



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**[4910-EX-P]**

**Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**

**[Docket No. FMCSA-2013-0275]**

**Hours of Service of Drivers: U.S. Department of Defense (DOD); Application for Renewal of Exemption**

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

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

**SUMMARY:** FMCSA announces its decision to renew the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's (SDDC) exemption from the minimum 30-minute rest break provision of the Agency's hours-of-service (HOS) regulations for commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers contracted by SDDC for special activities. SDDC currently holds an exemption valid through October 27, 2018. The exemption renewal is for five years and allows SDDC contracted-drivers to use 30 minutes or more of attendance time to meet the HOS rest break requirements, provided they do not perform any other work during the break. The terms and conditions of the current exemption remain in place for the five-year period.

**DATES:** The renewed exemption is effective through October 21, 2023. Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER.]

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments identified by Federal Docket Management System Number FMCSA-2013-0275 by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** [www.regulations.gov](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, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., between 9 a.m. and 5 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](http://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](http://www.regulations.gov) at any time and in the box labeled “SEARCH for” enter FMCSA-2013-0275 and click on the tab labeled “SEARCH.”

Privacy Act: In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at [www.dot.gov/privacy](http://www.dot.gov/privacy).

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 under the “help” section of the Federal eRulemaking Portal 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 online.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Thomas Yager, Chief, FMCSA Driver and Carrier Operations Division; Office of Carrier, Driver and Vehicle Safety Standards; Telephone: 614-942-6477. E-mail: [MCPSD@dot.gov](mailto:MCPSD@dot.gov). If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services, telephone (202) 366-9826.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **I. Public Participation and Request for Comments**

FMCSA encourages you to participate by submitting comments and related materials.

#### Submitting Comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this notice (FMCSA-2013-0275), indicate the specific section of this document to which the comment applies, and provide a reason for suggestions or recommendations. You may submit your comments and material online or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. FMCSA recommends that you include your name and a mailing address, an e-mail address, or a phone number in the body of your document so the Agency can contact you if it has questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and put the docket number, "FMCSA-2013-0275" in the "Keyword" box, and click "Search." When the new screen appears, click on "Comment Now!" button and type your comment into the text box in the following screen. Choose whether you are submitting your comment as an

individual or on behalf of a third party and then submit. If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit comments by mail and would like to know that they reached the facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. FMCSA will consider all comments and material received during the comment period and may continue this exemption or not based on your comments.

## **II. Legal Basis**

FMCSA has authority under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315 to grant exemptions from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. FMCSA must publish a notice of each exemption request in the **Federal Register** (49 CFR 381.315(a)). The Agency 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.

The Agency reviews the safety analyses and the public comments, 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** (49 CFR 381.315(b)) with the reason for the grant or denial, and, if granted, the specific person or class of persons receiving the exemption, and the regulatory provision or provisions from which exemption is granted. The notice must also specify the effective period of the exemption (up to 5 years), and explain the terms and conditions of the exemption. The exemption may be renewed (49 CFR 381.300(b)).

### **III. Background**

On December 27, 2011 (76 FR 81133), FMCSA published a final rule amending its HOS regulations for drivers of property-carrying CMVs. The final rule adopted several changes to the HOS regulations including a new provision requiring drivers to take a rest break of at least 30 minutes during the work day under certain circumstances.

FMCSA did not specify when drivers must take the break, but the rule requires that they wait no longer than 8 hours after the last off-duty period of 30 minutes or more to take it if they want to drive a CMV. Drivers who already take shorter breaks during the work day could comply with the rule by extending one of those breaks to 30 minutes. The new requirement took effect on July 1, 2013.

### **IV. Application for Renewal Exemption**

The SDDC manages the motor carrier industry contracts for the DOD. Certain motor carriers under contract to the SDDC provide protective services while transporting weapons, munitions, and sensitive/classified cargo.

SDDC's initial exemption application for relief from the HOS rest break requirement was submitted in 2013; a copy of the application is in the docket identified at the beginning of this notice. That application describes fully the nature of the operations of SDDC's contracted drivers. FMCSA published a notice granting the exemption request on October 28, 2013 (effective October 22), and made it valid through October 21, 2015 (78 FR 64265). The Agency renewed the exemption on October 7, 2015 (80 FR 60740), with an expiration date of October 21, 2017. However, section 5206(b)(2)(A) of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act

extended any HOS exemption in effect on the date of enactment of that Act for a period of 5 years from the date the exemption was granted. Because section 1003 of the FAST Act made the provisions of Division A (which includes section 5206) retroactively effective to October 1, 2015, the original SDDC exemption, valid through October 21, 2015, was extended by operation of law for 5 years from the date it was granted, in other words through October 21, 2018.

The SDDC requests renewal of a limited exemption from the HOS regulation pertaining to rest breaks [49 CFR 395.3(a)(3)(ii)] to allow SDDC-contracted drivers providing dual driver-protective services to be treated the same as drivers transporting explosives. As provided in § 395.1(q), operators of CMVs carrying Division 1.1, 1.2, or 1.3 explosives subject to the requirement for a minimum 30-minute rest break in Section 395.3(a)(3)(ii) may use 30 minutes or more of “attendance time” to meet the requirement for a rest break.

#### **V. Method to Ensure an Equivalent or Greater Level of Safety**

SDDC states that it requires continuous attendance and surveillance of such shipments until they reach their final destination. SDDC states that it has instituted several technical and administrative controls to ensure the efficient transportation of cargo requiring protective services, controls that would remain in effect under the requested exemption. They include the following:

- Conducting review of carrier compliance requirements and procedures for moving hazardous cargo.
- Evaluating carrier authority to operate on United States roadways.

- Evaluating carrier compliance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Compliance Safety Accountability Program Safety Measurement System standards.
- Providing over-the-road vehicle surveillance.
- Inspecting carrier facilities and corporate headquarters for compliance with DOD and DOT standards.

Further details regarding SDDC's safety controls can be found in its initial application for exemption. The application can be accessed in the docket identified at the beginning of this notice. SDDC asserts that granting the exemption would allow driver teams to manage their en route rest periods efficiently and also perform mandated shipment security surveillance, resulting in both safe driving performance and greater security of cargo during long-distance trips.

SDDC anticipates no safety impacts from this exemption and believes that its contract employee drivers should be allowed to follow the requirements in § 395.1(q) when transporting shipments of sensitive DOD cargo. SDDC believes that shipments made under the requested exemption would achieve a level of safety and security that is at least equivalent to that which would be obtained by following the normal break requirement in § 395.3(a)(3)(ii).

SDDC indicated that approximately 1,942 power units and 3,000 drivers would be covered by the exemption. The renewed exemption is effective for 5 years, the maximum period allowed by § 381.300.

## **VI. Terms of the Exemption**

1. Drivers authorized by SDDC to utilize the exemption renewal, must have a copy of the exemption document in their possession while operating under the terms

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

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.

#### Period of the Exemption

The exemption from the requirements of 49 CFR 395.3(a)(3)(ii) is effective from 12:01 a.m., October 22, 2018, through 11:59 p.m., October 21, 2023.

#### Extent of the Exemption

The exemption is restricted to SDDC’s contract driver-employees transporting security-sensitive materials. This exemption is limited to the provisions of 49 CFR 395.3(a)(3)(ii) and allows contract driver-employees transporting security-sensitive materials to be treated the same as drivers transporting explosives, as provided in Section 395.1(q). These drivers are required to comply with all other applicable provisions of the FMCSRs.

#### Preemption

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31313(d), as implemented by 49 CFR 381.600, during the period this exemption is in effect, no State shall enforce any law or regulation applicable to interstate commerce that conflicts with or is inconsistent with this exemption with respect to a firm or person operating under the exemption. States may, but are not required to, adopt the same exemption with respect to operations in intrastate commerce.

#### FMCSA Accident Notification



SDDC must notify FMCSA within 5 business days of any accidents (as defined by 49 CFR 390.5) involving the operation of any of its CMVs while utilizing this exemption. The notification must be by email to [MCPSD@DOT.GOV](mailto:MCPSD@DOT.GOV), and include the following information:

- a. Name of the Exemption: "SDDC"
- b. Date of the accident,
- c. City or town, and State, in which the accident occurred, or which is closest to the scene of the accident,
- d. Driver's name and driver's license State, number, and class,
- e. Co-Driver's name and driver's license State, number, and class,
- f. Vehicle company number and power unit license plate State and number,
- g. Number of individuals suffering physical injury,
- h. Number of fatalities,
- i. The police-reported cause of the accident,
- j. Whether the driver was cited for violation of any traffic laws, or motor carrier safety regulations, and
- k. The total driving time and the total on-duty time of the CMV driver at the time of the accident.

In addition, if there are any injuries or fatalities, the carrier must forward the police accident report to [MCPSD@DOT.GOV](mailto:MCPSD@DOT.GOV) as soon as available.

Termination

The FMCSA does not believe the drivers covered by this exemption will experience any deterioration of their safety record. However, should this occur, FMCSA will take all steps necessary to protect the public interest, including revocation or restriction of the exemption. The FMCSA will immediately revoke or restrict the exemption for failure to comply with its terms and conditions.

**Issued on:** October 16, 2017.

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Daphne Y. Jefferson,  
Deputy Administrator.

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