DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA–2013–0284]

Commercial Driver’s License Standards: Application for Exemption; Miami Nice Tours

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

ACTION: Notice of application for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces that Miami Nice Tours (Miami) has applied for an exemption from the commercial driver’s license (CDL) provisions of part 383 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) (49 CFR 350–399) for itself and 50 European drivers. Miami, a motor carrier, would employ the 50 European drivers to conduct approximately 87 motorcoach tours in the United States annually. Part 383 requires motorcoach drivers to hold a CDL issued by a U.S. State. While each driver is licensed to operate a motorcoach in his or her European country of residence, States do not issue CDLs to non-residents. Miami believes that these drivers are likely to achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to or greater than the level of safety that would be obtained if they held U.S. CDLs.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before September 16, 2013.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Federal Docket Management System Number FMCSA–2013–0284 by any of the following methods:

• Federal eRulemaking Portal: http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
• Fax: 1–202–493–2251.
• 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, DOT Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
• Instructions: All submissions must include the Agency name and docket number. For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the exemption process, see the Public Participation heading below. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to www.regulations.gov, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.
• Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to www.regulations.gov at any time and in the box labeled “SEARCH for” enter FMCSA–2013–0284 and click on the tab labeled “SEARCH.”
• Privacy Act: Anyone can search the electronic form of comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review a Privacy Act notice regarding our public dockets in the January 17, 2008, issue of the Federal Register (73 FR 3316).

• Public Participation: The Federal eRulemaking Portal is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. You can get electronic submission and retrieval help and guidelines by clicking on the word “Help” at the top of the Portal home page. If you want us to notify you that we received your comments, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard, or print the acknowledgement page that appears after submitting comments online. Comments received after the comment closing date will be included in the docket, and we will consider late comments to the extent practicable.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Thomas Yager, Chief, FMCSA Driver and Carrier Operations Division; Office of Bus and Truck Standards and Operations; Telephone: 202–366–4325. Email: MCPSD@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

FMCSA has authority under 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e) to grant exemptions from certain parts of the FMCSRs. The Agency is required to publish a notice of each exemption request in the Federal Register [49 CFR 381.315(a)]. FMCSA must provide the public an opportunity to inspect the information relevant to the application, including any safety analyses that have been conducted. The Agency must also provide an opportunity for public comment on the request.

FMCSA reviews safety analyses and public comments submitted and determines whether granting the exemption would likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level that would be achieved by the current regulation (49 CFR 381.305). The decision of the Agency must be published in the Federal Register with the reasons for denying or granting the application, and if granted, the name of the person or class of persons receiving the exemption and the regulatory provisions from which the exemption is granted [49 CFR 381.315(b) and (c)]. The notice must also specify the effective period and explain the terms and conditions of the exemption. The exemption may be renewed [49 CFR 381.300(b)].

Request for Exemption

Miami Nice Tours (Miami) is a motor carrier based in Florida and duly registered with FMCSA to transport passengers in interstate commerce. It has applied for an exemption from the
CDL provisions of part 383 of the FMCSRs for itself and 50 European drivers. It wishes to employ the foreign drivers to conduct approximately 87 motorcoach tours in the United States. Miami states that these drivers “have a long-term relationship with the passengers; the passengers simply would not book the tour without [these drivers] accompanying them. . . .” A copy of the application for exemption is in the docket listed at the beginning of this notice.

Part 383 requires motorcoach drivers to hold a CDL. The foreign drivers do not hold CDLs issued by a U.S. State, but they are licensed to operate motorcoaches in their respective country of residence (Germany, Austria, or Switzerland). Miami seeks the exemption because the foreign drivers cannot satisfy the residency requirement that all States require of applicants for a CDL. Miami states that an exemption is appropriate because Miami asserts that these drivers are likely to achieve a level of safety operating motorcoaches in the U.S. that is equivalent to or greater than the level of safety that would be obtained if they held U.S. CDLs.

Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(4) and 31136(e), FMCSA requests public comment on Miami’s application for an exemption from the CDL requirements of 49 CFR 383.23. The Agency will consider all comments received by close of business on September 16, 2013. Comments will be available for examination in the docket as explained in the ADDRESSES section of this notice under the term “Docket.”

Issued on: August 9, 2013.

Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator for Policy.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[FMCSA Docket No. FMCSA—2013–0019]

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 24 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.

DATES: The exemptions are effective August 16, 2013. The exemptions expire on August 16, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elaine M. Papp, Chief, Medical Programs Division, (202) 366–4001, fmcsamedical@dot.gov, FMCSA, Room W64–224, 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 and/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).

Background

On May 31, 2013, FMCSA published a notice of receipt of Federal diabetes exemption applications from 24 individuals and requested comments from the public (78 FR 32704). The public comment period closed on July 1, 2013, and one comment was received. FMCSA has evaluated the eligibility of the 24 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 requirement 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 24 applicants have had ITDM over a range of 1 to 38 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 requirement at 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10).

The qualifications and medical condition of each applicant were stated and discussed in detail in the May 31, 2013, Federal Register notice and they will not be repeated in this notice.

Discussion of Comments

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

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation is in favor of granting an exemption to Kyle P. Cerra, Jeffrey S. Hubbell, and Thomas R. Yecker after reviewing their driving histories.