RECENT RESEARCH SHOWS THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY MAKES AT LEAST A $9.5 BILLION INVESTMENT IN SAFETY

In an industry first, the American Trucking Associations determined the trucking industry invests at least $9.5 billion annually in safety. These investments include technologies on the truck such as collision avoidance systems, electronic logging devices for driver hours of service compliance and video event recorders. They also include driver safety training, driver safety incentive pay, and compliance with safety regulations (e.g., pre-employment and random drug tests and motor vehicle record checks).

The largest investment category is in driver safety training, equaling 36% of all investment. Driver safety training was followed by expenditures in compliance with safety rules (26%), on-board safety technologies (25%) and driver safety incentive pay (13%).

And the trucking industry’s huge investment in safety is paying off. According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, from 1980 through 2014, the number of large truck-involved fatal crashes declined 32% while the large truck-involved fatal crash rate per 100 million miles dropped a remarkable 74%. Trucks have an overall crash rate 28% lower than that of other vehicles.

Methodology: During the fall of 2015, ATA conducted a survey to quantify how much motor carriers invest in safety annually. ATA collected very detailed data through two surveys, with the longest one covering 120 questions on a wide range of safety expenditures for 2014. The shorter survey collected data in four safety investment categories without breaking out specifics in each of the categories.

The four main areas included:
- On-Board Safety Technology (e.g., Electronic logging devices; collision avoidance systems; stability control technologies; video event recorders)
- Driver Safety Training
- Safety Inventive Pay (e.g., bonuses, awards and recognition items)
- Compliance with Safety Regulations (e.g., motor vehicle record checks; drug tests)

Important Note: Not included in the study is general maintenance costs, which certainly has a significant safety component. These types of expenditures would include items such as purchasing new brakes, tires, etc. As a result, the investment numbers are minimums and would increase substantially if those types of expenditures were included.