Six Compelling Reasons To Return Motorist Observation Forms

Occasionally, clients will call on us to ask “why do I need to return these forms to SafetyFirst?” There are many more than six reasons, but we have summarized the most compelling reasons to follow this practice. If you have specific concerns that are not addressed in this document, talk to us – we usually work out good compromises in light of unusual circumstances.

1. **Insight.** The information that comes back to us will be used to develop your monthly trending reports. Specifically, we use the data in three ways:
   - We match the decal number to the driver who was behind the wheel at the time of the incident. This is the only way to report on drivers who are receiving multiple (repeat) complaints. We have found that the reports are not random – 80% of the drivers never get a complaint, 10% get only one, and the remainder get repeat calls. Why should you do extra work of tracking this information when our system is already set up for this task? Let us report to you who is included that small group of drivers who need the most urgent help.
   - We confirm that management did take some action on the report (we do not ask for a detailed accounting of what transpired, simply a check mark next to a broadly defined category) and the names of the driver and manager involved. This is especially helpful to corporate managers who are trying to determine which locations are pulling their weight on safety matters.
   - Trending reports are developed to show you how the fleet safety program is performing – month to month and as compared to other fleets that are engaged in your type of operation (benchmarking). Without your cooperation in returning the reports, our management summary reports are less helpful for your team.

2. **Confidentiality.** We only ask for one of three identification numbers along with the driver name – either drivers license OR employer assigned number. This is done to avoid assigning a complaint to the wrong “Jim Smith” or “Joe Jones” at your fleet. Additionally, we are only seeking a broad, categorical response on action taken, not details of discipline or training, etc.

   The information is for your use – we never sell data to others; however, your insurance carrier (if paying for the program) has a right to see this information in order to help your managers design training programs or other forms of loss control assistance. Your response typically gives your insurance provider confidence that your managers are, indeed, concerned with safety results. Some insurers may feel that the unwillingness to return reports shows a lack of commitment to safety results. Remember, your insurer is interested in reducing claim payouts – the program is dedicated to reducing collisions, these goals are virtually the identical.

3. **Financial Results.** The most comprehensive insurance carrier study ever released on this program was conducted by the actuarial department of Fireman's Fund insurance
This study had 200 fleets with over 30,000 vehicles of all types and sizes. That study documented a clear link between loss reduction and report return rates.

Those who returned a majority of reports saw a much greater reduction in loss activity than those who did not.

Additionally, another insurance carrier has documented a dramatic difference in loss results over the course of a year between SafetyFirst and three other vendors who do not assertively encourage the return of reports. This insurance carrier documented that the simple process of returning a majority of reports earned a loss reduction of $1070 per unit at a cost of $14.20 per unit – more than double the next best performance level from a vendor who only casually requests that reports be returned.

4. **Protection During Investigations.** The account should consider documenting the report investigations, even if only to place in their local paper files - why? The potential discoverability of the reports in the event of a negligent entrustment lawsuit - with documentation that the event was investigated, the file may serve as a defense but without backup (such as a returned report, or a document in file at the account) it could, potentially, aggravate such a situation. We have previously published information on Negligent Entrustment issues and would be happy to provide you with this information.

5. **Demonstrate Accountability to Drivers.** Drivers are being held accountable under the program by discussing the report details as promptly as possible. The report return process demonstrates to the drivers that managers are also accountable to deliver results with the program. The return process is simple – just sending a fax of what has been documented during the discussion with the driver. The extra step of obtaining the driver’s signature, and providing the manager’s signature on the report encourages the driver to take the coaching session seriously.

6. **Value Added.** Most vendors simply supply a product and “walk away” after the sale is made leaving the results strictly to chance. We do not sell decals, we provide a service – that service is helping your company reduce the likelihood of collisions through the coaching process. We believe that our diligence has made the difference in financial impact over our competitor’s programs, and has shown our customers to become partners with us as we help them manage the program.

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**SafetyFirst**

**Because Results Count**