

Transportation Safety Training Newsletter

Committee makes entry-level training recommendations

The committee tasked with crafting entry-level driver training recommendations as part of a negotiated rulemaking process has completed its work.

The Entry-Level Driver Training Advisory Committee (ELDTAC) is recommending to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) that entry-level drivers complete a training program, prior to completing the skills test for a Class A or Class B commercial driver's license (CDL), or a

passenger bus, school bus, or hazardous materials endorsement.

The training would be provided by a training provider who appears on an FMCSA-administered registry.

The core curricula for Class A and Class B training programs would include theory/knowledge and behind-the-wheel segments.

Theory/Knowledge

Theory/knowledge could be taught either online or in a classroom, and must be based upon a core curriculum with a written

knowledge test administered to measure competence in this area of instruction. ELDTAC did not prescribe a recommended length of time to be spent on the theory/knowledge instruction.

Behind-the-wheel

ELDTAC is recommending that Class A CDL trainees receive a minimum of 30 hours of behind-the-wheel training including a minimum of 10 hours on the range, 10 hours on the road, and 10 road

see 'Recommendations' pg. 2

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Carrier fitness proposal at OMB

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) long-awaited motor carrier safety fitness determination proposal has arrived at the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review.

The proposed regulation would change the way a motor carrier receives a safety rating from FMCSA. A motor carrier safety rating determines whether a motor carrier is fit to operate commercial motor vehicles in interstate commerce.



The proposed process is expected to be based on a data-driven model under FMCSA's Compliance, Safety, Accountability (CSA) enforcement program. The data would come from five of the CSA program's Behavioral Analysis and Safety Improvement Categories (BASICs).

The current safety rating process is based on a compliance review. The proposal arrived at OMB on June 23, 2015. OMB review is expected to take about 90 days. This is one of the final steps before the proposal is published in the *Federal Register*.



HOS exemption granted

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has granted an exemption to the 30-minute break provision to drivers operating oversize/overweight (OS/OW) loads when certain criteria are met.

This recently issued exemption enables all specialized carriers and drivers responsible for the interstate transportation of loads that exceed normal weight and dimensional limits (OS/OW loads) and require a permit issued by a government authority, to be exempt from the 30-minute rest break provision in Sec. 395.3(a)(3)(ii) of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs).

In order to use the exemption, certain criteria must be met.

1. Drivers must have a copy of the exemption document (either the *Federal Register* Notice or copy of the Approval Letter that was sent to the group that applied for the exemption, the Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association (SC&RA)) in their possession while operating under the terms of the exemption. The

exemption document must be presented to law enforcement officials upon request.

The following link will take you to the *Federal Register* document via the U.S.

Government Printing Office (GPO) website: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-18/pdf/2015-15018.pdf>

2. All motor carriers operating under this exemption must have a "Satisfactory" safety rating with FMCSA, or be "unrated." Motor carriers with "Conditional" or "Unsatisfactory" FMCSA safety ratings are prohibited from using this exemption.
3. All motor carriers operating under this exemption must have Safety Measurement System (SMS) scores below FMCSA's intervention thresholds, as displayed at <http://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/sms/>.

The exemption also includes an accident reporting requirement for a motor carrier that has a driver involved in an accident while using the exemption.

The exemption is effective June 18, 2015, and expires on June 18, 2017.

More veterans obtain CDLs

More than 10,000 veterans and active duty personnel have now taken advantage of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Military Skills Test Waiver Program.

In the first three years of the Military Skills Test Waiver Program, approximately 6,000 former military personnel obtained a civilian commercial driver's license (CDL).

In the past 12 months alone, another 4,000 individuals, including Reserves, National Guard, and U.S. Coast Guard service members, have taken advantage of the program.

The Military Skills Test Waiver Program, which began in 2011, grants state licensing agencies, including the District of Columbia, the authority to waive the skills test portion of the CDL application for active duty or recently separated veterans who possess at least two years of safe driving experience operating a military truck or bus.

Additional information is available via FMCSA's website: www.fmcsa.dot.gov.

'Recommendations' from pg. 1 trips of no less than 50 minutes each.

ELDTAC is recommending that Class B CDL trainees receive a minimum of 15 hours of behind-the-wheel (road and range driving) including a minimum of 7 hours of road driving.

The recommendations have been forwarded to FMCSA to use in creating a proposed entry-level driver training rule. FMCSA has tentatively set an October 15, 2015 date for publication of a proposal.

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**Q****&****A**

Your entry-level driver training questions

The topic of entry-level driver training has been in the headlines lately, and has generated many questions; some about what's next for this training requirement and some about the requirements that are currently in place.

In this edition of Q & A we will address some of the questions we have recently received on this topic.

Upcoming proposal

Q: Is it true that a committee is going to write the entry-level driver training rule?

A: The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) took a slightly different approach in developing the upcoming proposal, using a negotiated rulemaking process.

The negotiated rulemaking process involved 26 individuals representing a cross-section of motor carrier interests. These 26 individuals formed an advisory committee, meeting on a regular basis. Their task was to come to a consensus on specific aspects of what will become the proposed rulemaking including new classroom and behind-the wheel training standards.

The advisory committee has finished its work and has submitted its recommendations to FMCSA. The agency will use

these recommendations to help write the proposed rule.

Q: I heard that the entry-level driver training rule is going to change soon. Is this true?

A: FMCSA expects to publish a proposed rule in October 2015 and a final rule in 2016.

The current requirements

Q: Since FMCSA is working on a new rule, do we still have to follow the current/old rule?

A: Yes, compliance with the entry-level driver training regulation, located in Part 380, Subpart E, is required.

Q: Is there a time line as to how soon an entry-level driver must be trained?

A: An entry-level driver must complete training prior to operating a commercial motor vehicle requiring a commercial driver's license (CDL) in interstate commerce.

Q: We currently have a driver who operates non-CDL vehicles for our company. He has done this for us for about two years, and has a perfect driving record; no accidents and no tickets or citations.

He will be getting his CDL in the near future so he can operate our larger vehicles. Will he

need to complete entry-level driver training?

A: Yes, this driver needs to complete entry-level driver training. Though he has driven for your company for two years and has a solid driving record, he has not operated vehicles that require a CDL in interstate commerce.

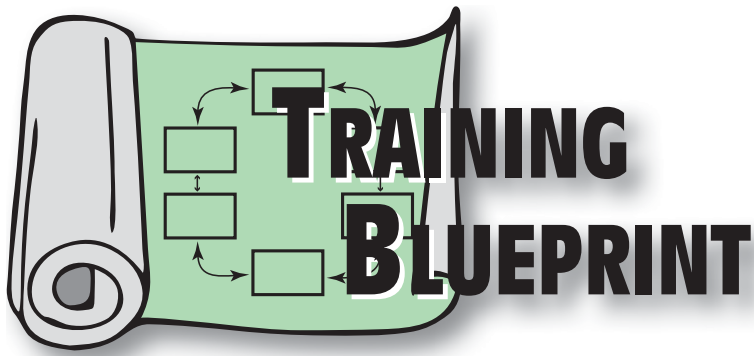
Q: I cannot find anything in the regulations addressing how to provide entry-level driver training. Can it be done via a computer based training program or must it be done in an instructor led environment?

A: The regulations do not address method of delivery. Any manner that conveys the required information is acceptable.

Q: What qualifications must the trainer meet to present or provide the training?

A: The regulations do not address trainer qualifications.





School zone safety: Understanding the hazards

Over the next several weeks, millions of children will be starting a new school year. As kids head back to the classroom, it is important that your drivers understand the hazards they may face when sharing the road with children and school buses.

What is a school zone?

A school zone is a section of roadway near a school or school crosswalk where signs provide notice that a school is nearby and children may be present. In a school zone, the posted speed limit is greatly reduced.

When driving through a school zone and in the area surrounding a school, a driver's undivided attention needs to be on the road, looking out for potential hazards. He/she must:

- Slow down;
- Obey all traffic laws;
- Follow the posted speed limit; and
- Obey the signals of crossing guards.

A driver should watch for children walking or bicycling on the roads or sidewalks near a school as well as children gathering and playing near bus stops. This includes

watching for children who are in a hurry to get to or leave school and are not paying attention to what is going on around them, including on the road.

Pay attention/drive defensively

The best way a driver can prevent an accident is by being alert, paying attention, and following



defensive driving practices when driving in a school zone. This includes:

- Continually scanning the road;
- Slowing down, especially in school zones and surrounding areas;
- Obeying traffic laws;
- Watching for children walking or biking near a school;
- Watching for children gathering near bus stops;
- Preparing to stop for a school bus when its yellow lights are flashing;
- Stopping for a school bus when its red lights are flashing; and
- Expecting the unexpected.



Trainer's Note: *Stress the importance of defensive driving when in or near school zones.*

School bus safety

According to statistics provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), between 2003 and 2012, there were 1,353 people killed in school-transportation-related crashes. That is an average of 135 deaths per year.

Occupants of school transportation vehicles accounted for 8 percent of the fatalities, non-occupants (pedestrians, bicyclists) accounted for 21 percent of the fatalities.

Occupants of other vehicles involved accounted for the majority of fatalities (71 percent).

Between 2003 and 2012, 119 school-age pedestrians (younger than 19 years old) died in school-transportation-related crashes. Over one-quarter (30 percent) were



struck by other vehicles (cars, light trucks, vans, large trucks) involved in the crashes.

About one-third (35 percent) of school age pedestrians killed were between 5 and 7 years old.

There are several factors that cause younger children to be at greater risk of being involved in an accident. Younger children are smaller and more difficult to see, as the driver's view of them may be blocked by a school bus or other large vehicle.

Younger children can be impulsive and may cross a road or street without warning. Also, they have a more difficult time judging vehicle speed.

Younger children may not fully understand the dangers posed by moving vehicles and may expect vehicles to stop for them when their school bus stops.

School bus laws

All states have laws in place to protect children as they board and exit school buses. Though specifics vary from state-to-state, there are standard rules that apply everywhere.

Never pass a school bus when its lights are flashing and its stop arm is

extended. This means children are boarding or exiting the bus.

Never pass a school bus on the right side. This is where children enter and exit the bus.

In many states, school bus drivers can report illegally passing vehicles. The illegal action does not need to be observed by law enforcement for a driver to be cited.

Trainer's Note: *Review the laws that apply to this topic for the states your drivers travel through.*

Know the flashing light system

School bus drivers use the "flashing signal light system" to alert motorists of pending actions.

Yellow flashing lights indicate that the bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children. Drivers must slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.

Red flashing lights and an extended stop arm indicate that the bus has stopped and that children are getting on or off the bus.

Drivers must stop and wait until:

- The red lights stop flashing;
- The stop arm is withdrawn; and
- The bus begins to move.

Trainer's Note: *Make sure your drivers understand the flashing light system. Stress the importance of obeying these signals.*

Conclude your training with a question and answer session.



Ways to evaluate training effectiveness

You conduct training on a regular basis. Your training covers everything from regulatory issues to safe driving to company policy and procedure.

The program appears to be solid, but are your drivers maintaining and applying the information presented?

Evaluation of your training session can help in determining the level of learning that took place and whether the session helped to improve driver job performance. The following are a few ways you can evaluate your training session.

Pre-tests and post-tests

Pre-tests and post-tests are one way trainers evaluate their drivers' level of understanding prior to and at the conclusion of training.

The pre-test gives you an idea of your drivers' current understanding and/or any misunderstanding of the subject being presented.

It also helps you identify areas that you should focus on during the session.

In addition to serving as a review of your session, the post-test helps you evaluate its

effectiveness. Use it in conjunction with the pre-test to identify any area(s) that may require you to provide additional education and/or training.

Feedback

As you get close to the conclusion of your session, distribute a survey/questionnaire.

Consider doing this prior to your closing remarks and make sure you leave time for your drivers to complete the survey.

Doing this after closing remarks or asking drivers to complete the survey after the scheduled ending time for the training session does not leave enough time for drivers to provide thoughtful feedback.

When creating the survey, make sure it includes both open and closed questions about how the drivers are using what they learned in class. This will help you determine the relevance and appropriateness of the topic(s) presented.

Supervisor observations

Supervisors are a good resource. They are able to observe a driver's



TRAINING Tip

performance before and after a training session and note changes or improvements.

Make sure your supervisors are aware of your training schedule, the subjects being taught. If possible, provide a copy of your training materials.

After the training session, reach out to your supervisors on a periodic basis to check on driver progress when it comes to the topics presented.

Measure performance

Compare safety, productivity, or quality measures for the month before and the month after the training.

Again, at the end of six months, compare these same measures to the results for the month prior to and after the training. Look for improvement as well as problems/issues that should be addressed with refresher training.



DRIVER ISSUES

Instructor's Notes

This month's edition of "Driver Issues" addresses school zone safety. Over the next several weeks, millions of children will be returning to the classroom. Now is a good time to review this topic with your drivers.

The first page addresses safe driving practices all drivers, including professional drivers, should follow when traveling through and/or near school zones.

The second page is a brief quiz. It allows you to determine your drivers' level of understanding on this topic.

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Note: Quiz answers — 1.) C, 2.) A, 3.) D, 4.) B, 5.) A



When driving in a school zone

- Slow down
- Obey all traffic laws
- Follow the posted speed limit
- Obey crossing guard signals/directions

Pay attention/drive defensively

- Continually scan the road
- Watch for children walking or biking
- Watch for children gathering near bus stops
- Prepare to stop when a school bus' yellow lights are flashing
- Stop when a school bus' red lights are flashing
- Always expect the unexpected



SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

DRIVER ISSUES



Directions: Read each statement carefully and mark the response that best answers the question.

1. When driving in a school zone:

- A. It is acceptable to drive 10 mph above the posted speed limit
- B. It is acceptable to drive 15 mph above the posted limit
- C. Slow down and follow the posted speed limit
- D. All of the above

2. When driving in a school zone, always obey the crossing guard's signals and directions.

- A. True
- B. False

3. When driving in a school zone:

- A. Continually scan the road
- B. Watch for children walking or biking
- C. Drive defensively
- D. All of the above

4. When a school bus' yellow lights are flashing, you should speed up and get past the bus before it stops.

- A. True
- B. False

5. When a school bus' red lights are flashing, you should stop.

- A. True
- B. False

Name: _____ Date: _____

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