



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2026-0199]

#### **Parts and Accessories Necessary for Safe Operation; Application for Exemption From Truck-Lite Co. LLC**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of final disposition; grant of application for exemption.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announces its decision to grant Truck-Lite Co. LLC's (Truck-Lite) application for a limited 5-year exemption to allow motor carriers to install Truck-Lite and/or sister company ECCO auxiliary amber brake-activated pulsating lamps on the rear of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in addition to the steady-burning brake lamps required by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). The Agency has determined that granting the exemption would likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level of safety provided by the regulation.

**DATES:** The exemption is effective May 29, 2026 and expires **June 3, 2031**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. José R. Cestero, Mechanical Engineer, FMCSA Vehicle and Roadside Operations Division, Office of Carrier, Driver and Vehicle Safety Standards; [MCPSV@dot.gov](mailto:MCPSV@dot.gov). If you have any questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services, telephone (202) 366-9826.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **I. Public Participation**

##### **Viewing Comments and Documents**

To view any documents mentioned as being available in the docket, go to <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FMCSA-2026-0199/document> and choose the

document to review. To view comments, click this notice, then click “Document Comments.” If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket online by visiting Dockets Operations on the ground floor of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, W58-213, Washington, DC 20590-0001, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 366-9317 or (202) 366-9826 before visiting Dockets Operations.

## **II. Legal Basis**

FMCSA has authority under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b) to grant exemptions from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). 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 the applicant’s safety analysis. The Agency must provide an opportunity for public comment on the request.

The Agency reviews applications, safety analyses, and public comments submitted and determines whether granting the exemption would likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption, pursuant to the standard set forth in 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(1). The Agency must publish its decision in the Federal Register (49 CFR 381.315(b)). If granted, the notice will identify the regulatory provision(s) from which the exempted parties will be exempt, the effective period, and all terms and conditions of the exemption (49 CFR 381.315(c)(1)). If the exemption is denied, the notice will explain the reason for the denial (49 CFR 381.315(c)(2)). The exemption may be renewed (49 CFR 381.300(b)).

## **III. Background**

### *Current Regulatory Requirements*

FMCSA requires in 49 CFR 393.25(e) that all exterior lamps (both required lamps and any additional lamps) shall be steady-burning with the exception of turn signal

lamps; hazard warning signal lamps; school bus warning lamps; amber warning lamps or flashing warning lamps on tow trucks and commercial motor vehicles transporting oversized loads; and warning lamps on emergency and service vehicles authorized by State or local authorities.

#### *Applicant's Request*

Truck-Lite's application for exemption was described in detail in a Federal Register notice published on February 18, 2026 (91 FR 7621) and will not be repeated as the facts have not changed.

#### **IV. Public Comments**

FMCSA received eighteen comments in response to the Truck-Lite application for exemption. Thirteen commenters supported the request, while five opposed it or raised concerns.

Supporters included Summit Fleet Services/DFW Reefer, Maverick Transportation, LLC, PITT OHIO, the American Trucking Associations (ATA), and several other fleet operators and individuals. These commenters stated that brake-activated pulsating lamps improve rear conspicuity and enhance safety by increasing driver awareness and reducing the likelihood of rear-end collisions. Summit Fleet Services/DFW Reefer and Brad Umphress referenced operational experience indicating reductions in rear-end crashes following the installation of pulsating or flashing rear lighting systems. Maverick Transportation, LLC, Tim Gates, and ATA cited research suggesting that modulated lighting is more attention-getting than steady-burning lamps and can improve driver reaction time, particularly in conditions involving low visibility, adverse weather, or high levels of driver distraction. Oakley Transport Inc., PITT OHIO, Case Farms Ohio, and Steve Enos emphasized increased visibility and improved driver awareness in real-world operations. ATA also encouraged FMCSA to work with industry

stakeholders to develop recommended practices regarding lamp characteristics such as color, placement, intensity, and operating patterns.

Commenters opposing the exemption or raising concerns included Citizens for Transportation Safety, the Transportation Safety Policy Institute (TSPI), AWM Associates, LLC, and two individuals. Citizens for Transportation Safety stated that the use of amber brake-activated lighting conflicts with established color conventions in which red signals braking and amber signals caution, noting that widespread use of amber lighting in escort vehicles, service vehicles, and construction zones reinforces amber as a non-braking signal. TSPI raised concerns regarding compliance with 49 CFR 393.11 and the incorporation of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 108, noting that the petition did not explicitly request relief from applicable rear lamp color requirements and may be inconsistent with existing regulatory color standards. Patrick Hunt and AWM Associates, LLC expressed concerns regarding glare, visual discomfort, and distraction, particularly under nighttime or stop-and-go traffic conditions, and the intensity of high-output LED lighting systems. One individual also warned that high-intensity LED lighting may cause momentary blindness or visual impairment in close-range traffic conditions.

Other commenters, including Mark Sabol and the ATA, provided additional observations regarding implementation and consistency. These commenters suggested that exemptions should be applied consistently across manufacturers and that further development of performance standards or recommended practices—such as brightness, placement, and operating characteristics—may be beneficial to support safe and uniform deployment of pulsating rear lighting technologies.

## **V. FMCSA Decision**

FMCSA has evaluated Truck-Lite's exemption application materials along with the comments received. The Agency has determined that granting a temporary exemption

to allow motor carriers to install Truck-Lite and/or ECCO (both owned by Clarience Technologies) auxiliary amber brake-activated pulsating lamps on the rear of CMVs in addition to the steady-burning brake lamps required by the FMCSRs at location or locations specified in Section VI.B., would likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level of safety achieved without the exemption.

Rear-end crashes generally account for approximately 30 percent of all crashes. These types of crashes often result from a failure to respond (or delays in responding) to a stopped or decelerating lead vehicle. Data between 2010 and 2016 show that large trucks are consistently three times more likely than other vehicles to be struck in the rear in two-vehicle fatal crashes.<sup>1,2</sup>

Research conducted by both FMCSA and NHTSA explored alternative rear signaling systems to address this issue. Specifically, FMCSA conducted research and development on Enhanced Rear Signaling (ERS) systems, which showed the ability of flashing lamps to draw visual attention. However, FMCSA ultimately decided not to pursue formal field operational testing of the prototype system due to concerns about implementation costs and fleets' willingness to invest in the technology. Nonetheless, the preliminary research showed that the ERS system performed well at detecting and signaling rear-end crash threats and drawing the gaze of following-vehicle drivers to the forward roadway which, if implemented, could potentially reduce the number and frequency of rear-end crashes into the rear of CMVs.

Separately, NHTSA has performed a series of research studies intended to develop and evaluate rear signaling applications designed to draw drivers' visual

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2012), Traffic Safety Facts – 2010 Data; Large Trucks, Report No. DOT HS 811 628, Washington, DC (June 2012).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2018), Traffic Safety Facts – 2016 Data; Large Trucks, Report No. DOT HS 812 497, Washington, DC (May 2018).

attention to the forward roadway.<sup>3</sup> The research demonstrated that people rated flashing all lights simultaneously or alternately flashing as attention-getting, even at levels of brightness within the current regulated limits.

In addition, NHTSA has conducted research on the effectiveness of rear turn signal color on the likelihood of being involved in a rear-end crash.<sup>4</sup> FMVSS No. 108 allows rear turn signals to be either red or amber in color. The study showed that amber signals show a 5.3 percent effectiveness in reducing involvement in two-vehicle crashes where a lead vehicle is struck from the rear in the act of turning left, turning right, merging into traffic, changing lanes, or entering/leaving a parking space. The advantage of amber rear turn signals was shown to be statistically significant.

FMCSA acknowledges the concerns raised by Citizens for Transportation Safety, the Transportation Safety Policy Institute (TSPI), Patrick Hunt, AWM Associates, LLC, and other commenters, regarding the use of amber lighting to convey braking events, potential driver confusion, compliance with 49 CFR 393.11, and the potential for glare or distraction.

FMCSA notes that the auxiliary lamps described in the application are not intended to replace the required rear stop lamps, which remain steady-burning and red in color, but rather to supplement those lamps. While the auxiliary lamps are not required under 49 CFR 393.11, when they are activated by the service brake system, they are subject to the steady-burning requirement under 49 CFR 393.25(e), which applies to both required and additional exterior lamps. As such, an exemption is appropriate when a

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2009), Traffic Safety Facts – Vehicle Safety Research Notes, Assessing the Attention-Gettingness of Brake Signals: Evaluation of Optimized Candidate Enhanced Braking Signals, Report No. DOT HS 811 129, Washington, DC (May 2009).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2009), Evaluation of Enhanced Brake Lights Using Surrogate Safety Metrics, Report No. DOT HS 811 127, Washington, DC (April 2009).

motor carrier seeks to use a non-steady-burning lamp that is otherwise regulated under this provision.

FMCSA further notes that the auxiliary lamps operate for a limited duration—pulsating for up to four seconds upon brake application before transitioning to a steady-burning red signal. The Agency finds that, because the required red brake lamps remain the primary braking signal, the use of an auxiliary amber pulsating lamp in addition to those required lamps does not alter the fundamental meaning of the braking signal conveyed to following drivers.

In conclusion, FMCSA is not aware of any evidence indicating that the use of auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamps—when operated under previously granted exemptions and in compliance with the applicable terms and conditions of those exemptions—has resulted in adverse safety impacts. Considering the available research, prior exemptions involving similar technologies, the supplemental nature of the auxiliary lamps, and the information provided in the application, FMCSA concludes that the installation of Truck-Lite and/or ECCO auxiliary amber brake-activated pulsating lamps on the rear of CMVs in addition to the steady-burning brake lamps required by the FMCSRs is likely to achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level of safety achieved without the exemption.

## **VI. Exemption**

### **A. Applicability of Exemption**

During the exemption period, motor carriers operating CMVs may install and use Truck-Lite and/or ECCO auxiliary amber brake-activated pulsating lamps in addition to the steady-burning brake lamps required by FMCSRs at locations specified in VI.B.

### **B. Terms and Conditions**

1. This exemption applies only to motor carriers operating CMVs equipped with Truck-Lite and/or ECCO auxiliary amber brake-activated pulsating lamps under the terms and conditions herein.
2. Motor carriers operating under this exemption may use Truck-Lite and/or ECCO auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamps in the following configurations on CMVs:
  - a. Upper Pair: Two auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamps centered about the trailer's centerline, positioned 6-12 inches from the centerline of the outermost identification (ID) lamps, and collinear with the three-ID-lamp cluster.
  - b. Single Lower Lamp: One auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamp centrally located on or below the rear sill, collinear with the stop/tail/turn lamps.
  - c. Upper Pair + Single Lower Lamp: Both the upper pair (as described in (1)) and a single auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamp (as described in (2)).
  - d. Lower Pair: Two auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamps centered about the trailer's centerline, located on or below the rear sill.
  - e. Upper Pair + Lower Pair: Both the upper pair (as described in (1)) and the lower pair (as described in (4)).
3. The Truck-Lite and/or ECCO auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamps used under this exemption must:
  - a. Be amber in color and function as a Class II strobe (pulsate) for up to four seconds when the brake is applied.
  - b. Transition to a steady red for the duration of the brake circuit activation.
  - c. Remain off when the brake circuit is inactive.
  - d. Be in addition to the steady-burning brake lamps required by the FMCSRs.
4. Truck-Lite is required to provide a list of the USDOT numbers of the motor carriers using Truck-Lite and/or ECCO auxiliary brake-activated pulsating lamps to

MCPSV@dot.gov on an annual basis beginning 12 months after the effective date of this notice.

5. Truck-Lite must meet with FMCSA on request to answer questions regarding reporting requirements provided under the exemption.

### **C. Preemption**

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(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.

### **VII. Termination**

FMCSA does not believe the motor carriers covered by this exemption will experience any deterioration of their safety record. However, the exemption will be revoked if: (1) Truck-Lite, ECCO, or motor carriers using Truck-Lite or ECCO pulsating lamps under the exemption fail 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 Title 49, chapter 313 or section 31136.

**Derek D. Barrs,**  
*Administrator.*

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