



# NEWS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

December 11, 2018

### **Government needs to do much more to ensure commercial vehicle safety**

VICTORIA – The Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia has released a new report: *An Independent Audit of Commercial Vehicle Safety*.

On average, over the past 10 years in B.C., about 300 people per year have died in motor vehicle incidents, with almost 20% of those incidents involving a heavy commercial vehicle. Government’s road safety goal is zero fatal collisions. Everyone needs to be more aware of commercial vehicles when using the roads.

“The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General, and ICBC have commercial vehicle safety programs in place that prevent crashes and save lives, but much more needs to be done to ensure British Columbia’s roads are safe,” said Carol Bellringer, Auditor General.

Heavy commercial vehicles, such as dump trucks, container trucks and semi-trailers, represent less than 3% of vehicles registered in B.C., yet they are involved in 19% of fatal collisions in the province. In the majority of fatal collisions involving a heavy commercial vehicle, the commercial driver is not at fault.

Safety education and awareness programs for road users on safe driving in, and around, commercial vehicles can prevent crashes. However, these programs are limited in B.C. because even though multiple organizations are involved, none have the budget or authority for overall responsibility. The report recommends that government establish clear responsibility for the promotion of commercial vehicle road safety education and awareness.

Government also needs to review the standards for commercial driver licensing. In B.C., drivers are not required to take driver training to get their commercial license. Government doesn’t know whether commercial driving standards in B.C. are adequate, but has recently started to address this issue.

The report also recommends that government do more to ensure commercial vehicles are operating safely on B.C.’s roads. For example, government doesn’t have a clear and effective system to hold licensed private inspection facilities accountable for complying with commercial vehicle safety standards. Also, commercial vehicle safety and enforcement officers have a challenging job and could be more effective with better supports.



Government collects a lot of data regarding road safety, but it has not analyzed the data to know if its commercial vehicle safety programs are effective. Better data analysis would allow government to know how well its programs and activities are meeting its safety goals.

“As part of our audit, we identified a model that assesses the impact of roadside inspection and enforcement activities on commercial vehicle safety. We adapted the model for use in B.C., then used it to analyze the data collected by the B.C. government,” said Bellringer. “Over the past three years, roadside inspection and enforcement activities with commercial vehicles in B.C. prevented an estimated 1,100 crashes, including four fatalities and more than 260 injuries. Government should use this type of data analysis to set clear targets and allocate resources efficiently to meet its targets.”

Bellringer concluded by saying, “We would like to thank everyone that helped with our audit. In particular, when we were out on the roads with the commercial vehicle safety and enforcement officers, we saw how important the work they do is and how dedicated and committed they are. As well, we saw how all road users have a critical role to play in road safety. As we head into the holiday season in particular, I’d encourage everyone to review the Be Truck Aware safe driving tips.”



**Learn More:**

To view the Be Truck Aware safe driving tips, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/driving-and-cycling/road-safety-rules-and-consequences/be-truck-aware>

The full report is available on the Office of the Auditor General website at [www.bcauditor.com](http://www.bcauditor.com).

Bellringer will answer questions pertaining to the report via a news conference.

News Conference Date: December 11, 2018

Time: 11:30 a.m. (Pacific time)

Dial-in Information:

From Vancouver: 604 681-0260

From elsewhere in Canada and the USA: 1 877 353-9184

Participant Pass Code: 44848#

During question and answer period, to ask a question: Press 01

During question and answer period, to exit the question queue: Press #

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The auditor general is a non-partisan, independent officer of the legislature who reports directly to the legislative assembly. The *Auditor General Act* empowers the auditor general and staff to conduct audits, report findings and make recommendations.

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