



COMMERCIAL FLEET TIRE DIGEST

*The authoritative guide to reducing commercial tire expenditures from
Pressure Systems International,
the manufacturer of the Meritor Tire Inflation System by PSI™*

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T.R.E.A.D. Act - What's it all about?

PSI Celebrates the 15th Anniversary of automatic tire inflation - developed in San Antonio in 1993. Today MTIS™ by PSI is the most widely used system in North America.

TREAD Act is the acronym for "Transportation Recall Enhancement, Accountability, & Documentation Act". In 2000, the fatalities associated with the roll over of Ford Explorers equipped with Firestone tires became a major consumer safety issue, and NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) became involved. Congressional hearings were held in September of the same year culminating in the quick passage (18 hours) by Congress of the TREAD Act.

cle manufacturer intentionally violates the new reporting requirements when a safety-related defect has subsequently caused death or serious bodily injury

In addition, there are a number of other provisions which mostly address manufacturers of tires and guidance to NHTSA on reporting data for:

- Tire Labeling Standard
- Tire Testing Standards
- Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems/ Automated Tire Inflation Systems

The "Early Warning" requirement is the heart of the TREAD Act, enabling NHTSA to collect data, notice trends, and warn consumers of potential defects in vehicles.

There are no current regulations on tire pressure monitoring/inflating systems for commercial truck tires. However it's important to note that NHTSA is currently running field evaluations of various systems. It is felt that within the next few years there will be new regulations ensuring that truck tires are always run at the recommended tire inflation pressure; or at a minimum, that they have a pressure monitoring system installed.

The NHTSA website www.nhtsa.dot.gov has additional information about the TREAD Act.

Because of the acronym, the public probably thinks that the TREAD Act is only about the tread rubber on Firestone tires...but it is not. There are 3 major components:

- It requires that vehicle manufacturers report to NHTSA when they conduct a safety recall in either the US or in a foreign country
- Vehicle manufacturers need to report information related to defects, reports of injury or death related to its products, as well as other relevant data in order to comply with "Early Warning" requirements
- There is criminal liability when a vehi-

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Q & A PSI ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

Q. Can you recommend a good, reliable air pressure gauge?

A. The standard stick gauges that most people use today are accurate when they are brand new out of the box to +/- 3 PSI. That means that a tire could be measured to be 97 PSI with one gauge and the same tire could be as high as 103 PSI with another gauge. If you drop the gauge on the concrete shop floor a few times, depending on how the gauge lands and bounces, it will affect the internal spring, and the result is that the gauge accuracy will decrease. There is only one type of "Stick" gauge that is adjustable all others may not be recalibrated.

You must check the accuracy of your pressure gauges using a master gauge that can be purchased at any of the tire supply companies. If the gauge does not give the correct answer, throw it away and get a new one.