

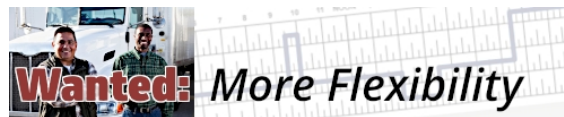


National Transportation Consultants

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Hours of Service Feedback

The proposed hours of service changes have been published and it appears as if drivers have a lot to say about them. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) held a two hour listening session in August at the truck show in Dallas. A second event will be held in Washington in September.



Most drivers expressed the desire to have even more flexibility than the proposed revisions to the regulations. For example:

30 Minute Break

The proposed changes will allow a stop logged as On-Duty Not Driving to satisfy this requirement as long as it's at least 30 minutes in duration. Some drivers felt that allowing multiple breaks that add up to 30 minutes would be beneficial. For example, two 15 minute breaks or three 10 minute breaks. Some commentators felt that stopping more frequently would help decrease fatigue and promote better driver health.

Sleeper Berth

Not surprisingly drivers are wondering why more options haven't been offered such as splitting the sleeper berth 6 and 4 hours, or five and five. Some expressed the opinion that the 5/5 split is best for teams.

Split Duty Provision

One interesting proposed change is the ability to stop the 14 hour clock by taking an Off Duty break of at least 30 minutes and not more than 3 hours. The driver could then extend the 14 hour "driving window" by the length of the break. The driver would then be required to take 10 consecutive hours off before driving again. The most likely use of this provision would be in a situation where the driver has been delayed at a customer.

Adverse Driving Conditions

The proposed change would allow drivers who encounter adverse driving conditions to extend the "driving window" up to an additional two hours. The definition of adverse driving conditions (§395.2) remains unchanged.

Short Haul

The maximum duty period has been extended to 14 hours which is a change the industry has been asking for. Currently short haul drivers who regularly exceed the 12 hour maximum may need to have an ELD. The extension to 14 hours negates this requirement. In addition the mileage radius has been increased to 150 air miles. Since an air miles are longer (6,076 feet) the 150 air mile radius works out to 172 miles.

CVSA Brake Safety Week

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) is holding its annual Brake Safety Week from September 15th through the 21st. Enforcement officials throughout North America will be conducting roadside inspections with a focus on brakes and the associated components such as hoses/tubing and ABS indicator lights. Vehicles with critical violations will be placed Out of Service.



In the 14 jurisdictions using performance-based brake testers (PBBT), vehicle braking efficiency will be measured using that tool. PBBTs determine overall vehicle braking efficiency or the total brake force over the effective total gross weight. The minimum required braking efficiency for trucks or combinations with gross vehicle weight rating above 10,000 pounds is 43.5 percent, required by 49 CFR of the code of Federal regulations and the CVSA North American Standard Out-of-Service Criteria.

This past May, CVSA sponsored a one day enforcement blitz also focusing on brakes. A total of 10,358 trucks were inspected. Out of those 16.1% (1,667 trucks) had critical violations and were placed out of service. Based on data gathered from 1.8 million inspections performed in 2019, the top five brake related violations were:

- Clamp or roto type brake out of adjustment
- Automatic brake adjustment system fails to compensate for wear
- Brake hose or tubing chafing and/or kinking
- No or defective ABS malfunction indicator lamp for trailer
- Inoperative / Defective brakes

New Crash Causation Study

Over a three year period from 2001 to 2003 the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration collected data on serious and fatal heavy truck crashes. This study was known as the Large Truck Crash Causation Study.

The data collected contained information about the vehicles, drivers and environment. Over the years many studies have been based on this data. However, the data is now 16 years old and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) has asked the Senate to fund a new study to help identify the root causes of current crashes to assist in the design of enforcement and safety programs.

Collin Mooney, CVSA's executive director, said in his request, "... technology, drug usage and passenger and commercial motor vehicle safety features have drastically altered highway safety, and crash causation needs to be re-examined through a new study." Mooney said a typical crash report would only state that a driver failed to yield at a stop sign, resulting in a crash. However, a comprehensive, in-depth study could find that the driver didn't start applying the brakes early enough because he was distracted by a cellphone, or that a vehicle's brakes were not functioning properly, extending stopping distance.

The previous study did contain valuable information and offered an insight into the root causes of crashes, far beyond the information contained in the typical police accident report. This is worthwhile project that deserves an updated study to gain insight into how crash causation may have changed over the years.

Roadcheck 2019 Results

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Administration (CVSA) has released the results of June's International Roadcheck. Over a period of three days over 67,000 inspections were completed resulting in 17.9% of the vehicles and 4.2% of the drivers being placed out of service. The Canadian out of service was 19.9% for vehicles and 2% for drivers. This year's focus was on steering and suspension systems. Inspectors identified 408 steering (2.5% of all out-of-service vehicle violations) and 703 suspension (4.3% of all out-of-service vehicle violations) out-of-service vehicle conditions.

Vehicle Results

The top five categories that accounted for 88% of the vehicles placed vehicles out of service were:

1. Braking systems
2. Tires and wheels
3. Brake adjustment
4. Cargo securement
5. Lighting devices

Driver Results

The top five categories that accounted for 93% of the drivers placed vehicles out of service were:

1. Hours of service
2. Wrong class license
3. False logs
4. Other
5. Suspended license

It's interesting to note that hours of service was the number one reason for drivers being placed out of service. It's important to remember that ELDs don't prevent violations, they just do an excellent job of recording them. This makes

the roadside inspector's job much easier. As far as "wrong class license" this most likely stems from the fact that all types and sizes of commercial motor vehicles are inspected, down to a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 pounds.

Seatbelt Results

Inspectors also discovered 748 seat belt violations. According to FMCSA, the overall safety belt usage rate for drivers of medium- and heavy-duty trucks and motorcoaches was 86% in 2016. Keep in mind that seat belt violations carry a high violation point value in CSA.

Hazardous Materials

The top five categories that accounted for 93% of the out of service for vehicles carrying hazardous materials were:

1. Loading
2. Shipping papers
3. Placarding
4. Markings
5. Bulk Packagings

Motorcoach Results

During International Roadcheck, 823 motorcoaches were inspected. 47 (5.7%) were placed out of service. 21 motorcoach drivers (2.6%) had out-of-service conditions. For motorcoach inspections, in addition to the standard critical vehicle inspection items, inspectors also check emergency exits, electrical cables and systems in engine and battery compartments, and seating (temporary and aisle seats).

Since its inception in 1988, more than 1.7 million roadside inspections have been conducted during International Roadcheck campaigns. International Roadcheck is a CVSA program with participation by FMCSA, Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Transport Canada and Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes (SCT) (Ministry of Communications and Transportation) of Mexico.

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