

Your guide to the recent (and significant) changes in **ONTARIO'S CVOR SYSTEM.**

# THE SECRET CVOR FILES

BY SANDRA BAIGENT

**O**ntario's CVOR system changed dramatically on April 2, 2007, but the majority of carriers in the country won't have heard much about this. To this day—May 14—there's no current information on Ontario's Ministry of Transportation (MTO) website. What's there is just a summary of the changes. What follows below is a synopsis of the changes to the system, as offered by MTO in private discussions and from a seminar conducted by the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) in early April.

Why the Change? On Jan. 1, 2006, amendments to the federal Motor Vehicle Transport Act (MVTA) came into force, requiring each province to register, safety-rate, and monitor the on-road safety performance of only its resident carriers. All provinces and territories agreed to "harmonize" their carrier safety rating and facility audit programs.

The changes propose a fairer mechanism of performance comparison between carriers of different sizes and types of operation, but they'll demand greater internal oversight on the carrier's part. The new CVOR model takes a "proactive and predictive" approach rather than the "rehabilitative" approach of the old system. The MTO seems to be taking the approach that the majority of collisions occur not because of vehicle

defects or maintenance related issues, but driver behavior. Greater emphasis is now placed on driver-related actions than mechanical deficiencies or not-at-fault collisions as a means identifying and preventing actions that seem to lead to collisions.

The new CVOR system uses the number of kilometers traveled in Canada as the basis for assessing a carrier's exposure to on-highway risk; no longer is it based on adjusted fleet size.

Records will now include events from all across Canada, but carriers will see increased thresholds for collisions, convic-

be accurate predictors of future likelihood of collision involvement. More points are assessed under the new system for driver actions than for mechanical deficiencies.

Collision (formerly referred to as accident) points have been revamped. Additional points are no longer added if charges are laid. The maximum number of collision points now would be six.

Unlike the previous system, collisions reported to the Collision Reporting Centres can be assigned points if the officer at the Reporting Centre decides there is sufficient information available to determine prevent-

	Property Damage	Personal Injury	Fatality
<b>NON-PREVENTABLE</b>	0	0	0
<b>PREVENTABLE</b>	4	4	6

tions, and inspections. While this is good news in terms of being able to track driver performance, carriers will see points appear on their CVOR abstracts for out-of-province incidents.

### MORE TO THE POINT

The point assessment protocol reflects MTO's new emphasis on driver behavior. This thinking comes as a result of an MTO study whose findings reflect those of a study conducted by the American Transport Research Institute (ATRI) analyzing driver actions that were deemed to

ability. Drivers should be informed of this immediately and carriers should be aware that the application of collision points on their CVOR Abstract *can* be appealed through the Transportation Health and Safety Association CVOR Review Panel. For further information, visit [www.thsao.on.ca](http://www.thsao.on.ca), and click on CVOR Review.

Collision points from other jurisdictions will appear on abstracts only if the other jurisdiction forwards police accident reports to Ontario.

It is important to remember that even if a carrier has fewer collision points appear-

## CVOR System

ing, it does not mean that their measure of performance will automatically improve. At this time, it is unclear how the new system will affect carriers' thresholds. It is entirely possible that the standard could be raised.

Carriers will immediately notice that the number of points assigned (upon conviction) to offences have been changed to bring Ontario into line with other Canadian jurisdictions. CVOR points for some offences have decreased, including logbook charges, insecure load, push-rod stroke exceeding limit, failing to remain, and impaired driving. On the other hand, points for convictions on driver-related charges have increased (see sidebar). In many instances, pleading guilty to a charge with fewer CVOR points will no longer be allowed.

As is the case with collisions, it is uncertain how the new system will affect conviction ratings, but it's anticipated that carriers will be held to a much higher standard than before. Conviction points for events that took place prior to April 2, but have not yet registered a conviction, will be assigned according to old system.

## INSPECTIONS

All levels of roadside inspections (no longer limited to only Level 1) are now included on the CVOR, and points are assigned for OOS defects found for both vehicle/combination of vehicles *and* driver. If driver defects are found (improper licence, log book infractions, etc.), points will be applied.

The old two-point-per-unit-per-inspection limit has been replaced by a surcharge scheme where points are assigned for each OOS defect in each category. A surcharge of 1 point is applied for every additional category of defect found after the initial defect. For example, if three OOS defects were to be found on a vehicle, the vehicle would receive five points (three for each defect found, and two surcharge points).

How a carrier's overall violation rate is determined has changed as well. The accident threshold used to account for 50 percent of the overall violation rate, with convictions and inspection each accounting for 25 percent. Under the new system, the accident threshold and conviction

## Point Assignment Changes

The Changing Sands of Enforcement Emphasis Here's a sample of some of the point assignment changes various infractions.

SHORT FORM WORDING	OLD POINT SYSTEM	NEW POINT SYSTEM
Defective Brakes	6	3
Insecure Load	6	3
Dangerous Goods	6	3
Fail to Maintain Log	6	3
Pushrod Exceeds Limit	6	3
Pass on right	3	5
Fail to share road	4	5
Operate in left lane	1	5
Following too close	4	5
Fail to yield	3	5
Speeding	2	5
Unsafe Move	3	5

threshold each account for 40 percent of the overall violation rate.

While at first glance it would appear that carriers will benefit from some of the

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charges having fewer conviction points, carriers need to realize that conviction points have almost double the impact on the overall violation rate. This is in keeping with MTO's new emphasis on driver behaviour—based on the established relationship between convictions and future collisions.

### ABSTRACTS & AUDITS

To prevent an overnight change in a carrier's safety rating following the implementation of the new protocol, the standard two-year sliding window has been changed in that the overall violation rate will see the old and new violation rates blended together. This will remain in effect until April 2, 2009.

Under current and proposed changes to the Safety Rating System and Facility Audit program, Carriers with an overall violation rate in excess of 70 percent will be considered Conditional. It's been suggested that facility audits will only be

Pending," and have an opportunity to dispute the change in safety rating. There are specific criteria that would have to be met and the carrier must request another audit.

### WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Carriers must understand the these changes and move to protect their CVOR. Drivers must be made aware of how the increased focus on their actions and behavior will affect the fleet's CVOR. HOS monitoring must be stepped up, as will monitoring of trip-inspection reports and vehicle maintenance records—especially in light of the point surcharge system. Driver abstracts will have to be closely monitored to ensure points aren't accruing to your CVOR without your knowl-

edge. The \$5 cost to pull your CVOR every two months or so is finite in comparison to the alternative. Carriers with a violation rate of 70-percent or higher will most surely be audited with in the next 24 months.

The change in emphasis places a higher significance on driver performance, so carriers will have to become even more proactive in terms of hiring practices and driver training in order to prevent the accumulation of points as a result of driver error. Now is a good time to take a long look at your current safety program to see if it will meet the challenges created by the revised CVOR system. ▲

Sandra Baigent is a partner in E & B Paralegal Inc. She can be reached at 519-285-5438, or by e-mail at: [sandy@ebparalegal.ca](mailto:sandy@ebparalegal.ca).

**FOR MORE INFO** 

CONTACT MTO CARRIER SANCTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS OFFICE  
**800-387-7736**

#### ALSO SEE:

[www.carriersafetyrating.com](http://www.carriersafetyrating.com)  
[www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/trucks/guideline/cvor.htm](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/trucks/guideline/cvor.htm) to check for updates.  
[www.ontruck.org](http://www.ontruck.org)

conducted on carriers with an overall violation rate in excess of 50 percent, with exceptions for serious safety concerns such as fatalities wheel-offs, vehicle impoundments, etc.

Conditional carriers that fail a facility audit could be required to undergo another facility audit within 12 months. In practice this would mean that a carrier could possibly fail two audits within the 24-month period, and as such, all resulting conviction points would be considered in determining the carriers' conviction threshold and overall violation rate.

Carrier with an overall violation of rate less than 50 percent who fail an audit now will be classified as "Conditional



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