



NEWS RELEASE

NEW FMCSA RULING: HOURS OF SERVICE FOR TRUCK DRIVERS

WASHINGTON - The nation's 3.5 million truck drivers will be limited to driving for only 11 hours and working for no more than 14 hours each day under a new rule issued today by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The final rule is based on an exhaustive scientific review and designed to ensure truck drivers get the necessary rest to perform safe operations and the quality of life they deserve, the agency's Administrator, John Hill, noted.

"This rule was designed to continue the downward trend in truck fatalities and maintain motor carrier operational efficiencies," said Administrator Hill. "Our science is meticulous and our analysis exhaustive so that we can deliver definitive results: more alert and efficient drivers, safer roads, and even fewer fatalities."

The agency consulted with scientific and medial researchers, reviewed existing fatigue research and worked with organizations like the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies and the National Institute for Occupational Safety in setting the final "Hours of Service" rules, Administrator Hill noted.

He added that the new federal rule requires all truck drivers to spend at least 10 hours resting between shifts before being allowed back on the road. Drivers also cannot operate a truck if they have worked more than 60 hours in a given week. Under the new rules, drivers that rest for at least 34 hours can also reset their weekly work schedule.

"These rules are crafted to match what we know about drivers' circadian rhythms and the real world work environment truckers face every day," said Administrator Hill.

Hill said the rule would build on safety improvements already under way among the nation's truck operators. He noted, for example, that the number of large truck fatalities declined for the third year in a row in 2007 with 4,808 fatalities, down from 5,240 in 2005. Meanwhile, safety data show that between 2004 and 2006, there was only one fatigue-related fatality that occurred during a truck driver's eleventh hour behind the wheel.

Hill also noted that in 2006 the Agency proposed a rule that would require drivers and trucking companies with serious or repeat hours-of-service violations to track their hours-of-service using electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs). The final rule for EOBRs is pending.

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