



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

[4910-EX-P]

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2012-0032]

Commercial Driver's License Standards: Application for Exemption; Daimler Trucks North America (Daimler)

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

ACTION: Notice of application for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces that Daimler Trucks North America (Daimler) has requested an exemption for one commercial motor vehicle (CMV) driver from the Federal requirement to hold a U.S. commercial driver's license (CDL). Daimler request an exemption for Mr. Thomas Passegger, Project Engineer in Autonomous Trucks for Daimler. Mr. Passegger holds a valid German commercial license and wants to test drive Daimler vehicles on U.S. roads to better understand product requirements in "real world" environments, and verify results. Daimler states that the requirements for a German commercial license ensure that operation under the exemption will likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to or greater than the level that would be obtained in the absence of the exemption. FMCSA requests public comments on Daimler's application for exemption.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments bearing the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Docket ID FMCSA-2012-0032 using any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- Mail: Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.
- Hand Delivery or Courier: West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
- Fax: 1-202-493-2251

Each submission must include the Agency name and the docket number for this notice. Note that DOT posts all comments received without change to www.regulations.gov, including any personal information included in a comment. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments, go to www.regulations.gov at any time or visit Room W12-140 on the ground level of the West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The on-line FDMS is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year.

Privacy Act: In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to www.regulations.gov, as described in the system of records notice (DOT/ALL-14 FDMS), which can be reviewed at www.dot.gov/privacy.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Richard Clemente, FMCSA Driver and Carrier Operations Division; Office of Carrier, Driver and Vehicle Safety Standards; Telephone: 202 366-4225. E-mail: MCPD@dot.gov. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services, telephone (202) 366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Participation and Request for Comments

FMCSA encourages you to participate by submitting comments and related materials.

Submitting Comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this notice (FMCSA-2012-0032), indicate the specific section of this document to which the comment applies, and provide a reason for suggestions or recommendations. You may submit your comments and material online or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. FMCSA recommends that you include your name and a mailing address, an e-mail address, or a phone number in the body of your document so the Agency can contact you if it has questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to www.regulations.gov and put the docket number, "FMCSA-2012-0032" in the "Keyword" box, and click "Search." When the new screen appears, click on "Comment Now!" button and type your comment into the text box in the following screen. Choose whether you are submitting your comment as an individual or on behalf of a third party and then submit. If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit comments by mail and

would like to know that they reached the facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. FMCSA will consider all comments and material received during the comment period and may grant or not grant this application based on your comments.

II. Legal Basis

FMCSA has authority under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315 to grant exemptions from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. FMCSA must publish a notice of each exemption request in the **Federal Register** (49 CFR 381.315(a)). The Agency must provide the public an opportunity to inspect the information relevant to the application, including any safety analyses that have been conducted. The Agency must also provide an opportunity for public comment on the request.

The Agency reviews the safety analyses and the public comments, and determines whether granting the exemption would likely achieve a level of safety equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved by the current regulation (49 CFR 381.305). The decision of the Agency must be published in the **Federal Register** (49 CFR 381.315(b)) with the reason for the grant or denial, and, if granted, the specific person or class of persons receiving the exemption, and the regulatory provision or provisions from which exemption is granted. The notice must also specify the effective period of the exemption (up to 5 years), and explain the terms and conditions of the exemption. The exemption may be renewed (49 CFR 381.300(b)).

Request for Exemption

Daimler has applied for an exemption for Thomas Passegger from 49 CFR 383.23, which prescribes licensing requirements for drivers operating CMVs in interstate or

intrastate commerce. Thomas Passegger, holds a valid German commercial license but is unable to obtain a CDL in any of the U.S. States due to residency requirements in the United States. A copy of the application is in Docket No. FMCSA-2012-0032.

The exemption would allow Mr. Passegger to operate CMVs in interstate or intrastate commerce to support Daimler field tests designed to meet future vehicle safety and environmental requirements and to develop improved safety and emission technologies. Mr. Passegger will typically drive for no more than 6 hours per day for one to two days, and 10 percent of the test driving will be on two-lane State highways, while 90 percent will be on interstate highways. The driving will consist of no more than 200 miles per day. He will in all cases be accompanied by a holder of a U.S. CDL who is familiar with the routes to be traveled. Daimler requests that the exemption cover the maximum allowable duration of five years.

Mr. Passegger holds a valid German commercial license, and as explained by Daimler in its exemption requests, the requirements for that license ensure that the same level of safety is met or exceeded as if this driver had a U.S. CDL. Daimler request that the exemption cover the maximum allowable duration of five years.

IV. Method to Ensure an Equivalent or Greater Level of Safety

FMCSA has previously determined that the process for obtaining a German commercial license is comparable to, or as effective as, the requirements of part 383, and adequately assesses the driver's ability to operate CMVs in the U.S.

Since 2015, FMCSA has granted Daimler drivers similar exemptions: [March 27, 2015 (80 FR 16511); October 5, 2015 (80 FR 60220); December 7, 2015 (80 FR 76059); December 21, 2015 (80 FR 79410)]; July 12, 2016 (81 FR 45217); July 25, 2016 (81 FR 48496); August 17, 2017 (82 FR 39151); September 10, 2018 (83 FR 45742).]

Issued on: September 18, 2019.

Larry W. Minor,

Associate Administrator for Policy.

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