



DON'T GET CAUGHT OFF GUARD!

Brakes are the Single most important Safety System on a piece of equipment.

So why are Brakes the Number 1 Out of Service Violation cited in Road Side Inspections?

There are a number of reasons why ASA's go out of adjustment and continue to be the Number One Out of Service Violation in North America.

First the initial installation is very important, always follow the Manufacturer installation instructions. If an installation template is included you must use it to ensure the proper set up. ASA's are designed to maintain a proper shoe to drum clearance in all braking applications when installed correctly.

A Brake Out of Adjustment reduces the braking capability and stopping distance and is a serious safety risk in an emergency brake situation. A brake out of adjustment can have zero braking capability.

Second most drivers usually apply the brakes with 10-20% air applications under normal driving conditions. ASA's are designed to compensate for wear and adjust with full brake applications to cause the ratchet to roll over to the next peg. As the brakes wear naturally the ASA's are not compensating for the wear without the full brake applications.

Regular full brake applications with a minimum 90 PSI are needed to ensure the ASA is adjusting if all other components are working properly. An automatic slack adjuster should adjust approximately ½" with every 10 full brake applications. Keep in mind that all other components need to be working properly as well. If the ASA does adjust then it could be defective or there is

another fault in the foundation brake system that needs to be identified and corrected.

What can we do to reduce the amount of brake violations in the industry?

Brake experts recommend that as part of the driver's pre-trip inspection the driver should make a minimum of 6 full brake applications with at least 90 psi, this is called a 6 pack. The pressure may drop after a few full brake applications, so charge the system back to 90 psi or above and complete the last full brake applications. Do not pump the brakes, apply a full brake application then release and repeat the procedure. These 6 to 12 full brake applications should ensure that your ASA is adjusting.

This procedure only works if the ASA is working properly and there are no other problems in the foundation brake system. If the slack adjuster does not adjust itself then it is time to have maintenance investigate why the ASA is not adjusting.

If this procedure becomes part of drivers daily pre-trip inspection, the violations for Brakes out of Adjustment should be reduced significantly. The other benefit is if there are any other faults in the foundation brake system they can be addressed before they become a serious issue.

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