

## Case Study 26: Wellness – by Industry Group

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Many employers offer wellness programs for their employees. These vary widely in content and in the extent they are promoted. Furthermore, the connection between driving and health, as well as between driver health and safety, is widely recognized. Consequently, the employer interviews sought information about employee wellness programs in the context of driver safety, especially their linkage to employer provided traffic safety programs. Those findings are summarized here by industry group.

Transit: The physical and physiological challenges of bus driving are recognized and well understood within the transit industry. Most agencies have some form of wellness program designed for bus operators. These are so fully integrated into the fabric of the transit business that they are not seen as elements of a safety per se, though the link to safety is recognized.

Trucking: The physical and physiological challenges of truck driving are recognized and well understood within the trucking industry, in large part because of USDOT regulations. Whether this is integrated into a formal wellness program varies widely across companies, however. As is often the case, to ensure broad participation, a set of mandatory requirements displaces possibly more comprehensive voluntary measures.

Safety Organizations: The wellness linkage depends on the safety organization's mission and constituency. One of the EMS related safety organizations is extremely active in the area of EMS practitioner and patient safety during transport, at the policy and practical program level.

Other Organizations: For all four groups, the linkage between wellness and the various safety programs is more implicit than direct, but for different reasons. For the four hazardous environment examples, the stress of working in overtly hazardous environments is the "wellness" element that connects to the safety program. This is especially true for one employer where the impromptu monitoring and dissemination of descriptions of incidents and issues reinforces the elaborate safety program. The associated stress is recognized both anecdotally and by the configuration of the safety program.

For the two university shuttles, on the other hand, there is little overt discussion or consideration of stress or other health matters, although concern with safety dominates their operations. In this latter feature, they resemble public transit authorities. Another factor may be that their drivers are all part-time students, a workforce category typically underserved by employer health programs.

The other two groups (Limo/Tour Bus and Small Employer) responded consistent with what would be expected from a small employer and the associated limited resources. In other

words, the wellness linkage is recognized and acknowledged, but little is actually offered or provided.