Las Vegas, NV – The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), the trucking industry’s not-for-profit research organization, today unveiled its list of the top ten critical issues facing the North American trucking industry.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s (FMCSA) Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) tops the list for the first time in ATRI’s annual survey of more than 4,000 trucking industry executives. The complete results were released at the 2012 Management Conference and Exhibition of the American Trucking Associations (ATA) meeting in Las Vegas, NV, the nation’s largest gathering of motor carrier executives. The ATRI Top Industry Issues report also solicited and tabulated specific strategies for addressing each issue.

Ongoing concerns with recent as well as potential changes in the federal hours-of-service regulation caused that issue to remain in the number two position for the second consecutive year. Many in the industry are concerned over how changes to the 34-hour restart provision, the addition of a mandatory rest break after 8 hours of driving, and threats to reduce total drive time will impact industry operations. Last year’s top industry issue, the economy, fell two spots this year to third place. That issue topped the list for a record three consecutive years and remains a source of concern for many in the industry. Worry over the increasing driver shortage put that issue at number four. Economic recovery, CSA and HOS changes may be contributing factors to a shrinking pool of qualified drivers according to some in the industry.

The ATA-commissioned survey results and proposed strategies will be utilized by the ATA Federation to better focus its advocacy role on behalf of the U.S. trucking industry and ATA Federation stakeholders.

"ATRI's annual survey of critical industry issues gives ATA, and all trucking stakeholders, a clearer understanding of the challenges our industry faces," said ATA chairman Dan England, Chairman of the Board, C.R. England, Inc., Salt Lake City, UT.

"As we all know, the trucking industry operates in a complex and evolving environment and we must constantly work to understand how economic and regulatory changes will impact the industry,” ATA President and CEO Bill Graves said. “By improving our understanding of the issues, we can be better stewards of the important job our industry is tasked with. ATRI’s work once again gives ATA the information we need to effectively represent the industry.”

ATRI is the trucking industry’s 501(c)(3) not-for-profit research organization. It is engaged in critical research relating to freight transportation’s essential role in maintaining a safe, secure and efficient transportation system. A copy of the survey results is available from ATRI at www.atri-online.org.

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