

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lucy Garliauskas, Director, Office of Human Environment, (202) 366-2047, Lucy.Garliauskas@dot.gov or Adam Sleeter, Office of the Chief Counsel, (202) 366-8839; Federal Highway Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Electronic Access**

An electronic copy of this notice may be downloaded from the Office of the Federal Register's home page at <http://www.archives.gov/> and the Government Printing Office's Web site at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/>.

Background

Section 5207 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (Pub. L. 109-59, Aug. 10, 2005), established the Surface Transportation Environment and Planning Cooperative Research Program in section 507 of Title 23, United States Code. The FHWA anticipates that the STEP or a similar program to provide resources for national research on issues related to planning, environment, and realty will be included in future surface transportation legislation. The general objective of the STEP is to improve understanding of the complex relationship between surface transportation, planning, and the environment.

The SAFETEA-LU provided \$16.875 million per year for FY 2006-2009 to implement this cooperative research program. Due to obligation limitations, rescissions, and congressional designation of Title V Research in SAFETEA-LU, on average \$14.5 million of the \$16.875 million authorized was available each fiscal year.

The STEP is the primary source of funds for FHWA to conduct research and develop tools and technologies to advance the state of the practice regarding national surface transportation and environmental decisionmaking. In FY 2012, the FHWA expects to seek partnerships that can leverage limited research funding in the STEP with other stakeholders and partners in order to increase the total amount of resources available to meet the nation's surface transportation research needs.

The FY 2012 STEP will support the implementation of a national research agenda that includes:

(1) Conducting research to develop climate change mitigation, adaptation and livability strategies;

(2) Developing and/or supporting accurate models and tools for evaluating transportation measures and developing indicators of economic, social, and environmental performance of transportation systems to facilitate alternative analysis;

(3) Developing and deploying research to address congestion reduction efforts;

(4) Developing transportation safety planning strategies for surface transportation systems and improvements;

(5) Improving planning, operation, and management of surface transportation systems and rights-of-way;

(6) Enhancing knowledge of strategies to improve transportation in rural areas and small communities;

(7) Strengthening and advancing State/local and tribal capabilities regarding surface transportation and the environment;

(8) Improving transportation decisionmaking and coordination across international borders;

(9) Improving state of the practice regarding the impact of transportation on the environment;

(10) Conducting research to promote environmental streamlining/stewardship and sustainability;

(11) Disseminating research results and advances in state of the practice through peer exchanges, workshops, conferences, etc;

(12) Meeting additional priorities as determined by the Secretary; and

(13) Refining the scope and research emphases through active outreach and in consultation with stakeholders.

The FHWA is issuing this notice to: (1) To announce the STEP Implementation Strategy for the FY 2012 STEP in anticipation of future surface transportation legislation, and (2) to solicit comments on proposed research activities to be undertaken in the FY 2012 STEP via the STEP Web site. The STEP Implementation Strategy can be found at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/step/about_step/strategy/. That Strategy updates information on the graphs and charts regarding historical planning and environment research funding, and adds information about the proposed FY 2012 STEP including proposed funding levels, goals, and potential research activities. We invite the public to visit this Web site to obtain additional information on the STEP, as well as information on the process for forwarding comments to the FHWA

regarding the STEP implementation plan. The URL for the STEP Web site is: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/step/>.

The FHWA will use this Web site as a major mechanism for informing the public regarding the status of the STEP.

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 507.

OMB Approval for Specific Forms, Surveys, Questionnaires: Burden Statement

This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to identify potential research for the creation of a research plan for the FHWA STEP Program. Public reporting burden is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. No confidential information will be collected; therefore, no assurances of confidentiality will be provided. Please note that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 2125-0627 (Expiration 6/30/14). Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: Information Collection Clearance Officer, Federal Highway Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.

Authority: 5 CFR 1320.8.

Issued on: August 8, 2011.

Victor M. Mendez,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2011-20506 Filed 8-11-11; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**

[Docket No. FMCSA-2011-0177]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Request for Comment; Extension of an Information Collection: Hours of Service (HOS) of Drivers Regulations

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

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

(PRA), FMCSA announces its plan to submit the Information Collection Request (ICR) described below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval and invites public comment. The FMCSA requests OMB approval to revise and extend an existing ICR entitled, "Hours of Service (HOS) of Drivers Regulations." The HOS rules require most commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers to maintain in the CMV an accurate record of duty status (RODS) in either paper or electronic form. The Agency, effective June 4, 2010, authorized the use of electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) to create driver RODS. This ICR estimates, for the first time, the PRA burden of motor carriers voluntarily directing their drivers to employ EOBRs. This ICR promotes safety in CMV operations by assisting motor carriers and enforcement officials in monitoring compliance with the HOS rules. On June 6, 2011, FMCSA published a **Federal Register** notice allowing for a 60-day comment period on the ICR (76 FR 32388). One comment was received.

DATES: Please send your comments by September 12, 2011. OMB must receive your comments by this date in order to act quickly on the ICR.

ADDRESSES: All comments should reference Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Docket Number FMCSA-2011-0177. Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the proposed information collection to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget. Comments should be addressed to the attention of the Desk Officer, Department of Transportation/Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and sent via electronic mail to oir_submission@omb.eop.gov, faxed to (202) 395-6974, or mailed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert F. Schultz, Jr., FMCSA Driver and Carrier Operations Division. Telephone: 202-366-4325. E-mail: MCPSD@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Hours of Service (HOS) of Drivers Regulations.

OMB Control Number: 2126-0001.

Type of Request: Revision and extension of a currently-approved information collection.

Respondents: Motor Carriers, Drivers of CMVs.

Estimated Annual Respondents: 4.93 million [4.60 million drivers + 0.33 million active motor carriers].

Estimated Time per Response: A driver employing a paper RODS takes an average of 6.5 minutes to complete it; a driver employing an EOBR takes an average of 2 minutes to complete it. A driver takes an average of 5 minutes to forward a paper RODS to the motor carrier; a driver employing an EOBR is relieved of this task by automation. Whether using a paper or EOBR RODS, a motor carrier takes 2 minutes to review a RODS and its corresponding supporting documents, and 1 additional minute to maintain those supporting documents. For those motor carriers using an EOBR, the ICR burden of maintaining the RODS is eliminated by automation; for those motor carriers using paper RODS, 1 minute is required to maintain the RODS.

Expiration Date: 8/31/2011.

Estimated Frequency of Response

Drivers: 240 days per year, on average.

Motor Carriers: 240 days per year, on average.

Estimated Annual Responses: 3,843.59 million—the sum of the following:

A. Driver Tasks

(1) Filling out the RODS: 1,104 million, and

(2) Forwarding the RODS to the motor carrier: 102.23 million.

B. Motor Carrier Tasks

(1) Reviewing the RODS: 552 million,

(2) Maintaining the RODS: 981.36 million, and

(3) Maintaining the supporting documents: 1,104 million.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 172.08 million burden hours [118.92 million driver hours + 53.16 million carrier hours].

Background: The FMCSA regulates the amount of time a CMV driver may drive or otherwise be on duty, in order to ensure that an adequate period of time is available to the driver to rest. A driver must accurately record his or her duty status (driving, on duty not driving, off duty, sleeper berth) at all points during the 24-hour period designated by the motor carrier (49 CFR 395.8(a)(1)). This RODS must be made on a grid specified by subsection 395.8(g). The term "logbook" is often used in the industry to denote the collection of the most recent RODS of the driver. A driver must have the RODS for the previous 7 consecutive days in the CMV at all times (395.8(k)(2)). The RODS must be submitted to the motor carrier along with any supporting

documents, such as fuel receipts and toll tickets that could assist in verifying the accuracy of entries on the RODS, and the motor carrier must retain these records for a minimum of 6 months from the date of receipt (49 CFR 395.8(k)(1)).

Statutory authority for regulating the hours of service (HOS) of drivers operating CMVs in interstate commerce is derived from 49 U.S.C. 31136 and 31502. The penalty provisions are located at 49 U.S.C. 521, 522 and 526, as amended. On November 28, 1982, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the agency responsible for administration of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) (49 CFR 350 *et seq.*) at that time, promulgated a final rule requiring motor carriers to ensure that their drivers record their duty status in a specified format and verify the accuracy of the HOS of each driver (47 FR 53383). The rule is codified at 49 CFR 395.8.

The HOS rules provide the following four methods of recording driver duty status:

(1) *Paper RODS:* This grid form requires the driver to graph time and location on a paper record over a 24-hour period (Section 395.8(g)). It must be present on the CMV in the absence of a regulatory exception.

(2) *Time Record:* The HOS regulations allow certain "short haul" CMV drivers to avoid the onboard-the-CMV RODS requirement if their employing motor carrier records their HOS by means of a time record or time card maintained at the place of business (Section 395.1(e)). To qualify for this exception, short-haul drivers generally must return at the end of the duty day to the same location at which they began the day, and must remain within a certain distance of that location at all times during the duty day. The time record must show the time the driver began work, was released from work, and the total hours worked.

(3) *Automatic On-Board Recording Device (AOBRD):* An electronic record is permitted if it is created and maintained by an AOBRD as defined by 49 CFR 395.2. The record must include all the information that would appear on a paper RODS, and the driver or carrier must be capable of producing this information upon demand.

(4) *EOBR:* Motor carriers subject to an FMCSA remedial directive must use an electronic record created and maintained by an EOBR as defined in 49 CFR 395.2. Other motor carriers may voluntarily employ EOBRs.

The RODS is important because it provides motor carriers and enforcement personnel a significant tool

for determining driver compliance with the HOS rules. Compliance helps FMCSA protect the public by reducing the number of tired CMV drivers on the highways.

Most States receive grants from FMCSA under the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program. As a condition of receiving these grants, States agree to adopt and enforce the FMCSRs, including the HOS rules, as State law. As a result, State enforcement inspectors use the RODS and supporting documents to determine whether CMV drivers are complying with the HOS rules. In addition, FMCSA uses the RODS during on-site compliance reviews (CRs) and targeted reviews of motor carriers. The CR is a public record. An unfavorable review can be damaging to a motor carrier's business because customers may access the CRs before selecting a motor carrier to hire. Finally, Federal and State judicial systems generally accept RODS as evidence in actions alleging driver or motor carrier violations of the HOS regulations. This information collection supports the DOT's Strategic Goal of Safety because the information helps the Agency ensure the safe operation of CMVs in interstate commerce on our Nation's highways.

The currently-approved PRA burden estimate is 181.28 million hours, as approved by OMB on August 20, 2010. The expiration date of this IC is August 31, 2011. In this ICR, FMCSA proposes to reduce the PRA burden by approximately 9.20 million burden hours, or by slightly over 5 percent. FMCSA seeks OMB approval of its revised estimated PRA burden of 172.08 million burden hours. In today's submission, FMCSA for the first time estimates the extent of *voluntary* EOBR use by motor carriers, and subtracts that same number from its estimate of the extent of the use of paper RODS. The Agency maintains its OMB-approved estimates of the total number of CMV drivers subject to the HOS rules, and the total number of CMV drivers subject to an Agency remedial HOS directive.

Public Comments Invited: You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including: (1) Whether the proposed collection is necessary for the performance of FMCSA's functions; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways for the FMCSA to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the collected information; and (4) ways that the burden could be minimized without reducing the quality of the information collected.

Issued on: August 8, 2011.

Kelly Leone,

Associate Administrator for Research and Information Technology.

[FR Doc. 2011-20584 Filed 8-11-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-EX-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Notice of Fiscal Year 2012 Safety Grants and Solicitation for Applications

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

ACTION: Notice; change in application due dates.

SUMMARY: This notice informs the public of FMCSA's Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 safety grant opportunities and FMCSA's projected application due dates. FMCSA announces these grant opportunities based on authorities provided for in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy of Users. The Agency will inform applicants if new authorizing legislation changes its grant programs for FY 2012 through a **Federal Register** notice. The 10 safety grant programs include the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) Basic grants; MCSAP Incentive grants; New Entrant Safety Audit grants; MCSAP High Priority grants; Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) Operator Safety Training grants; Border Enforcement grants (BEG); Commercial Driver's License Program Improvement (CDLPI) grants; Performance and Registration Information Systems Management (PRISM) grants; Safety Data Improvement Program (SaDIP) grants; and the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) grants. It should be noted that FMCSA does not expect the Commercial Driver's License Information System (CDLIS) Modernization grants to be continued in reauthorization, and, therefore, FMCSA will not be soliciting applications for this grant program in FY 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Please contact the following FMCSA staff with questions or needed information on the Agency's grant programs:

MCSAP Basic/Incentive Grants—

Suzanne Poole,

suzanne.poole@dot.gov, 202-493-0804.

New Entrant Safety Audits Grants—

Arthur Williams,

arthur.williams@dot.gov, 202-366-3695.

Border Enforcement Grants—Carla Vagnini, *carla.vagnini@dot.gov*, 202-366-3771.

High Priority Grants—Cim Weiss, *cim.weiss@dot.gov*, 202-366-0275. CMV Operator Safety Training Grants—Arthur Williams, *arthur.williams@dot.gov*, 202-366-0710.

CDLPI Grants—James Ross, *james.ross@dot.gov*, 202-366-0133.

SaDIP Grants—Cim Weiss, *cim.weiss@dot.gov*, 202-366-0275.

PRISM Grants—Julie Otto, *julie.otto@dot.gov*, 202-366-0710.

CVISN Grants—Julie Otto, *julie.otto@dot.gov*, 202-366-0710.

All staff may be reached at FMCSA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., E.S.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background and Purpose

FMCSA recognizes that State and local governments and other grantees are dependent on the Agency's safety grants to develop and maintain important CMV safety programs. FMCSA further acknowledges that delays in awarding grant funds may have an adverse impact on these important safety programs. As a result, FMCSA completed a grants process review to identify ways to streamline the application, award, and grants management processes, and to award grant funds earlier each fiscal year. In addition, FMCSA made changes in the grants application, award and oversight processes to standardize application forms, increase the use of electronic documents, standardize quarterly reports, and reduce the number of needed grant amendments.

FMCSA continues to enter into grant agreements beginning October 1 or as soon thereafter as administratively practicable. FMCSA intends to begin awarding grants no later than 90 days from the date the application is due.

FMCSA uses the standard grant application form and quarterly reporting process. FMCSA requires the Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) and its attachments for all grant program applications. While each grant program may request different data in some of the data fields on the form, the use of the Standard Form 424 is mandatory. FMCSA uses the Standard Form-Project Progress Report (SF-PPR) as its required form for quarterly reporting. While each grant program may request that different data be submitted in some fields or boxes on the