

393.60(e)(1) to allow the installation of the RouteTracker electronic on board data event recorder on CMVs. A copy of the application is included in the docket referenced at the beginning of this notice.

Section 393.60(e)(1) of the FMCSRs prohibits the obstruction of the driver's field of view by devices mounted at the top of the windshield. Antennas, transponders and similar devices (devices) must not be mounted more than 152 mm (6 inches) below the upper edge of the windshield. These devices must be located outside the area swept by the windshield wipers and outside the driver's sight lines to the road and highway signs and signals.

Turnpike applied for the exemption because it wants to install RouteTracker devices in its customers' vehicles throughout the United States. Turnpike contends that it must be able to mount the recorder in a position that is lower on the windshield than what is currently allowed under 49 CFR 393.60(e)(1) "in order to maximize the ability of the device to collect safety and regulatory compliance data." Turnpike noted that the preferred installation location is in the lower right side of the windshield, and outside the area swept by the windshield wipers. Turnpike stated "The windshield mount is the preferred installation to prevent driver tampering and ensure twenty-four hour communication relay."

In its application, Turnpike noted that the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) submitted a petition for rulemaking to FMCSA on October 18, 2007, to amend 49 CFR 393.60(e). The CVSA petition requests that the FMCSRs be amended to permit video event recorders and similar devices that require a clear forward facing visual field to be mounted not more than 50 mm (2 inches) below the upper edge of the area swept by the windshield wipers, provided that they are located outside the driver's sight lines to the road and highway signs and signals. A copy of the CVSA petition has been placed in the docket referenced at the beginning of this notice.

Turnpike recommended that FMCSA—as a condition of the exemption if it were granted—require Turnpike to comply with the mounting provisions proposed in the CVSA petition as described above during the period of the exemption. Turnpike stated that doing so would "enable Turnpike to maximize the use of RouteTracker in collecting safety and regulatory compliance data while abiding by a mounting standard that the CVSA has determined is safe and appropriate."

On November 7, 2008, Turnpike sent FMCSA an amendment to its exemption application. Turnpike notes that its preferred mounting location is in the lower right edge of the windshield, outside the area swept by the windshield wipers and outside the driver's sight lines to the road and highway signs and signals. A copy of the amended application is included in the docket referenced at the beginning of this notice. As such, complying with CVSA's proposed mounting location—not more than 2 inches below the upper edge of the area swept by the windshield wipers—as proposed in its original application dated April 2, 2008, would not be consistent with Turnpike's preferred mounting location at the bottom right of the windshield.

The amended application requests that FMCSA grant an exemption to § 393.60(e)(2) that would permit installation of its RouteTracker device in the lower right side of the windshield, outside the area swept by the windshield wipers and outside the driver's sight lines to the road and highway signs and signals. Turnpike notes that while § 393.60(e)(2) permits CVSA inspection decals, and stickers and/or decals required under Federal or State laws to "be placed at the bottom or sides of the windshield provided such decals or stickers do not extend more than 4½ inches from the bottom of the windshield and are located outside the area swept by the windshield wipers, and outside the drivers' sight lines to the road and highway signs or signals," this section applies only to decals and stickers—and not to transponders or similar devices such as its RouteTracker device. Given that the RouteTracker device has dimensions of 4" x 3.5" x 1.25", Turnpike contends that mounting its RouteTracker device in the lower right side of the windshield and outside the drivers' sight lines to the road and highway signs or signals is consistent with that allowed for decals and stickers described above, and will not degrade safety.

Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e), FMCSA requests public comment from all interested persons on Turnpike's application for an exemption from 49 CFR 393.60. All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated at the beginning of this notice will be considered and will be available for examination in the docket at the location listed under the ADDRESSES caption of this notice. Comments received after the comment closing date

will be filed in the public docket and will be considered to the extent practicable. In addition to late comments, FMCSA will also continue to file, in the public docket, relevant information that becomes available after the comment closing date. Interested persons should continue to examine the public docket for new material.

Issued on: January 29, 2009.

Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator for Policy and
Program Development.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2002-12844; FMCSA-2002-12423; FMCSA-2004-19477]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Vision

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

ACTION: Notice of renewal of exemptions; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces its decision to renew the exemptions from the vision requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for 5 individuals. FMCSA has statutory authority to exempt individuals from the vision requirement if the exemptions granted will not compromise safety. The Agency has concluded that granting these exemption renewals will provide a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level of safety maintained without the exemptions for these commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers.

DATES: This decision is effective February 25, 2009. Comments must be received on or before March 9, 2009.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments bearing the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Docket ID FMCSA-02-12844; FMCSA-02-12423; FMCSA-04-19477, using any of the following methods.

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions for submitting comments.

- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- *Hand Delivery or Courier:* West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140,

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

- Fax: 1-202-493-2251.

Each submission must include the Agency name and the docket number for this Notice. Note that DOT posts all comments received without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information included in a comment. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> at any time or Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The FDMS is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. If you want acknowledgment that we received your comments, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard or print the acknowledgement page that appears after submitting comments on-line.

Privacy Act: Anyone may search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or of the person signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review the DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19476). This information is also available at <http://DocketInfo.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Mary D. Gunnels, Director, Medical Programs, (202) 366-4001, fmcsamedical@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. Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may renew an exemption from the vision requirements in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), which applies to drivers of CMVs in interstate commerce, for a two-year period if it finds "such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption." The procedures for requesting an exemption (including renewals) are set out in 49 CFR part 381.

Exemption Decision

This notice addresses 5 individuals who have requested a renewal of their exemption in accordance with FMCSA procedures. FMCSA has evaluated these 5 applications for renewal on their merits and decided to extend each exemption for a renewable two-year period. They are: Lester G. Kelley, II, Dennis R. O'Dell, Jr., Jerry W. Parker, Virgil A. Potts, Henry A. Shelton.

These exemptions are extended subject to the following conditions: (1) That each individual have a physical examination every year (a) by an ophthalmologist or optometrist who attests that the vision in the better eye continues to meet the standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), and (b) by a medical examiner who attests that the individual is otherwise physically qualified under 49 CFR 391.41; (2) that each individual provide a copy of the ophthalmologist's or optometrist's report to the medical examiner at the time of the annual medical examination; and (3) that each individual provide a copy of the annual medical certification to the employer for retention in the driver's qualification file and retain a copy of the certification on his/her person while driving for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local enforcement official. Each exemption will be valid for two years unless rescinded earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be rescinded if: (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 before it was granted; or (3) continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315.

Basis for Renewing Exemptions

Under 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(1), an exemption may be granted for no longer than two years from its approval date and may be renewed upon application for additional two year periods. In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, each of the 5 applicants has satisfied the entry conditions for obtaining an exemption from the vision requirements (67 FR 68719; 68 FR 2629; 69 FR 71100; 72 FR 5489; 68 8794; 70 FR 8659; 69 FR 64806; 70 FR 2705). Each of these 5 applicants has requested renewal of the exemption and has submitted evidence showing that the vision in the better eye continues to meet the standard specified at 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) and that the vision impairment is stable. In addition, a review of each record of safety while driving with the respective vision

deficiencies over the past two years indicates each applicant continues to meet the vision exemption standards. These factors provide an adequate basis for predicting each driver's ability to continue to drive safely in interstate commerce. Therefore, FMCSA concludes that extending the exemption for each renewal applicant for a period of two years is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

Request for Comments

FMCSA will review comments received at any time concerning a particular driver's safety record and determine if the continuation of the exemption is consistent with the requirements at 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315. However, FMCSA requests that interested parties with specific data concerning the safety records of these drivers submit comments by March 9, 2009.

FMCSA believes that the requirements for a renewal of an exemption under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315 can be satisfied by initially granting the renewal and then requesting and evaluating, if needed, subsequent comments submitted by interested parties. As indicated above, the Agency previously published notices of final disposition announcing its decision to exempt these 5 individuals from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10). The final decision to grant an exemption to each of these individuals was based on the merits of each case and only after careful consideration of the comments received to its notices of applications. The notices of applications stated in detail the qualifications, experience, and medical condition of each applicant for an exemption from the vision requirements. That information is available by consulting the above cited **Federal Register** publications.

Interested parties or organizations possessing information that would otherwise show that any, or all of these drivers, are not currently achieving the statutory level of safety should immediately notify FMCSA. The Agency will evaluate any adverse evidence submitted and, if safety is being compromised or if continuation of the exemption would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA will take immediate steps to revoke the exemption of a driver.

Issued on: January 29, 2009.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy and Program Development.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket ID. FMCSA-2008-0340]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Vision

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

ACTION: Notice of final disposition.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces its decision to exempt 24 individuals from the vision requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). The exemptions will enable these individuals to operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in interstate commerce without meeting the prescribed vision standard. The Agency has concluded that granting these exemptions will provide a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level of safety maintained without the exemptions for these CMV drivers.

DATES: The exemptions are effective February 5, 2009. The exemptions expire on February 7, 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Mary D. Gunnels, Director, Medical Programs, (202) 366-4001, fmcsamedical@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. Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

You may see all the comments online through the Federal Document Management System (FDMS) at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> at any time or Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The FDMS is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. If you want acknowledgment that we received your comments, please include a self-

addressed, stamped envelope or postcard or print the acknowledgement page that appears after submitting comments on-line.

Privacy Act: Anyone may search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or of the person signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review the DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19476). This information is also available at <http://Docketsinfo.dot.gov>.

Background

On December 12, 2008, FMCSA published a notice of receipt of exemption applications from certain individuals, and requested comments from the public (73 FR 75803). That notice listed 24 applicants' case histories. The 24 individuals applied for exemptions from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), for drivers who operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may grant an exemption for a 2-year period if it finds "such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption." The statute also allows the Agency to renew exemptions at the end of the 2-year period. Accordingly, FMCSA has evaluated the 24 applications on their merits and made a determination to grant exemptions to all of them. The Agency would like to publish two corrections. Mr. Bryant M. Adam's profile was published with two convictions for moving violations in a CMV for failure to obey a traffic signal when he has no convictions on his driving record. Mr. Timothy L. Kelly's name was incorrectly spelled in his profile. The comment period closed on January 12, 2009.

Vision and Driving Experience of the Applicants

The vision requirement in the FMCSRs provides:

A person is physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle if that person has distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in each eye without corrective lenses or visual acuity separately corrected to 20/40 (Snellen) or better with corrective lenses, distant binocular acuity of a least 20/40 (Snellen) in both eyes with or without corrective lenses, field of vision of at least 70° in the horizontal meridian in each eye, and the ability to recognize the colors of traffic signals and devices

showing standard red, green, and amber (49 CFR 391.41(b)(10)).

FMCSA recognizes that some drivers do not meet the vision standard, but have adapted their driving to accommodate their vision limitation and demonstrated their ability to drive safely.

The 24 exemption applicants listed in this notice are in this category. They are unable to meet the vision standard in one eye for various reasons, including amblyopia, retinal detachment, prosthesis, optic nerve hypoplasia, macular scar, central scotoma, retinal vein occlusion, retinal scar, ruptured globe and loss of vision due to trauma. In most cases, their eye conditions were not recently developed. All but 14 of the applicants were either born with their vision impairments or have had them since childhood. The 14 individuals who sustained their vision conditions as adults have had them for periods ranging from 4 to 42 years.

Although each applicant has one eye which does not meet the vision standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), each has at least 20/40 corrected vision in the other eye, and in a doctor's opinion, has sufficient vision to perform all the tasks necessary to operate a CMV. Doctors' opinions are supported by the applicants' possession of valid commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) or non-CDLs to operate CMVs. Before issuing CDLs, States subject drivers to knowledge and skills tests designed to evaluate their qualifications to operate a CMV.

All these applicants satisfied the testing standards for their State of residence. By meeting State licensing requirements, the applicants demonstrated their ability to operate a commercial vehicle, with their limited vision, to the satisfaction of the State.

While possessing a valid CDL or non-CDL, these 24 drivers have been authorized to drive a CMV in intrastate commerce, even though their vision disqualified them from driving in interstate commerce. They have driven CMVs with their limited vision for careers ranging from 4 to 64 years. In the past 3 years, three of the drivers had convictions for traffic violations and one of the drivers was involved in crashes.

The qualifications, experience, and medical condition of each applicant were stated and discussed in detail in the December 12, 2008 notice (73 FR 75803).

Basis for Exemption Determination

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may grant an exemption from the vision standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10) if the exemption is likely