

The FMCSA admits that fatal crashes involving large trucks have increased by 5.7% over the last three years.



The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has announced a major new study into the underlying causes behind fatal large truck crashes.

In a Request for Information document to be published in the Federal Register on January 15, 2020, the FMCSA announced plans to begin a groundbreaking new study into the causal factors in large truck crashes — dubbed the Large Truck Crash Causal Factors Study (LTCCFS).

The FMCSA pointed to a rise in truck crash fatalities as a reason for the study: “Over the last three years (2016- 2018), fatal crashes involving large trucks increased 5.7 percent. This study will help FMCSA identify factors that are contributing to the growth in fatal large truck crashes, and in both injury and property damage only (PDO) crashes. These factors will drive new initiatives to reduce crashes on our nations roadways.”

The FMCSA says that they “seek information on how best to design and conduct a study to identify factors contributing to all FMCSA reportable large truck crashes (towaway, injury and

fatal).”

The agency says that the purpose of the study is “to yield information that will help FMCSA and the truck safety community to identify activities and other measures likely to lead to significant reductions in the frequency, severity, and crash rate involving commercial motor vehicles.”

The FMCSA laid out three specific goals for the LTCCFS study:

1. **Evaluate crashes involving large trucks and identify emerging trends;**
2. **Monitor crash trends and identify causes and contributing factors; and**
3. **Develop effective safety improvement policies and programs.**

The announcement of the LTCCFS comes just months after worrisome new statistics showed an uptick in fatal crashes involving large trucks in 2018 that corresponded with the first full year that the Electronic Logging Device Mandate was in effect for most truck drivers.

In October 2019, the [NHTSA released a report](#) on crash fatalities in 2018 — the first full year since the FMCSA required most truckers to start using ELDs to track Hours of Service compliance in December of 2017. The FMCSA promised that the ELD Mandate would “help create a safer work environment for drivers.”

While there was a 2.4% decrease in crash fatalities for all drivers, the NHTSA data showed that fatal crashes involving large trucks actually increased by 0.9%.

During a similar study conducted by the FMCSA in 2001 — 2003, the FMCSA said that “a primary finding of the study was that in the vast majority of crashes where the critical reason for the crash was assigned to the large truck, it was attributed to a driver-related action or inaction.”

The FMCSA will be accepting public comments on the study for 60 days after publication in the Federal Register. For more information on how you can submit your comments once the

comment period officially opens, please [click here](#) .

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