



ASK Transit

Inquiry on Operator Shoulder Harnesses

Information compiled on April 30, 2010

The Question: Has your transit agency installed the optional shoulder harness in conjunction with the lap belt for your operators? If so, what feedback are you receiving from your operators and/or what has your experience been with the shoulder harness?

Asotin County says ...Our buses have shoulder straps.

Clallam Transit says ...We have not installed optional shoulder harness', but we piggy backed on bus order with another agency that came with a shoulder harness that can be removed; however we do not consider them optional and our operators are required to use them. We are not altering the intention of usage and are not having any problems.

Columbia County Public Transportation says...We only have shoulder harnesses.

Everett Transit says... We have not. Two issues have been brought to my attention. One is that under WA codes, if the harness is installed it must be used by anyone driving the unit. Secondly, higher numbers of repetitive motion injuries occur due to Operators leaning forward for a task and being forced back when the belt tensions as it is designed to.

Grant Transit says... No, we have not.

Intercity Transit says... Our buses were installed with a shoulder harness but they were removed. I talked to several operators prior to responding to get it right from the source. They said that #1 they restricted operator movement. The flat steering wheels on our buses made for wider movement then they would allow. This would also be the case with the large blind spots on larger vehicles. They became hazards when they locked up at an improper time. We have had some complaints and, I believe, L&I claims of injury when they lock up. One driver felt that they did not fit him correctly. He went further to say that they fit some fine but others not as well.

Island Transit says...We have shoulder belts for all our cut-a-ways but not the gilligs.

Link Transit says... Some our newer vehicles are equipped with the shoulder harness in conjunction with the lap belt. In these cases the driver is required to wear both accessories. We did experience some

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problems with the retractors not functioning properly and locking up during slow, non-deliberate movements sometimes occurring during turns. The manufacturer replaced the retractor units at no cost and the problem was solved.

Mason Transit says... At this time we use only the lap belt that comes with the coaches.

Pullman Transit says...Our newer busses come with the optional shoulder harness that is not permanently attached to the clip. At this time the drivers are given the option as to whether to wear the shoulder part or not. Some of the drivers choose to wear the belt with shoulder harness and others do not. Some like it others do not. 5 of our newer buses are equipped with both the lap and shoulder belts. The shoulder belt can be detached from the lab portion and therefore work separate from each other. We have given the drivers the choice of using both or just the lap belt and most like to use only the lap belt. They tell us that the shoulder belts are uncomfortable and they feel it restricts their movements.

Skagit Transit says... No, our transit agency has not installed the shoulder harness for our Operators at this time.

Spokane Transit says...No optional shoulder harnesses installed.

Valley Transit says... Currently we only use the lap belt in our buses.

Whatcom Transit says...No, we do not have the shoulder harness, and have no plans to install them.