SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The preliminary agenda for the meeting includes:

10–10:15 a.m. Call to Order.
10:15–10:45 a.m. Introduction and Agenda Review
10:45–11:15 a.m. Preliminary Report on Cochlear Implants
11:15–11:45 a.m. Public Comment Period
11:45–12:45 p.m. Break for Lunch
12:45–2 p.m. Update on 2007 Evidence Report on Sleep Apnea; Overview of 2007 Medical Expert Panel Opinions on Sleep Apnea
2–2:30 p.m. Review on Previous MRB recommendations on Sleep Apnea
2:30–4 p.m. Public Comment Period

Breaks will be announced on meeting day and may be adjusted according to schedule changes, other meeting requirements.

Background
The Secretary of the Department of Transportation announced on November 2, 2010, the five medical experts who serve on the MRB. Section 4116 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU, Pub. L. 109–59) requires the Secretary of Transportation with the advice of the MRB to “establish, review, and revise medical standards for operators of Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMVs) that will ensure that the physical condition of operators is adequate to enable them to operate the vehicles safely.” FMCSA is planning revisions to the physical qualification regulations of CMV drivers, and the MRB will provide the necessary science-based guidance to establish realistic and responsible medical standards.

The MRB operates in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) as announced in the Federal Register (70 FR 57642, October 3, 2005). The MRB is charged initially with the review of all current FMCSA medical standards (49 CFR 391.41), as well as proposing new science-based standards and guidelines to ensure that drivers operating CMVs in interstate commerce, as defined in CFR 390.5, are physically capable of doing so.

Meeting Participation
Attendance is open to the interested public, including medical examiners, motor carriers, drivers, and representatives of medical and scientific associations. Written comments for this MRB meeting will also be accepted beginning June 30, 2011, and continuing until July 15, 2011, and should include the docket number that is listed in the ADDRESSES section. During the MRB meeting (11:15–11:45 a.m. and 2:30–4 p.m.), oral comments may be limited depending on how many persons wish to comment; and will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis as requestors register at the meeting. The comments must directly address relevant medical and scientific issues on the MRB meeting agenda. For more information, please view the following Web site: http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mrb.

Issued on: May 5, 2011.
Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator of Policy.
[FR Doc. 2011–1157 Filed 5–10–11; 8:45 am]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[FMCSA Docket No. FMCSA–2011–0040]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Diabetes Mellitus

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

ACTION: Notice of final disposition.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces its decision to exempt seventeen individuals from its rule prohibiting persons with insulin-treated diabetes mellitus (ITDM) from operating commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in interstate commerce. The exemptions will enable these individuals to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.


FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Mary D. Gannells, Director, Medical Programs, (202) 366–4001, fmcsamedical@dot.gov, FMCSA, Room W04–224, Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., 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/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.

Privacy Act: Anyone may search the electronic form of all comments received into any of DOT’s 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, or other entity). You may review DOT’s Privacy Act Statement for the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) published in the Federal Register on January 17, 2008 (73 FR 3316), or you may visit http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E0–785.pdf.

Background
On March 29, 2011, FMCSA published a notice of receipt of Federal diabetes exemption applications from seventeen individuals and requested comments from the public (76 FR 17478). The public comment period closed on April 28, 2011 and one comment was received.

FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of the seventeen applicants and determined that granting the 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)(3).

Diabetes Mellitus and Driving Experience of the Applicants
The Agency established the current standard for diabetes in 1970 because several risk studies indicated that drivers with diabetes had a higher rate of crash involvement than the general population. The diabetes rule provides that “A person is physically qualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle if that person has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of diabetes mellitus currently requiring insulin for control” (49 CFR 391.41(b)(3)).

FMCSA established its diabetes exemption program, based on the Agency’s July 2000 study entitled “A Report to Congress on the Feasibility of a Program to Qualify Individuals with Insulin-Treated Diabetes Mellitus to Operate in Interstate Commerce as Directed by the Transportation Act for the 21st Century.” The report concluded that a safe and practicable protocol to allow some drivers with ITDM to operate CMVs is feasible.

The September 3, 2003 (68 FR 52441) Federal Register notice in conjunction with the November 8, 2005 (70 FR 67777) Federal Register notice provides the current protocol for allowing such drivers to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.
These seventeen applicants have had ITDM over a range of 1 to 28 years. These applicants report no severe hypoglycemic reactions resulting in loss of consciousness or seizure, requiring the assistance of another person, or resulting in impaired cognitive function that occurred without warning symptoms, in the past 12 months and no recurrent (2 or more) severe hypoglycemic episodes in the past 5 years. In each case, an endocrinologist verified that the driver has demonstrated a willingness to properly monitor and manage his/her diabetes mellitus, received education related to diabetes management, and is on a stable insulin regimen. These drivers report no other disqualifying conditions, including diabetes-related complications. Each meets the vision standard at 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10).

The qualifications and medical condition of each applicant were stated and discussed in detail in the March 29, 2011, Federal Register notice and they will not be repeated in this notice.

Discussion of Comment

FMCSA received one comment in this proceeding. The comment was considered and discussed below.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation stated that it had reviewed the driving record for Edward D. Boyer and are in favor of granting him a Federal diabetes exemption.

Basis for Exemption Determination

Under 49 U.S.C. 31313(e) and 31315, FMCSA may grant an exemption from the diabetes standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(3) 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.

To evaluate the effect of these exemptions on safety, FMCSA considered medical reports about the applicants’ ITDM and vision, and reviewed the treating endocrinologists’ medical opinion related to the ability of the driver to safely operate a CMV while using insulin.

Consequently, FMCSA finds that in each case exempting these applicants from the diabetes standard in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(3) is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

Conditions and Requirements

The terms and conditions of the exemption will be provided to the applicants in the exemption document and they include the following: (1) That each individual submit a quarterly monitoring checklist completed by the treating endocrinologist as well as an annual checklist with a comprehensive medical evaluation; (2) that each individual reports within 2 business days of occurrence, all episodes of severe hypoglycemia, significant complications, or inability to manage diabetes; also, any involvement in an accident or any other adverse event in a CMV or personal vehicle, whether or not it is related to an episode of hypoglycemia; (3) that each individual provide a copy of the optometrist’s or optometrist’s report to the medical examiner at the time of the annual medical evaluation; and (4) that each individual provide a copy of the annual medical certification to the employer for retention in the driver’s qualification file, or keep a copy in his/her driver’s qualification file if he/she is self-employed. The driver must also have a copy of the certification when driving, for presentation to a duly authorized Federal, State, or local enforcement official.

Conclusion


In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31313(e) and 31315 each exemption will be valid for two years unless revoked earlier by FMCSA. The exemption will be revoked 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. If the exemption is still effective at the end of the 2-year period, the person may apply to FMCSA for renewal under procedures in effect at that time.

Issued on: May 5, 2011.

Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator of Policy.

For Further Information Contact:
Assistant Director, Compliance