



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

JUN 13 2008

Mr. Neil D. Schuster
President and CEO
American Association
of Motor Vehicle Administrators
4301 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22203

Dear Mr. Schuster:

Thank you for your letter of May 13, 2008. It was a pleasure to meet with the AAMVA Board members, you and your staff on May 1, to discuss the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) on-going efforts to address the capacity issues of the Problem Driver Pointer System (PDPS). NHTSA considers its relationships with both the States and AAMVA to be of the utmost importance. This long-standing partnership enables us to achieve our mutual goals of providing a safe passage for the public on our nation's roadways.

In November 2007, Jim Ports, Deputy Administrator for NHTSA, addressed the AAMVA Fall Workshops in Glendale, Arizona stating, among other things, that NHTSA is committed to providing excellent customer service to all the States and authorized users of the PDPS. In his address to the conference attendees and during a breakout meeting with AAMVA and State representatives, Mr. Ports emphasized that everyone in the room shared responsibilities for the remediation of the problems with PDPS.

Prohibited business practices of large batch submissions during core business hours (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) were found to be common place when delays began to surface. Soon thereafter, we discovered that Florida was having recurring internal network capacity issues resulting in huge numbers of transactions being transmitted during NDR's peak usage hours. The resulting surge in transactions was the root cause in many of the delays. In addition, Florida's practice of submitting multiple inquiries for a single licensing transaction combined with allowing counter clerks to re-submit inquiries when delays of 90 seconds elapsed also exacerbated the problem.

AAMVA must share responsibility for delays in processing as well. Recently, AAMVANet suffered a severe network failure resulting in delays of processing for hours. To the point, we are all culpable for causes and for finding solutions to these issues.

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NHTSA
www.nhtsa.gov

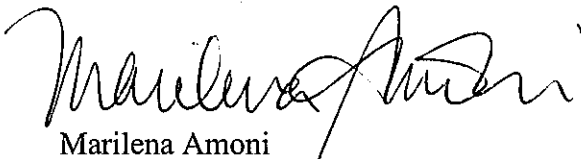
NHTSA brings significant amount of resources to bear on this problem. The National Driver Register (NDR) recently commissioned a Resource Allocation Specialist to analyze the current configuration of the PDPS and to provide a report listing recommendations and solutions to maximize our system configuration. The report identified 15 recommendations of which ten have already been implemented. The final five recommendations will require significant amounts of NDR staff and monetary resources to complete. The NDR will continue to share its progress in completing the final five recommendations with AAMVA during our weekly teleconference meeting and summary for your quarterly conference call with State members. As a long-term solution, NHTSA is in the final year of a 3-year effort to modernize the PDPS. The new system will be scalable to anticipate significant future growth in PDPS usage. We anticipate the new system to be operational in 2009.

In response to your request to "consider holding harmless the states that cannot become MCSIA compliant," I will refer you to the NDR final rule published on July 29, 2005 (Federal Register Vol. 70 pages 43750 – 43757) wherein it is states: "This portion of the final rule implements a Federal statutory provision that is considered self-executing and would be a requirement of any participating State without the need for a corresponding regulation." The regulation further states: "MCSIA intended to close loopholes that existed in licensing programs as a result of not checking both databases before issuing and before renewing, a non-CDL license. The requirement to make these inquiries has been a statutory requirement of the participating states, since the enactment of MCSIA. From that point forward, States participating in the NDR should have been meeting all inquiry requirements." The Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act (MCSIA) became law in 1999.

In closing, I want to assure you that the NDR staff will continue to work with AAMVA, the States, and our timeshare vendors to find reliable short and long-term solutions as we strive to reduce the impact of processing delays of State transactions through the PDPS to our customers.

If I can be of further assistance, please have your staff contact me or Mr. Sean McLaurin, Chief, National Driver Register and Traffic Records Division on (202) 366-2737.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marilena Amoni". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Marilena Amoni
Acting Associate Administrator
National Center for Statistics and Analysis