

By way of background, earlier in 2018, the NMSCA had requested a limited waiver from certain HOS regulations which was a nearly identical request to their recent application for exemption summarized in today's **Federal Register** notice. The waiver requested was for drivers employed by NMSCA member companies that are under contract to and have been issued a "Resource Order" by a Federal government agency to provide food and water services to contracted private fire-fighting companies. The 90-day waiver was approved by the FMCSA, and recently expired on October 24, 2018. The Agency had determined that granting NMSCA this waiver was in the public interest, and that the waiver was likely to achieve a level of safety equivalent to the level of safety that would be obtained in the absence of the waiver. The NMSCA added in today's exemption request that the 90-day waiver that had received from the Agency was very helpful due to the severity of wildfires in the Western states which allowed them to complete the mission of providing food, water and showers to the Nation's first responders without any disruption to public safety.

A copy of the NMSCA application for exemption is available for review in the docket for this notice.

Issued on: November 20, 2018.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2018-0135]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Hearing

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of final disposition.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces its decision to exempt 30 individuals from the hearing requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) in interstate commerce. The exemptions enable these hard of hearing and deaf individuals to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

DATES: The exemptions were applicable on October 13, 2018. The exemptions expire on October 13, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Christine A. Hydock, Chief, Medical Programs Division, (202) 366-4001, fmcamedical@dot.gov, FMCSA, Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W64-224, Washington, DC 20590-0001. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. If you have questions regarding viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services, telephone (202) 366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Participation

A. Viewing Documents and Comments

To view comments, as well as any documents mentioned in this notice as being available in the docket, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Insert the docket number, FMCSA-2018-0135, in the keyword box, and click "Search." Next, click the "Open Docket Folder" button and choose the document to review. If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket online by visiting the Docket Management Facility in Room W12-140 on the ground floor of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

B. Privacy Act

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to www.regulations.gov, as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at www.dot.gov/privacy.

II. Background

On September 10, 2018, FMCSA published a notice announcing receipt of applications from 30 individuals requesting an exemption from the hearing requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) to operate a CMV in interstate commerce and requested comments from the public (83 FR 45745). The public comment period ended on October 10, 2018, and two comments were received.

FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of these applicants and determined that granting exemptions to these individuals would achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level that would be achieved by complying with the current regulation 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11).

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding hearing found in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) states that a person is physically qualified to driver a CMV if that person first perceives a forced whispered voice in the better ear at not less than 5 feet with or without the use of a hearing aid or, if tested by use of an audiometric device, does not have an average hearing loss in the better ear greater than 40 decibels at 500 Hz, 1,000 Hz, and 2,000 Hz with or without a hearing aid when the audiometric device is calibrated to American National Standard (formerly ASA Standard) Z24.5-1951.

49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) was adopted in 1970, with a revision in 1971 to allow drivers to be qualified under this standard while wearing a hearing aid, 35 FR 6458, 6463 (April 22, 1970) and 36 FR 12857 (July 3, 1971).

III. Discussion of Comments

FMCSA received two comments in this proceeding. Vicky Johnson, of Minnesota Department of Safety, wrote there are no objections to Thomas D. Sneer receiving a hearing exemption. An anonymous commenter indicated that Donald Reamsnyder of Florida, is seeking the exemption for a B CDL with Passenger/School Bus endorsement. The Agency's Federal Hearing Exemption stipulates, that the driver granted a hearing exemption is prohibited from operating a motorcoach or bus with passengers in interstate commerce.

IV. Basis for Exemption Determination

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), FMCSA may grant an exemption for up to five years from the hearing standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) if the exemption is likely to achieve an equivalent or greater level of safety than would be achieved without the exemption. The exemption allows the applicants to operate CMVs in interstate commerce. FMCSA grants exemptions from the FMCSRs for a two-year period to align with the maximum duration of a driver's medical certification.

The Agency's decision regarding these exemption applications is based on current medical information and literature, and the 2008 Evidence Report, "Executive Summary on Hearing, Vestibular Function and Commercial Motor Driving Safety." The evidence report reached two conclusions regarding the matter of hearing loss and CMV driver safety: (1) No studies that examined the relationship between hearing loss and crash risk exclusively among CMV drivers were identified; and (2) evidence from studies of the private driver's

license holder population does not support the contention that individuals with hearing impairment are at an increased risk for a crash. In addition, the Agency reviewed each applicant's driving record found in the Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS), for commercial driver's license (CDL) holders, and inspections recorded in the Motor Carrier Management Information System (MCMIS). For non-CDL holders, the Agency reviewed the driving records from the State Driver's Licensing Agency (SDLA). Each applicant's record demonstrated a safe driving history. Based on an individual assessment of each applicant that focused on whether an equal or greater level of safety is likely to be achieved by permitting each of these drivers to drive in interstate commerce as opposed to restricting him or her to driving in intrastate commerce, the Agency believes the drivers granted this exemption have demonstrated that they do not pose a risk to public safety.

Consequently, FMCSA finds that in each case exempting these applicants from the hearing standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11) is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

V. Conditions and Requirements

The terms and conditions of the exemption are provided to the applicants in the exemption document and includes the following: (1) Each driver must report any crashes or accidents as defined in 49 CFR 390.5; (2) each driver must report all citations and convictions for disqualifying offenses under 49 CFR part 383 and 49 CFR 391 to FMCSA; and (3) each driver is prohibited from operating a motorcoach or bus with passengers in interstate commerce. The driver must also have a copy of the exemption when driving, for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local enforcement official. In addition, the exemption does not exempt the individual from meeting the applicable CDL testing requirements.

VI. Preemption

During the period the exemption is in effect, no State shall enforce any law or regulation that conflicts with this exemption with respect to a person operating under the exemption.

VII. Conclusion

Based upon its evaluation of the 30 exemption applications, FMCSA exempts the following drivers from the hearing standard, 49 CFR 391.41(b)(11), subject to the requirements cited above: David Alagna, (IL)

Matthew H. Albrecht, (PA)
Raymond Amundson, (OK)
Michael Arwood, (TN)
Jonathan D. Ball, (PA)
Gerald Bennett, (NH)
Dominick Booker, (PA)
Michael Borman, (CO)
Russel Brannan, (GA)
Gerald Buoniconti, (MA)
Luke C. Bundrum, (GA)
Steven D. Chambers, (OK)
Michael Dohanish, (OH)
Ralph K. Domel, (TX)
Jacquelyn Hetherington, (OK)
Julian Koch, (TX)
Jeremy Lampart, (SC)
Jay Larson, (TX)
Thomas E. McLaughlin, (NY)
Dustin R. Miller, (MI)
Eric D. Peer, (DE)
Jose B. Ramirez, (IL)
Donald Reamsayder, (FL)
Kenneth W. Reimer, (WI)
Troy Rolland, (TX)
Thomas D. Sneer, (MN)
Carlos Talamantes, (TX)
Kenneth Weaver, (TX)
Paul Whetstone, (AZ)
Jason Wynne, (TX)

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315, each exemption will be valid for two years from the effective date unless revoked earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be revoked if the following occurs: (1) The person fails to comply with the terms and conditions of the exemption; (2) the exemption has resulted in a lower level of safety than was maintained prior to being granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136 and 31315.

Issued on: November 20, 2018.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2018-0189]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Approval of a New Information Collection Request: Truck and Bus Maintenance Requirements and Their Impact on Safety

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995,

FMCSA announces its plan to submit the Information Collection Request (ICR) described below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for its review and approval and invites public comment. This new request titled "Truck and Bus Maintenance Requirements and Their Impact on Safety" will allow for a study that focuses on vehicle maintenance and aims to determine the impact of vehicle maintenance requirements on overall motor carrier safety. This information collection supports the DOT Strategic Goal of Safety.

DATES: Please send your comments by December 27, 2018. OMB must receive your comments by this date in order to act quickly on the ICR.

ADDRESSES: All comments should reference Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Docket Number FMCSA-2018-0189. Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the proposed information collection to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget. Comments should be addressed to the attention of the Desk Officer, Department of Transportation/Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and sent via electronic mail to oir_submission@omb.eop.gov, or faxed to (202) 395-6974, or mailed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Quon Y. Kwan, Program Manager, Technology Division, Department of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 6th Floor, West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001. Telephone: 202-385-2389; Email Address: quon.kwan@dot.gov. Office hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Truck and Bus Maintenance Requirements and Their Impact on Safety.

OMB Control Number: 2126-00XX.
Type of Request: New information collection.

Respondents: Freight motor carriers and passenger carriers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 578 respondents will complete the Online Recruitment Survey. Of those 578 respondents, 289 will also complete the Carrier Maintenance Manager Survey.

Estimated Time per Response: Varies [Online Recruitment Survey: 5 minutes.