



# Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

Improving uniformity in commercial motor vehicle safety and enforcement

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February 2, 2018

Docket Management Facility  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
West Building, Ground Floor  
Room W12-140  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Docket Comments: Docket Number FMCSA-2017-0373  
*Hours of Service of Drivers: Application for Exemption; STC, Inc.*

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) respectfully submits the following comments regarding STC's application for an exemption from the requirement that motor carriers equip their vehicles with electronic logging devices (ELDs).

CVSA is a nonprofit association comprised of local, state, provincial, territorial and federal commercial motor vehicle safety officials and industry representatives. The Alliance aims to achieve uniformity, compatibility and reciprocity of commercial motor vehicle inspections and enforcement by certified inspectors dedicated to driver and vehicle safety. Our mission is to improve commercial motor vehicle safety and uniformity throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico by providing guidance and education to enforcement, industry and policy makers.

CVSA strongly opposes the exemption request. First and foremost, exemptions from federal safety regulations have the potential to undermine safety, while also complicating the enforcement process. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and the Hazardous Materials Regulations exist to ensure that those operating in the transportation industry are equipped to do so safely.

The federal hours-of-service requirements exist to help prevent and manage driver fatigue. While it's true that we cannot regulate sleep, the hours-of-service rules set forth a framework that, if followed, allows for drivers to get the rest necessary to operate their vehicles safely. Unfortunately, hours-of-service violations continue to be some of the most frequently found violations by enforcement officials, who conduct roadside safety inspections. What this tells us is that too many drivers and motor carriers either don't understand the hours-of-service rules or are intentionally violating them – and, as a result, undermining safety. Deployment of ELDs will help address both of these issues.

For those drivers and motor carriers who don't understand the intricacies of the hours-of-service requirements and for those who make the occasional mistake when using their paper log, ELDs will remove the guess work and the risk of human error. This will result in better compliance and fewer violations. For those who are using their log books to find 'wobble room' in the current hours-of-service regulations, ELDs will make it easier for inspectors to identify violations and take unsafe, noncompliant carriers and drivers off the roadways. The devices will also save time for both inspectors and drivers, leading to more efficiency.

CVSA does not believe that STC's arguments in support of an exemption have merit. Exemptions should be awarded only when there is a proven, *critical* need. The seasonal nature of STC's business is not a justification for exemption from a critical safety requirement. STC also argues that the company will be negatively impacted by the cost of implementation. However, there are many inexpensive ELDs available for purchase. The cost of an ELD is simply part of the cost of doing business and compliance for those in the truck and bus industries – vehicles have to be maintained, drivers have to be trained and ELDs have to be installed. The ELD requirement will save both the enforcement community and the motor carrier industry time, effort and financial resources, reducing the amount of time a driver spends documenting their hours and reducing the time required for a roadside inspection.

In their request, STC also asserts that the continued use of paper logs will allow the company to maintain a level of safety equivalent to the use of ELDs. However, FMCSA's own research has determined that the use of ELDs will provide an improved level of safety, which is the basis for the requirement in the first place. Therefore, simply continuing the use of paper logs with no additional safety measures or oversight activities cannot result in a level of safety equivalent to the use of ELDs.

Every new exemption is an opportunity for confusion and inconsistency in enforcement, which undermines the foundation of the federal commercial motor vehicle enforcement program—uniformity. More confusion will ultimately lead to less enforcement on our highways.

If you have further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 301-830-6149 or by email at [collinm@cvsa.org](mailto:collinm@cvsa.org).

Respectfully,



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Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance