

flight crewmembers in a single annual training and proficiency evaluation program.

*Grant, January 31, 1997, Exemption No. 6012A*

[FR Doc. 97-4064 Filed 2-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

## Maritime Administration

[Docket No. M-028]

### Application of Foreign Underwriters to Write Marine Hull Insurance

The Maritime Administration (MARAD) has received an application under 46 CFR part 249 from HIH Casualty and General Insurance Limited, an Australia based underwriter, to write marine hull insurance on subsidized and Title XI program vessels.

In accordance with 46 CFR 249.7(b), interested persons are hereby afforded an opportunity to bring to MARAD's attention any discriminatory laws or practices relating to the placement of marine hull insurance which may exist in the applicant's country of domicile.

Responses to this notice must be sent to the Secretary, Maritime Administration, Room 7300, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20509, and must be received by close of business on Wednesday, March 5, 1997.

Dated: February 13, 1997.

Joel C. Richard,

*Secretary, Maritime Administration.*

[FR Doc. 97-4062 Filed 2-18-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

## National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. 96-133, Notice 01]

### Development of Improved Driver Interview Procedures for Police Use at Checkpoints

**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice and Request for Comments on Data Collection.

**SUMMARY:** The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) plays a key role in the national effort to reduce alcohol related traffic injuries and deaths. One way the enforcement community has tried to combat this problem is by conducting sobriety checkpoints; however, there is evidence that many of the impaired drivers passing through these checkpoints are not detected by police. One component

of this study is the observation by researchers of customary police interviewing practices at sobriety checkpoints. Behaviors and cues of interviewed drivers will be linked to their breath alcohol levels to develop more effective screening procedures. Breath samples will be obtained only from drivers who volunteer to participate in this study. Current data on the best ways to improve driver interviews by police at checkpoints do not exist. NHTSA invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment the proposed data collection as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATE:** Written comments must be submitted on or before April 21, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to NHTSA, Docket Section, Room 5111, Docket #96-133, Notice 01, 400 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Marvin M. Levy, Ph.D., Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Office of Research and Traffic Records (NTS-31), Washington, DC 20590, Phone Number (202) 366-5597.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

Alcohol related traffic fatalities rose to 17,274 in 1995, 41 percent of all traffic fatalities for the year. NHTSA is committed to the development of effective programs to reduce the number of deaths and injuries related to alcohol-impaired driving. Among the law enforcement activities aimed at reducing drunk driving, sobriety checkpoints can act both as a specific deterrent, by apprehending impaired drivers passing through the checkpoint, and a general deterrent, by encouraging motorists not to drive after drinking. The success of sobriety checkpoints as a deterrent depends to a large extent on the perception of drivers that they will be caught if they have been drinking. However, past research suggests that many impaired drivers are not being detected by police at checkpoints. If drivers conclude that they may not be detected, then the effectiveness of this enforcement approach may decline. There is some evidence that police interview procedures can be improved, for impaired drivers who are stopped and still seated in their vehicle, when police use a procedure employing eye gaze nystagmus. Other cues or combination of cues may also result in improved detection rates.

The objective of this study is to develop and test an improved set of checkpoint interview procedures that

police may use to detect more effectively drivers who are at illegal blood alcohol concentrations [BACs].

##### II. Method of Data Collection

Data will be collected voluntarily at two separate sites in cooperating police jurisdictions during regularly scheduled checkpoint operations. To examine the effectiveness of cues and procedures that officers can use to detect drivers at illegal BACs, researchers will accompany officers while they are conducting routine driver interviews. Researchers will observe what the police do, by listening to the kinds of questions they ask and what motorists say in response to police inquiries, and how the drivers behave. Also, drivers will be observed for visual and other cues or signs indicative of alcohol consumption. For those drivers who have been permitted to proceed, a researcher, located downstream of the interviewing officer, will ask the driver to consent to blow into a device that measures the driver's breath alcohol. Each motorist will be assured of confidentiality. No identifiers, such as names, addresses, or license plate numbers, will be obtained regardless of whether or not the motorist agrees to cooperate. Also, no information about the results from breath alcohol testing will be provided to the police. No survey questions will be asked of drivers. The researchers will be using portable non-evidentiary quality "screening devices" to measure BAC. In the event that a driver who may be at an illegal BAC is identified, he or she will be informed of the BAC findings and provided with suggested remedies such as having a sober passenger drive, or taking a cab provided by the researchers.

##### III. Use of the Findings

The findings from researcher observations of checkpoint operations will help determine whether further development of an improved battery of police interview procedures is warranted. If the results are positive, a field test will be conducted as part of this study to determine whether the new procedures are an improvement over those customarily used by police to detect drivers at illegal BACs. Should the findings from the field test be successful, a police training package, containing the improved procedures, will be developed and disseminated to police agencies.

Improved interview procedures will help police officers at checkpoints make more accurate decisions regarding which drivers should or should not be detained for further sobriety testing.