

Description of Respondents:
Applicants who warrant Disaster Declaration.

Responses: 40.

Annual Burden: 249.

Jacqueline White,

Chief, Administrative Information Branch.

[FR Doc. 04-3791 Filed 2-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025-01-M

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Declaration of Disaster #3564]

State of Ohio (Amendment #2)

In accordance with a notice received from the Department of Homeland Security—Federal Emergency Management Agency, effective February 13, 2004, the above numbered declaration is hereby amended to include Belmont County as a disaster area due to damages caused by severe storms, flooding, mudslides, and landslides occurring on January 3, 2004, and continuing through January 30, 2004.

In addition, applications for economic injury loans from small businesses located in the contiguous county of Marshall in the State of West Virginia may be filed until the specified date at the previously designated location. All other counties contiguous to the above named primary county have been previously declared.

All other information remains the same, *i.e.*, the deadline for filing applications for physical damage is March 26, 2004, and for economic injury the deadline is October 26, 2004.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 59002 and 59008)

Dated: February 17, 2004.

S. George Camp,

Acting Associate Administrator for Disaster Assistance.

[FR Doc. 04-3843 Filed 2-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8025-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket Nos. FMCSA-99-5578, FMCSA-99-5748, FMCSA-99-6156, FMCSA-2000-7918]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Vision

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

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

SUMMARY: This notice publishes the FMCSA decision to renew the exemptions from the vision requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for 16 individuals. The FMCSA has statutory authority to exempt individuals from vision standards if the exemptions granted will not compromise safety. The agency has concluded that granting these exemptions will provide a level of safety that will be 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 March 7, 2004. Comments from interested persons should be submitted by March 24, 2004.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by DOT DMS docket numbers FMCSA-99-5578, FMCSA-99-5748, FMCSA-99-6156, and FMCSA-2000-7918 by any of the following methods:

- Web site: <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site.

- Fax: 1-202-493-2251.

- Mail: Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Nassif Building, Room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- Hand delivery: Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

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

Instructions: All submissions must include the agency name and docket numbers for this notice. For detailed instructions on submitting comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, *see* the Public Participation heading of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this document. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://dms.dot.gov>, including any personal information provided. Please *see* the Privacy Act heading under Regulatory Notices.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to <http://>

dms.dot.gov at any time or to Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Sandra Zywockarte, Office of Bus and Truck Standards and Operations, (202) 366-2987, FMCSA, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public Participation: The DMS is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. You can get electronic submission and retrieval help guidelines under the "help" section of the DMS Web site. 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 on-line.

Privacy Act: Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all 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 the Department of Transportation's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (volume 65, number 70, pages 19477-78), or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Exemption Decision

Under 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e), the FMCSA may renew an exemption from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), which applies to drivers of CMVs in interstate commerce, 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 procedures for requesting an exemption (including renewals) are set out in 49 CFR part 381. This notice addresses 16 individuals who have requested renewal of their exemptions in a timely manner. The FMCSA has evaluated these 16 applications for renewal on their merits and decided to extend each exemption for a renewable 2-year period. They are:

Herman L. Bailey, Jr.
Mark A. Baisden
Brad T. Braegger

Myles E. Lane, Sr.
Dennis J. Lessard
Harry R. Littlejohn

George L. Silvia.
James D. Simon.
Wayland O. Timberlake.

Clifford H. Dovel
 Daniel R. Franks
 Victor B. Hawks

Craig W. Miller
 Martin D. Ortiz

Robert J. Townsley.
 Jeffrey G. Wuensch.

These exemptions are extended subject to the following conditions: (1) That each individual have a physical exam 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 2 years unless rescinded earlier by the 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. 31315 and 31136(e).

Basis for Renewing Exemptions

Under 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(1), an exemption may be granted for no longer than 2 years from its approval date and may be renewed upon application for additional 2-year periods. In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e), each of the 16 applicants has satisfied the entry conditions for obtaining an exemption from the vision requirements (64 FR 27027, 64 FR 51568, 66 FR 63289, 67 FR 10475, 64 FR 40404, 64 FR 66962, 64 FR 54948, 65 FR 159, 65 FR 66286, 66 FR 13825). Each of these 16 applicants has requested timely 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 2 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, the FMCSA concludes that extending the exemption for each renewal applicant for a period of 2 years is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

Comments

The 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. 31315 and 31136(e). However, the FMCSA requests that interested parties with specific data concerning the safety records of these drivers submit comments by March 24, 2004.

In the past the FMCSA has received comments from Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates) expressing continued opposition to the FMCSA's procedures for renewing exemptions from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10). Specifically, Advocates objects to the agency's extension of the exemptions without any opportunity for public comment prior to the decision to renew, and reliance on a summary statement of evidence to make its decision to extend the exemption of each driver.

The issues raised by Advocates were addressed at length in 66 FR 17994 (April 4, 2001). The FMCSA continues to find its exemption process appropriate to the statutory and regulatory requirements.

Issued on: February 17, 2004.

Pamela M. Pelcovits,

Director, Policy, Plans, and Regulations.

[FR Doc. 04-3758 Filed 2-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-EX-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Rail Corridor—Richmond, VA to Hampton Roads (via Williamsburg to Newport News, VA and via Petersburg to Norfolk, VA)

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The FRA is issuing this notice to advise the public that FRA and the

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Richmond to Hampton Roads High Speed Rail Corridor. The EIS will evaluate potential alternatives for higher-speed rail service in both the Richmond-Petersburg-South Hampton Roads Corridor and the existing Amtrak corridor from Richmond to Williamsburg to Newport News, providing rail connections to the Southeast, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions as part of the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) Corridor.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of alternatives and impacts considered should be sent to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation by May 15, 2004, at the address below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Christopher Bonanti, Environmental Program Manager, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), 400 Seventh Street, SW., MS 20, Washington, DC 20590, telephone (202) 493-6383; or Mr. Alan Tobias, Manager of Passenger Rail Programs, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, P.O. Box 590, Richmond, VA, 23218-0590, telephone (804) 786-1063.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FRA, in cooperation with the VDRPT, will prepare a Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Richmond to Hampton Roads High Speed Rail Corridor. The project will evaluate potential alternatives and potential environmental impacts for higher-speed rail service within the project study area. The project study area generally follows the Richmond-Petersburg-South Hampton Roads Corridor and the existing Amtrak corridor from Richmond to Williamsburg to Newport News. This rail service would serve as an extension of the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) Corridor, providing rail connections to the Southeast, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions.

Multiple service and alignment alternatives exist within the project study area to connect the Hampton Roads region to the Main Street Station in Richmond, Virginia, which is the study terminus for intercity rail service connections to the Southeast, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. FRA and the VDRPT will address project issues and alternatives in environmental documentation prepared as part of the Alternatives Analysis and Tier I EIS.