

**FMCSA Stakeholder Audience Research**  
**State Agency: Focus Groups**  
**DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**Public Burden Statement**

A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2126-0061. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be approximately 60 minutes per person, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are voluntary. 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 Motor Carrier Safety Administration, MC-RRA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, D.C. 20590.

**PART 1: INTERVIEWER INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION (2 minutes)**

---

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'll be facilitating our discussion today. Thank you for being here and agreeing to participate.

Our conversation will be somewhat structured in that I have some things for you to review and questions I need to ask, but I hope the questions can lead to a larger discussion among everyone.

My job is to hear from everybody here, so I may call on you from time to time. There are no right or wrong answers; I am interested in everyone's thoughts, so please speak up, whether your ideas are similar or seem quite different from someone else. There's no need to raise your hand, but try to speak one at a time so we can make sure everybody is heard.

Please turn off your cell phones during our time together. Or if you need to leave yours on, please turn it to vibrate.

To make sure we end on time, I might need to change the topic or move us along. It's to make sure we respect everyone's time, not because I am not interested in what you are saying.

The estimated public burden for this discussion is 90 minutes. The discussion will be recorded to help us write a report and to show some other people what you said. But this recording is not being made for broadcast, and your names won't be used in the report.

Do you have any questions before we get going?

## **PART 2: ROLE, RESPONSIBILITY UNDERSTANDING (10 MINUTES)**

---

1. I'd like to start by getting to know you all a little better. To have a sense of where you're coming from.  
  
Why don't we go around the room and everybody say what they do for a living? What's your job title? Who do you work for? What do you do there?
2. Does your work involve dealing with truck or bus/passenger vehicle safety? How? What is your role?
3. What makes your job difficult to do? How could it be easier?
4. What do you think are the most important issues related to the Nation's roadway safety these days?
5. Whom do you trust most to inform you about safety and compliance issues on the Nation's roadways? How come?
6. How safe do you think the Nation's roadways are generally? Why do you say that?
7. What are the biggest threats to safety on the Nation's roadways?
8. What sort of impact do you think CMV drivers could have on the Nation's roadway safety? Please elaborate.
9. What responsibility do CMV drivers have to maintain the Nation's roadway safety? What are some specific things they should do?
10. What agencies, organizations and departments do you deal with on a regular basis when it comes to safety and compliance as part of your job? Try to think of as many as possible.

## **PART 3: FMCSA UNDERSTANDING (15 MINUTES)**

---

### **[IF NOT MENTIONED]**

11. Do you ever work with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)?
12. In your own words, what does the FMCSA do? What is its function?
13. How do you feel about the FMCSA generally? Would you say you feel positive or negative about them? How come? Please be as detailed as you can.
14. Thinking more specifically, what are some things the FMCSA does well? Why do you say that?
15. What does the FMCSA need to improve? How could it improve?

16. What do other people in your industry think about the FMCSA? What makes you say that?
17. Do you ever receive safety and compliance communication from the FMCSA?
18. How do you receive your FMCSA communication? Where does it come from before it reaches you?
19. Think about the other safety and compliance organizations and agencies you deal with in your job. How does FMCSA's communication compare to those organizations? Why do you say that?
20. What are the positive impacts you experience from receiving information from the FMCSA? What are the negatives?
21. Is there anything difficult about receiving safety and compliance communication from the FMCSA? How could it be easier?  
**PROBE AS NEEDED:**
  - a. How clear is the information you receive? How could it be clearer?
  - b. How do you receive information from FMCSA? How would you prefer to?
  - c. How many contacts at FMCSA do you have? How do you manage the contacts? Is there ever any confusion? How could that be fixed?
  - d. Do you typically communicate with the FMCSA field offices or the main headquarters? How is the experience communicating with them different? How is it similar?
22. What's the most important thing the FMCSA could do to improve its safety and compliance communication with you? Why do you say that?
23. What would be the most useful safety and compliance information you could receive from the FMCSA? Why? Anything else?

#### **PART 4: PROGRAM UNDERSTANDING (16 MINUTES)**

---

24. Now I'd like to talk about a few specific programs that the FMCSA runs. We'll talk about each program individually before moving on to the next.

**[Q25-33 WILL BE ASKED OF UP TO TWO (2) PROGRAMS. INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE IS ONE PROGRAM AS AN EXAMPLE. THE OTHER PROGRAMS WILL BE THE SAME LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY]**

25. Have you ever heard of a program called **the electronic logging devices mandate**?
26. In your own words, what is **the electronic logging devices mandate**?
27. Here is a description of **the electronic logging devices mandate**:

**FMCSA's recently announced Electronic Logging Device (ELD) rule will improve roadway safety by using technology to ensure commercial truck and bus drivers comply with hours-of-service regulations that prevent fatigue. An ELD will synchronize with a vehicle's engine to automatically record driving time, along with other data like engine hours, vehicle movement, miles driven and location information. The rule establishes a four-year transition period with multiple phases to gradually eliminate the use of paper logs, as well as currently installed Automatic On-Board Recording Devices, and replace them with ELDs.**

28. In your own words, describe for me what this program is.
29. How useful is this description in understanding the program? How could it be more useful for your job?
30. How does this program impact your job? Does it make it easier? Harder? How so?
31. How clear is the language in this program? Is there anything confusing about it?
32. How do you feel about this program generally? Would you say you feel positive or negative about it? How come? Please be as specific as you can.
33. How do you think this program impacts road safety, if at all? Why do you say that?
34. I'd like for you to read the statements about this program on this handout and tell me if it makes you more or less favorable toward it.

**[PARTICIPANTS WILL BE SHOWN A SERIES OF STATEMENTS FOR EACH PROGRAM. BELOW ARE EXAMPLES FOR ABOVE PROGRAM. OTHER STATEMENTS WILL BE THE SAME LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY]**

- **The new ELD rule will result in annual net benefits worth more than \$1 billion – largely by reducing the amount of required industry paperwork and making it easier, simpler, and quicker to keep driver logs.**
- **ELD use will increase the efficiency of roadside law enforcement personnel in reviewing driver records.**
- **Strict protections are included in the final rule designed to shield commercial drivers from harassment by employers.**
- **ELDs are projected to save 26 lives and prevent more than 550 injuries annually that result from crashes involving large trucks and buses.**
- **The new ELD rule will result in annual net benefits worth more than \$1 billion – largely by reducing the amount of required industry paperwork and making it easier, simpler, and quicker to keep driver logs.**
- **ELD use will increase the efficiency of roadside law enforcement personnel in reviewing driver records.**
- **Strict protections are included in the final rule designed to shield commercial drivers from harassment by employers.**
- **ELDs are projected to save 26 lives and prevent more than 550 injuries annually that result from crashes involving large trucks and buses.**

- **The ELD rule is an intrusion into the privacy rights of professional truckers.**
  - **It will do nothing at all to improve highway safety and will actually do the opposite by placing even more pressure and stress on already frazzled drivers.**
  - **This inflexible electronic surveillance will dictate strict windows of opportunity to work and may limit where responsible drivers can choose to rest.**
  - **Buying these expensive devices will reduce driver salaries, especially those working for small businesses and owner-operator independent drivers.**
- 
- a. Much more positive
  - b. Somewhat more positive
  - c. Neither more positive or more negative
  - d. Somewhat more negative
  - e. Much more negative

Why do you say that?

35. Thinking about our discussion today, can you think of any other organizations we should talk to? Anything specific?
36. Before we wrap up, we wanted to give you a chance to give your opinion on any other roadway issue that may not have come up today. Tell us what is important to you and what you want to make sure we take away from this discussion as it pertains to the Nation's roadways.

#### **PART 5: CLOSING (2 MINUTES)**

---

37. Do you have any other questions or comments for me?

**[DISCLOSE SPONSOR, THANK AND DISMISS]**