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March 16, 1993

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Director  
Environmental, Safety  
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FHWA-97-2176

FHWA Docket No. MC-92-10  
Room 4232  
HCC-10  
Office of Chief Counsel  
Federal Highway Administration  
400 Seventh Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20590

AC 114

RE: ANPRM: Training for LCV Operators  
58 ER 4638  
January 15, 1993

Dear Sir or Madam:

Pennzoil is a natural resources company engaged in the exploration, production, refining, and marketing of petroleum products; the operation of quick lube facilities; and the mining and sales of sulphur. Pennzoil operates a refinery in Utah that utilizes longer combination vehicles (LCVs). We thank the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for the opportunity to comment on its advance notice of proposed r&making (ANPRM) concerning training requirements for operators of LCVs. Our responses correspond to the question numbers used in the ANPRM.

In general, Pennzoil believes that the LCV training requirements should apply **only** to LCV drivers. FHWA should not require drivers who do not drive LCVs to obtain LCV training and certification.

**1. Should the definition of LCV that will be used to develop a training requirement include vehicles not covered by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)? How should FHWA define the term "LCV?"**

Pennzoil suggests that FHWA develop a training program that includes all LCV (commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) with two trailers or CMVs with more than two trailers) trailer combinations regardless of operating weights or overall lengths. Training requirements should include all configurations of LCV truck/tractor combinations. However, Pennzoil suggests that the training program remain flexible so that FHWA can include appropriate exemptions as yet undetermined.

The handling characteristics of combination vehicles are similar and require similar driver training (except for the vehicles mentioned in our response to question 13). By

DOCKET MC-92-10-7  
PAGE 1 OF 4



developing a training program that includes all types of trailer combinations, FHWA will ensure that drivers need only one LCV training course to operate all types of LCV vehicles. On the other hand, if FHWA adopts a narrow definition of LCV, drivers may be required to attend different training courses in order to operate substantially similar vehicles. A training program that covers all types of vehicles will minimize the paperwork burden and also eliminate repetitive training classes.

**2. What difficulties would the ISTEA definition create from an enforcement standpoint, in distinguishing which vehicles meet the definition and in determining which drivers must comply with any LCV training requirements?**

If FHWA adopts our suggested definition of LCV, the enforcement problems mentioned in this section of the ANPRM would be eliminated. Under Pennzoil's proposed definition, enforcement would be simplified because it would not require the measuring and weighing of LCVs. Instead, an inspector could monitor compliance by noting proper licensing of the driver. Pennzoil also suggests that vehicle or driver papers list any exemptions that may apply to the LCV.

**3. What should the FHWA's role be in assuring that the training is carried out according to minimum standards?**

FHWA's role should be to determine the completion of training requirements. Such a determination could be accomplished through the existing commercial driver's license (CDL) program. Pennzoil suggests that FHWA require LCV driver applicants to produce proof of completed training when applying for or renewing a CDL. Only applicants who drive LCVs should be required to submit proof of completed LCV training requirements. Pennzoil also suggests LCV instructors file records with FHWA and state agencies listing the drivers who have completed the required training in their course. The filing of such records will provide a mechanism for FHWA to confirm completion of training requirements.

**4. What standards are necessary to ensure that instructors have been adequately and properly trained and are carrying out their training responsibilities in an acceptable manner?**

Pennzoil believes that instructors should be capable teachers who are knowledgeable in all CDL requirements. Training should include instruction on the handling characteristics of LCVs as well as instruction on the regulatory requirements. Pennzoil suggests that FHWA require instructors of the driving portion of the training course to have a minimum of 5 years of experience with combination units. Instructors of the regulatory portion of the course do not need driving experience, but should be experts in the regulatory requirements.

Pennzoil also believes that instructors should be tested on a periodic basis - perhaps once every one to three years - to determine competency and regulatory knowledge. Such periodic testing will enhance highway safety by ensuring that drivers receive effective and current training.

DOCKET mc-92-10-7  
PAGE 2 OF 4



**5. Should the initial licensing of LCV instructors and certification of LCV drivers be accomplished by a Federal or State agency?**

The preferred licensing would be through the FHWA in order to establish a uniform standard for the licensing of drivers and the certification of instructors. FHWA should establish a uniform national training standard because a national standard will ensure that drivers trained in one state are qualified to drive in another state.

Although FHWA should develop a national training course, Pennzoil also suggests that the training course cover the regulatory requirements of different states. Instructors should provide drivers with a course book that lists the requirements in different states. The national training standards should also include instruction designed to cover particular regional driving problems and requirements. For instance, drivers trained in the Rocky Mountain states should be knowledgeable about the special problems and regulatory requirements that face drivers in the Rocky Mountain area.

**6. What Federal, State, or local agency should have the responsibility for assuring that the requirements of LCV training are met? Who should be held accountable if training requirements are not met?**

Pennzoil believes that enforcement of LCV training should be handled through the Department of Transportation (DOT). DOT should provide individuals who have completed the training with a certificate verifying the completion of training. Pennzoil suggests that individuals assume accountability for the completion of training requirements. The CDL program also requires drivers to assume responsibility for the completion of training requirements.

**7. Should nonprofit, private organizations be authorized to evaluate and certify the adequacy of LCV training programs?**

Pennzoil believes that nonprofit organizations could be authorized to evaluate and certify programs only if FHWA establishes strict guidelines for the evaluation.

**8. What types of LCV driver training programs exist?**

Pennzoil does not believe LCV driver programs exist in the Utah area. The only training programs available in Utah cover tractor and single trailer units.

**9. Should the implementation of minimum training requirements be "phased-in" over time?**

Pennzoil suggests that FHWA implement the training program over a one year period. The one year period would not only provide sufficient time for existing schools to adapt their curriculum, but also provide enough time for western states to establish new schools.

DOCKET MC-92-10-7  
PAGE 3 OF 4

Pennzoil also suggests that FHWA phase-in the requirement for drivers to obtain training and certification over at least a two year period. The two year period should provide enough time for drivers to obtain certification.

**10. Should LCV training be a prerequisite for a double/triple trailer endorsement on a CDL?**

Pennzoil believes that LCV training should be a prerequisite for the attainment or renewal of a double/triple trailer endorsement on the CDL.

**11. Should LCV drivers be required to have previous experience with single trailer vehicles?**

Pennzoil believes that previous driving experience is important for the safe handling of LCVs. Therefore, Pennzoil suggests that all LCV drivers possess a minimum of one year of experience with a single trailer vehicle.

**12. How often should LCV training be offered/repeated for both instructors and drivers?**

Pennzoil believes that FHWA should require refresher training for drivers no more frequently than every four years. Such refresher training would ensure driver awareness of regulatory changes. Repeat training for instructors should be required only in the event of either technological or training changes that occur after the initial training.

**13. Do specialized vehicle combinations such as triples or those handling special cargo require different training standards?**

Specialized vehicle combinations, normally used to handle special cargo, have different handling and maneuvering characteristics. Therefore, Pennzoil believes that specialized vehicle combinations require different training standards. Pennzoil suggests that FHWA include training for special vehicles in the general LCV training program. Training programs could cover specialized vehicle combinations at the end of the general training for drivers who handle such vehicles. Pennzoil does not recommend that FHWA require drivers to attend separate training programs for specialized vehicle combinations. Such training can be adequately addressed during the general training.

Again, Pennzoil appreciates the opportunity to comment on the ANPRM concerning training requirements for LCV operators. We sincerely hope that these comments aid in the development of a comprehensive and effective LCV training standard that will improve highway safety.

Very truly yours,



By S.J.H. Manekshaw

DOCKET MC-92-10-7  
PAGE 4 OF 4