



## National Conference of State Fleet Administrators (NCSFA)

**Mission:** "NCSFA provides its members with proactive networking and political forum, bringing State Fleet representatives together to educate, inform, problem solve and instruct members on current fleet management policies, procedures and exchange of ideas, solutions and technology..."

### 2008 NCSFA Officers

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## NCSFA Position Statement

### NCSFA Supports the value of Government Fleet Education and Training

#### **Background:**

The management of fleet vehicles and equipment is a complex endeavor and should be taken seriously by government organizations to mitigate risks, increase safety, and reduce overall costs.

The National Conference of State Fleet Administrators (NCSFA) is a non-profit organization with approximately 200 dedicated fleet professionals. The goal of NCSFA is to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of its members through education and ongoing peer-to-peer networking opportunities. Our professional organization serves the needs of members who manage fleets of automobiles, SUVs, trucks and vans, and a wide range of specialized mobile equipment for customers in the many of the state and university owned fleets throughout the United States. NCSFA provides its Members a range of products and services, including member surveys, web site, sharing of statistical information, benchmarking, best management practices, quarterly newsletter publications, position papers, fleet professional recognition award programs, and an annual conference and trade show.

The organization was founded over 20 years ago in 1987 to promote communication, fleet management education, and individual growth among fleet professionals involved with the management of state and university fleet programs. By nature of their positions in state governments, our members are the primary decision makers in their respective organizations on matters of fleet and fuel management. Our focus has been to concentrate on building both the professional and management skills of our members and coming together to learn what is available and new from our vendors to make the fleet job more effective and efficient.

An up-to-date, safe, well-maintained vehicle and equipment management program is paramount to the overall success of a fleet management operation. State government and university vehicles operate in various capacities to provide services to the constituents they serve. The natures in which these services are provided do not always offer the most optimal terrain or conditions. As a result, today's highly-trained fleet administrators and vehicle operators cannot provide the safest possible and most reliable transportation to government employees and students with out-of-date, poorly-maintained vehicles traveling over the nation's highways and byways,

#### **Discussion:**

Over the past several years, a number of actions have been taken to improve and identify administrator training activities and highly advance curriculums. NCSFA provides access to one of the nation's premier fleet management certification program called the Certified Automotive Fleet Manager or CAFM. This certification program requires State fleet administrators to take written exams designed to test an applicant's knowledge of state laws and regulations affecting vehicle transportation. In addition, NCSFA provides annual education curricula and support materials for both new state administrators and ongoing in-service and re-certification testing and training for existing fleet administrators, often utilizing the latest technologies available. The safe operation of government vehicles is important to ensure that the people's business is conducted in an efficient and effective manner.



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Before any vehicle is driven each day, the administrator and operator are both personally responsible to ensure its safety by conducting a physical check of various vehicle systems, e.g., brakes, tires, lights, steering, etc., to ensure that all systems meet requirements for safe and proper operation. Finally, fleet administrators must attend to the unique requirements of vehicle operator and agency special needs, which frequently requires additional special training and dedication.

Selecting and training men and women to be government fleet administrators is an important task. Fleet managers must be knowledgeable about the transportation industry, have excellent management skills, be mechanically knowledgeable, and be a disciplinarian, health provider, and a mentor to others in the business. This is not an easy combination of skills and personality traits to find in individuals, but ones that are important in the selection and training of government fleet managers.

#### **Recent and Current Activities:**

A number of activities at the national level either have occurred recently or are underway.

- **The cost of fuel has exceeded \$100 per barrel and has placed a significant amount of pressure on fleet administrators to reduce overall costs while providing the same level of services required by their constituent base.**
- **The Federal Department of Energy and the fleet industry as a whole are leaning toward implementing more alternative fuel vehicle choices to lessen the impact of escalating fuel costs. These mandates require careful study and research prior to implementation and industry training is the responsibility of each organization.**
- **The nation is facing an economic downturn that requires even more diligence and special education to manage a government fleet effectively. With states facing reduced tax revenues and spending deficits elected officials often seek to reduce travel, training and education opportunities in an effort to reduce costs. In our opinion these initiatives often fall short actually increasing costs and leave fleet administrators with few options to receive much needed training and networking opportunities with peers to find creative solutions to reduce overall; fleet operational costs.**

#### **Conclusions:**

The National Conference of State Fleet Administrators supports efforts at federal, state, local and non-profit professional organization at all levels dedicated and designed to improve the education, knowledge and skills of state fleet administrators. It is further our belief that providing continuing education venues relating to fleet management is the surest way to safeguard and preserve the safety of vehicle occupants, train vehicle technicians, and reduce overall fleet costs in the organization.



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This being said, the National Conference of State Fleet Administrators recognizes that administrators entrusted to participate in fleet management training opportunities have a fiduciary responsibility to their organization to attend all training sessions provided. Further, the National Conference of State Fleet Administrators encourages its attendees to proactively share the results of each training opportunity given with their leadership to demonstrate the value and cost-reduction initiatives gained by attending such training and what it has to offer each organization.

The National Conference of State Fleet Administrators will continue to be actively involved in any federal initiatives or rulemaking activities that impact state fleet operations. The National Conference of State Fleet Administrators recognizes that the demands and scrutiny of government fleet managers have increased in recent years. For example, fleet managers must deal with government regulations and alternative fuel mandates, increasing vehicle costs, diminishing government funds, lower tax revenues, increased vehicle technologies, pressure to extend replacement intervals, and managing ongoing accident safety concerns. These factors only highlight the importance of on-going training and professional fleet management certification programs. In addition, for fleet administrators to be highly effective they must interact and network with the peers and industry leaders on a regular basis to stay abreast of cost saving initiatives and increasing technology in the fleet environment. The National Conference of State Fleet Administrators supports the investment of quality and fleet management education believes it often promotes organizational cost saving initiatives, streamlining abilities, creating synergies and innovation.

*"The greatest reward of an education is to be able to face the world with an open mind..."*  
-R.M. Sherfield

**Disclaimer:** NCSFA reserves the right as an organization to establish its opinions based on the consensus of the organization and understands that individual state government organizations, and their administrator opinions may differ from the position represented in this document.

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