



## Florida Department of Transportation Research Web-based Safety Inspector Training and Certification Program BD548-19

The Office of Motor Carrier Compliance (OMCC) plays a critical role in fulfilling FDOT's mission to provide a safe transportation system by performing commercial vehicle safety inspections and weight enforcement. In 2008, Motor Carrier Compliance Officers (safety inspectors) conducted over 126,000 inspections.

Safety inspectors must be knowledgeable of regulations established by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. OMCC's training academy conducts mandatory training and certification programs for all potential and current safety inspectors. However, the programs had been experiencing an unacceptable failure rate of over 25 percent.

To improve the graduation rate, a study team at the University of Central Florida's (UCF) Center for Advanced Transportation Simulation Systems (CATSS) and the Institute for Simulation and Training (IST) recently designed a web-based program to assist in the training and certification of safety inspectors. The web-based program supplements the current federally-required classroom training and certification programs with the goal of increasing course graduation rates and improving on-the-job performance. It teaches safety inspectors how to apply regulations, exceptions, and other criteria during a safety inspection. The program allows participants to study mechanical parts, and features practice scenarios, quick reference aids, and simulated walk-around inspections. The program also includes an on-line reference library.

The study team found that the web-based program significantly improved the graduation



*A Motor Carrier Compliance Officer inspects the air braking system of a commercial vehicle*

rates of safety inspectors and the successful completion of the Field Training Officer program. The failure rate during the training academy phase of the program dropped to zero, and the evaluation scores during the Field Training Officer program phase increased dramatically. The program has resulted in three of the past four classes achieving a 100 percent pass rate on the required federal certification test, thereby increasing safety inspector job performance and enhancing the safety of commercial trucking in Florida.

The web-based training program improves the ability of inspectors to perform their duties and to identify potential safety hazards. The study team recommends that the database be maintained and updated regularly and that other training modules be developed to address hazardous materials, cargo tanks, weights, and passenger vehicles.