

QA-17999

August 11, 1993

FHWA Docket No. MC-93-12
Room 4232, HCC-10
Office of Chief Council
Federal Highway Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

7:26

FHWA-97-2/99-36

Re: "Training for all Entry Level Drivers of Commercial Motor Vehicles."

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter is in response to the above proposed rulemaking, and the associated request for information concerning the training of experienced CMV drivers receive.

In 1968, I was interested in a career in the motor carrier industry, specifically, I thought I would like a job in the trucking industry, as a driver.

Not knowing anything about the industry, or anyone associated with the industry, I felt that my only way "in" was to seek vocational training at a commercial training facility.

This training was invaluable to me, as it afforded me the opportunity to learn the basic skills that were required to obtain a job within the industry. These skills have, over the years, proven to be invaluable to me, and many of my co-workers, in obtaining some of the best jobs the industry has had to offer.

Although the curriculum has undoubtedly been expanded and improved over the years, I have no doubt that there may still be room for improvement, as the industry, and the motor carriers within the industry, are going through many changes within their own operations.

In my own particular case, the training I have received as an employee of several motor carriers, both less-than-truckload and truck-load, has contributed to making me a more knowledgable driver, and a more professional driver.

This additional training has included, at various times, bi-monthly safety seminars and meetings on such subjects as: overhead clearances and obstructions, maneuvering CMVs in traffic, and positioning for deliveries, hazardous materials knowledge of regulations and emergency preparedness, economic fuel operations, and customer relations.

Also, throughout the past eighteen years, I have been afforded the opportunity to participate in 13 sponsored Truck Driving Championships, which has sharpened my knowledge and driving skills. This experience itself, I believe, was instrumental in obtaining superior employment on at least one occasion.

Answering the question: "what would the public consider to be an entry level driver?," it is my opinion that an "entry level driver" would be one who has completed the basic "model curriculum for training tractor-trailor drivers," as prescribed by the FHWA, as a first step, and then, serving what certain segments of the labor force might consider an "apprenticeship period," during which time, a "basically trained" driver would spend all his/her working time with an experienced driver (driver trainer), to sharpen his/her skills, for a specified period of time.

It is also my belief that improvements in the "model curriculum" should include, but not be limited to, instruction in all phases of the industry, which should include such things as:

- A. Basic operating practices and territories of L-T-L and T-L motor carriers,
- B. Basic knowledge of freight handling equipment which may be encountered at customer pick-up/delivery points,
- C. Instruction covering basic geographic skills, i.e. reading maps, understanding the national highway system, driving in mountainous terrain,
- D. Instructions in vehicle operations and handling/ maneuvering during all four seasons, and during all weather conditions: fog, rain, snow, ice, freezing effects over and under bridges, and wind.

In conclusion, it is my firm belief that an informed, well trained driver will make a better professional, more **accountabl** for his/her actions in the industry, and a more desirable, responsible, employee. Furthermore, it is my opinion that all individuals entering the surface transportation industries should have formal training and instruction in all phases of the industry.

Sincerely,



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