to remove the Conditional rating and replace it with a Satisfactory rating. Meanwhile many brokers and shippers won't use their services.

Were you audited in 2021, and if so, was it an off-site audit? Our safety consultants are interested in learning more about your real-world audit experiences. Watch your email for a short survey on compliance audits and be sure to respond. If you have specific comments or questions to share, email us at [safety@safecarriers.org](mailto:safety@safecarriers.org).

## Interested in Reducing Tire and Fuel Costs?

With on-highway diesel fuel hovering around \$4/gallon nationwide (never mind California!) and retail tire prices going through the roof, our members are looking for ways to reduce these costs. We're pleased to announce that ICSA will soon be offering a new members-only vendor partnership for purchasing fuel at a discount at more than 1500 locations throughout the country. In addition, members will be able to purchase tires and related maintenance services at reduced costs. Watch your email and the ICSA website for more details coming soon.

## ICSA Member David Volles Wins \$500 TAT Drawing

Congratulations to the ICSA members who were trained and certified by Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) during National Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January and were entered into our drawing for \$500!

If you provided us your mailing address, you will be receiving your new ICSA cap in the next few days. The winner of the \$500 drawing was David Bolles of Phoenix-based Frontier Express, Inc. Congratulations, Mr. Bolles - you will soon be receiving your check!

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## USDOT to Revive VIUS

### Why You Should Care

Starting February 23 and concluding in October 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation is launching a research effort to help gain a better understanding of the features and purposes of commercial vehicles traveling on U.S. roadways.

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) is re-launching the Vehicle Inventory and Use Survey, or VIUS, to collect real-world data on commercial vehicle use that USDOT and state transportation agencies can use to help plan projects that benefit trucking and logistics. From 1963 to 2002, the survey (then called the Truck Inventory and Use Survey), was conducted every 5 years but was discontinued in 2002 for reasons long forgotten.

What is important and why you should care is that you may be among the 150,000 owners of Class 1 – 8 vehicles who receive the initial letter from BTS and the U.S. Census Bureau requiring you to participate. While you are required to respond to the survey, we urge you to view this not as a burden but as a chance to contribute actual vehicle use data that can directly benefit truck operators in years to come.

The confidential survey includes questions on types of goods being transported, frequency of maintenance intervals, miles traveled and fuel economy by vehicle weight, type, and configuration. Sample questions include: "Was [your] vehicle new when you took physical possession of it?" and "What type of transmission did this vehicle have?"

For the first time ever, the survey also will ask for input on parking-assist technologies among other technology questions. For complete information on the VIUS research, log on to <https://www.bts.gov/bts/vius>.

## ICSA Announces New Safety Awards for Members

As a non-profit whose principal mission is to improve highway safety, ICSA invests much of its resources in training, messaging and information designed to help its members operate safely. As we approach a milestone of 5,000 members, ICSA will launch its new safety recognition program effective with the end of the first quarter of 2022.

Each quarter, ICSA's safety team will award 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes to a fleet and an individual owner/operator who meets the criteria. First place winners each quarter will receive a \$500 fuel card; 2nd and 3rd place winners will receive useful ICSA merchandise gifts.

While the safety team is finalizing final requirements, carriers who wish to be considered for safety awards must meet at least the following minimum criteria:

- ICSA membership dues paid up and an active member profile set up in [safecarriers.org](http://safecarriers.org)

- SmartDrive camera(s) installed and active
- SmartDrive score under 50 for the quarter
- Enrolled in ICSA's approved drug testing consortium and hair testing completed
- No claims

After the 4th Quarter winners are named, an annual winner will be chosen from the four quarterly winners as the overall 2022 awards. The 2022 winners will receive a \$1000 fuel card along with other prizes. Watch your email and the March Landing Gear newsletter for complete details.

## Coaching Corner

### Fault vs. Preventability

By Mike Hitchcock  
ICSA Senior Safety Advisor



Determining who is at fault will often depend on the applicable laws and the evidence collected at the scene. Preventability is completely different, particularly for professional drivers. Let me give you an example.

You are driving through a residential area, doing the speed limit and, while you are checking your left mirror, a vehicle backs out of a driveway on the right-hand side of the street, and you hit them. Is this crash your fault? No! Was it preventable on your part?

To determine preventability, we ask two questions:

1. Was there something that the truck driver did that caused the crash?
2. Was there something that the truck driver could have "reasonably" done to prevent the crash?

If the answer to either of these questions is yes, then the crash is considered preventable. Is it possible to not be at fault but be involved in what would be considered a preventable crash? Yes, we often see this. Could the crash be determined as preventable on the part of both drivers? Yes.

Being a professional driver means more than getting paid to drive. It means making good decisions. I often talk to professional drivers and hear comments like "I can't handle being on the road with all the idiots out there" and "I'm tired of being cut off by four wheelers - they drive me crazy."

Individually, we won't change how four wheelers drive but, the best drivers on the highway don't let it get under their skin. When they get cut off, they just grin a little and say, "I expected you to do that and to drive that way."

None of us are perfect but the more we hold ourselves to a higher standard, the better example we set for the motoring public. Driving responsibly will save lives, it's smart business, it's good for the image of our industry and it's the professional way to behave.