

From: Lake, Steven
To: 'varatd@scsenate.org' <varatd@scsenate.org>
CC: Adams, Marcia S <Marcia.Adams@SCDMV.net>
Caldwell, John H <John.Caldwell@SCDMV.net>
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Subject: School Bus "S" Endorsement

Danny,

Per our conversation earlier this morning, I have prepared the following information which outlines DMV's plan for addressing the new federal requirements for school bus endorsements on commercial drivers licenses. As you are aware, S.406 was signed into law on May 3, 2005 which incorporated the new federal requirements into 56-1-2005. All current holders of an "S" endorsement or a "T" restriction on their commercial drivers license (CDL) will be required to meet these new requirements no later than September 30, 2005. All customers holding an "S" endorsement issued before September 30, 2002 and all "T" restriction holders will be required to take and pass a written test in order to meet the new requirements. All customers holding "S" endorsements issued on or after September 30, 2002 will not be required to take the written test.

According to our records, 9,825 individuals currently hold a CDL with an "S" endorsement or "T" restriction. Of this number, 5,518 were issued on or after September 30, 2002 and will not need to be retested. Therefore, DMV will need to test 4,307 individuals prior to the September 30, 2005 deadline. To the best of our knowledge, all of these individuals currently drive school buses for the Department of Education. DMV has been working on a plan to notify and test these individuals prior to the beginning of the school year. We have established test sites around the state to conduct mass testing of these individuals beginning on July 15, 2005 and are working with the Department of Education to notify these individuals of the requirements, test sites and dates. We will also be able to conduct these tests in our field offices throughout the state at any time during normal office hours. Study materials for the new test will be in our field offices on July 5, 2005.

We are beginning our testing on July 15, 2005 in order to have as many individual as possible in compliance with the new requirements prior to the beginning of the new school year in August. However, in the event that individuals do not pass the test on their initial attempt, they will have time to retest prior to the September 30 deadline.

We are aware that an article was printed in the Greenville News on June 30, 2005 which indicated that DMV blames the legislature for passing legislation in this past session to be in compliance with federal law passed in 1999. I want to assure you that DMV did not make this statement. In anticipation of this legislation, we have been proactively working with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the Department of Education to make the necessary plans to comply with the new requirements. As an example, within one week of the Governor signing this bill into law, DMV worked with FMCSA to obtain the exemption for the 5,518 CDL holder with an "S" endorsement issued on or after September 30, 2005.

Please ensure Senator Ryberg, that DMV will make all of the necessary arrangements to assist DOE and the affected license holder in order to comply with the new federal requirements with minimal impact on the citizens of South Carolina. If you should have any questions or need additional information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to call me at 896-3851 or 606-3115.

Steven Lake