

ISSUE NUMBER

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ISSUE NAME

OOSC, Part II, Item 1. Brake System, d. Trailer Breakaway

STATUS

Closed

Vehicle Committee

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We check and activate breakaway devices in our state. One of our officers lost a court case due how it's worded in the Inspection Procedure. We also have a state law that required breakaway devices.

JUSTIFICATION OR NEED

Come inline with how it's instructed in NAS-B, the power point slide states to follow agencies policies and procedures if testing the breakaway device.

REQUEST FOR ACTION

Remove from page 10 in the Hydraulic Brake and Trailer Inspection the sentence (Do not activate the breakaway device during the inspection) Leave in (In some cases, the breakaway device on these trailers is a once application feature) Add in after, follow your agencies policies and procedures if activating the breakaway device during your inspection.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE

Whether to pull the breakaway device, or not, on an electric brake vehicle has been a topic of debate for many years. Committee members have been in agreement that no one has seen the single use device but have been hesitant to remove the guidance from the hydraulic brake bulletin. Whether to pull the device has then been left up to the individual inspector or jurisdiction. This has led to a lack of uniformity in the enforcement of the breakaway brakes on these trailers. Committee members agreed that there needs to be a uniform standard for all jurisdictions to follow. The hydraulic brake bulletin tells inspectors not to pull the breakaway while the NAS Part B course leaves it up to the jurisdiction. The question was asked as to whether or not data could be obtained on how many violations were written for a defective breakaway system. This data is not available since 393.43(d) will not be specific to electric brakes. A concern was voiced about the possibility of breaking parts when the pin is pulled. The one-time use devices have not been seen and the multi-use devices should be tested during pre-trip inspections. If the proper procedures are followed, there should not be a concern of breaking the device. One committee member stated he specifically asked a manufacturer about pulling the breakaway device because drivers had told him the manufacturers recommend not testing it. The manufacturer's response was that they are designed to be tested so testing the device roadside is not a problem.

The Committee agreed to amend the bulletin to conduct the breakaway device test. Committee members had

further discussion that the proper procedure needs to be followed when conducting the test. The amendment included the proper procedure contained in the NAS Part B course, for testing electric breakaway brakes to be added into the Inspection Bulletin 2012-04.