MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATIONS – AN UPDATE
The Newly Revised ANSI/ASSE Z15.1 Standard

ASSE members and the SH&E Profession overall have submitted numerous inquiries addressing the pending release of the newly revised Z15.1 Standard, “Safe Practices for Motor Vehicle Operations.” This document will hopefully answer some of these questions.

The scope of the standard is: This standard sets forth practices for the safe operation of motor vehicles owned or operated by organizations, including:

- Definitions
- Management, leadership and administration
- Operational environment
- Driver considerations
- Vehicle considerations
- Incident reporting and analysis

These practices are designed for use by those having the responsibility for the administration and operation of motor vehicles as a part of organizational operations.

The standard was originally proposed by the ASSE Transportation Practice Specialty circa 2002/2003. The first version of the standard was approved in 2006. The revision of the most current iteration started in 2010 and the administrative approval was given by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) on March 28, 2012.

Key Differences: Z15.1-2012 versus Z15.1-2006

The committee basically saw this revision as moderate in nature, but there are some significant differences between the two versions.

While length is not necessarily an indicator of change, the standard was expanded by about 20% with more technical information and some additional explanatory information. This technical brief will look at the different sections and identify some of the key differences.
Section #1: The Scope, Purpose, and Application section basically remained intact with some changes to address some syntax and format issues. The committee did not see any changes to this section as substantive in nature.

Section #2: The Definitions Section remained basically intact with some editorial changes to improve the definitions. Due to a number of inquiries from outside stakeholders the committee added a definition of an “organizational vehicle” to address questions on this issue.

Section #3: This section is a significant portion of the standard and addresses management leadership and commitment. The section was extensively edited, but the committee thought these changes were mostly editorial in nature and did not impact the standard in a substantive way. However, specific recognition is given to the Z10 Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems. The consensus is that it is important to tie motor vehicle practices and operations to the overall safety and health management program.

Section #4: This section deals with the operational environment and it was extensively edited during the revision process and many of these changes were substantive in nature. The standard now puts more emphasis on restraint systems, impaired driving, aggressive driving, distracted driving, journey management, and fatigue management. While the standard always addressed distracted driving, the consensus is that distracted driving is more of a significant issue for SH&E Professionals than it was when the first version of the standard was released in 2006. As a result, this section of the standard was enhanced and a model distracted driving policy was added as an appendix.

Section #5: The driver is addressed in this portion of the standard. The document was edited, but more from the perspective of readability versus substantive changes. The one issue the committee would like to hear more from stakeholders on addresses the issue of MVRs (Motor Vehicle Records) and how a driver’s record is used from the perspective of implementing this standard.

Section #6: The vehicle itself is addressed in this section of the standard. This portion of the standard was edited, and some of the changes were viewed by the committee as substantive. Several of the committee members took the position that the changes to acquisition, inspection, and modification were substantive and would impact how SH&E Professionals work with organizational vehicles from the perspective of maintenance and operational checks.

Section #7: Incident reporting and analysis is/was one of the key drivers for the establishment of the standard in the first place. This section of the standard was edited, but the changes were not viewed as substantive in nature.

Appendix Materials: The appendix materials are viewed by many of the committee members as being the key materials contained within the publication. The appendix materials are not considered to be mandatory sections of the standard, but they have been widely used in both the private and public sectors. The appendix materials were significantly edited and changed and a model distracted driving policy was included. The appendix materials current consist of:
Articles and Background Materials

ANSI/ASSE Z15.1-2012 calls for organizations to have a written motor vehicle safety program that defines organizational requirements, responsibilities and accountabilities for drivers and motor vehicle safety; to have a written safety policy that includes communicating management’s concern for the health and well-being of drivers throughout the organization; how to have a system of responsibility and accountability in order to ensure effective implementation of a vehicle safety program; a driver recruitment, selection and assessment program; orientation and training; a system in place to report to corporate executives major incidents, trends and safety performance, including the immediate reporting of major incidents to management; internal and external communications programs to be in place, (this includes contingency communications with the media); inspections and maintenance; regulatory compliance; and audits.

One of the main questions asked by SH&E Professionals addresses how standards such as Z15.1 are used by government agencies. It is important to note that we are talking about voluntary national consensus standards. The following statement is included in all ANSE/ASSE Standards:

“The use of American National Standards is completely voluntary; their existence does not in any respect preclude anyone, whether he/she has approved the standards or not, from manufacturing, marketing, purchasing, or using products, processes, or procedures not conforming to the standards.”

However, if the question addresses how governmental agencies can use these standards from compliance related perspective the links below should be of assistance:

Safeguarding: Are ANSI Standards Really Voluntary?

ASSE Position Statement on Consensus Standards

What’s the Difference Between an OSHA Rule and an ANSI Standard?

Articles of Interest Addressing Z15.1

The URL below will take the reader to the recent press release announcing the approval of the revised Z15.1 Standard.
The URL below will take the reader to a special edition of TransActions (Publication of the Transportation Practice Specialty) addressing the release of the original standard in 2006:


The URL below will take the reader to an interview done with Dale Young and Andy Peterson who are part of Zurich Services Corporation’s Risk Engineering Transportation Team. In this interview, Young and Peterson discuss how the standard “Safe Practices for Motor Vehicle Operations” (ANSI/ASSE Z15.1) has impacted Zurich’s employees and clients.

http://www.asse.org/practicespecialties/interviews/dYoung_APeterson.php

When the original version if the ANSI/ASSE Z15.1 standard was approved in 2006, many safety, health and environmental (SH&E) professionals are eager to see how this standard will affect transportation safety. In this interview, Carmen Daecher, (Past Chair) of the ANSI Z15 Accredited Standards Committee (ASC) on Safety Requirements for Motor Vehicle Operations, and Bill Hinderks, (Current Chair) of the Z15.1 standard, explain the structure and intent of the standard as well as its predicted impact on safety rates, vehicle management and driver hiring and training procedures. While this interview is from 2006, it still provides an excellent overview of the driver for the standard and why it is important.

http://www.asse.org/practicespecialties/interviews/DaecherHendercks.php

The U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration recognizes Z15.1 and the ASSE Transportation Practice Specialty:


Of interest is that the Cha Cha Question/Answer website service recently had a question about defensive driving and reference was made back to the Z15.1 Standard. We received hundreds of messages and inquiries due to this one small blurb. We think this of interest to SH&E professionals since it indicates that the general public also has significant interest in this issue.

http://www.chacha.com/question/what-is-deffensive-driving

Oregon OSHA does list Z15.1 as a reference document in its publication addressing driver safety:

The State of Washington uses Z15.1 as a guidance document for their organizational driver safety programs:


For more information on transportation related safety issues we also recommend that you review and considering participating with:

http://www.asse.org/practicespecialties/transportation/

http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/9db1deee#/9db1deee/1

http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/14a32963#/14a32963/1

Below you will find the first two sections of the revised ANSI/ASSE Z15.2012 Standard

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AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARD Z15.1
SAFE PRACTICES FOR MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATIONS

STANDARD REQUIREMENTS

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION
(Not part of American National Standard Z15.1)

1. SCOPE, PURPOSE, APPLICATIONS, EXCEPTIONS AND INTERPRE-TATIONS

1.1 Scope. This standard sets forth practices for the safe operation of motor vehicles owned or operated by organizations, including:

- Definitions
- Management, leadership and administration
- Operational environment
- Driver considerations
- Vehicle considerations
- Incident reporting and analysis

These practices are designed for use by those having the responsibility for the
administration and operation of motor vehicles as a part of organizational operations.

1.2 Purpose and Application. The purpose of this standard is to provide organizations with a document for the development of policies, procedures and management processes to control risks associated with the operation of motor vehicles. It is not intended to be a mandate for its use; it has been developed to assist organizations in defining and developing an effective safety and risk management program for managing motor vehicle operations.

This standard applies to licensed motor vehicles designed to be operated primarily on public roads.

This standard applies to the operation of organization-owned or leased vehicles, whether the vehicle is being driven on organizational business or for personal use; and the operation of rental or driver-owned vehicles for organizational purposes. It applies to persons working on behalf of the organization whose job performance requires the use of a motor vehicle.

1.3 Exceptions. This standard is not applicable to unlicensed equipment or off-road recreational vehicles.

1.4 Interpretations. Requests for interpretations of this standard shall be in writing and addressed to the Secretariat of this standard.

E1.2 Licensed motor vehicles designed primarily for use on public roads may also be operated off the road. This standard also applies to off-road use of such vehicles.

E1.3 Examples of excepted vehicles and equipment include:

- Farm equipment
- All-terrain vehicles
- Haulage trucks operated solely on industrial or mine sites
- Road construction equipment
- Snowmobiles
2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Accident. An unplanned or unintended event or series of events that may: (a) result in death, injury, loss of or damage to a system or service; (b) cause environmental damage; (c) adversely affect an activity or function.

E2.1 The term incident is preferred over accident, as the term accident suggests that the event was not preventable.


2.2 Aggressive Driving. Driving in a selfish, bold or pushy manner, without regard for the rights or safety of other users of the roadway.


2.3 Collision. An incident in which the first harmful event involves a motor vehicle in motion coming in contact with another vehicle, other property, person(s) or animal(s).


2.4 Crash. An incident involving one or more motor vehicles in motion.


2.5 Defensive Driving. Driving to save lives, time and money, in spite of the conditions around you and the actions of others.

2.6 Distracted Driving. Diversion of the driver’s attention from the task of operating a motor vehicle by activities, objects or events inside or outside the vehicle, or by factors such as emotional stress or preoccupation.

E2.7 Incidents may include, but are not limited to, events such as:

- Two vehicles coming in contact with one another
- Single-vehicle crashes
- Near-misses (close calls)
• An object falling on or from a moving motor vehicle
• Fire starting in a moving motor vehicle
• Weather-related incidents

Organizations should determine what constitutes a major incident. Thresholds for a major incident may be based on the severity of injury, environmental contamination or property damage.


2.8 Incident Rate. The number of incidents per some unit of measurement for the purpose of assessing safety performance over time or comparing performance with other organizations.

2.9 Injury. Physical harm or damage to a person resulting in the marring of appearance, personal discomfort and/or bodily harm, impairment or death.

2.10 Motor Vehicle. Any licensed mechanically or electrically powered device (except one moved by human power), not operated on rails, designed to be operated primarily on public streets and roads. Cargo and/or attachments (trailers, etc.) to a motor vehicle are considered part of that vehicle.

2.11 Organizational Vehicle. Any vehicle owned, leased or rented on behalf of the organization.


E2.10 Two-wheeled and three-wheeled vehicles (motorcycles and motor scooters) are included under the definition of a motor vehicle.

Adapted from: ANSI D15.1, Method of Recording and Measuring Motor Vehicle Fleet Accident Experience and Passenger Accident Experience.
2.12 **Passenger.** A person, other than the driver of the vehicle, who is in or on a motor vehicle.

2.13 **Preventable Collision.** One in which the driver failed to do everything that reasonably could have been done to avoid the collision.

2.14 **Remedial Training.** Training required following an incident to upgrade and renew skills and demonstrate proficiency.

2.15 **Road Rage.** A criminal offense in which a vehicle is used as a weapon with intent to do harm, or the physical assault of a driver or vehicle.

2.16 **Shall.** The term shall is used throughout ANSI/ASSE Z15.1 in accord with ANSI conventions to indicate a mandatory or required practice in terms of this standard.

2.17 **Should.** The term should is used throughout ANSI/ASSE Z15.1 in accord with ANSI conventions to indicate a recommended practice.

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E2.13 **Source:** *Defensive Driving Course.*

E2.15 **Source:** *Defensive Driving Course.*