

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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National Safety Code

What is the National Safety Code?

The National Safety Code (NSC) is a set of 16 minimum safety performance standards that were developed by representatives of the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA). These standards apply to commercial vehicles, drivers and motor carriers in Canada. Although the NSC standards are not law, the federal, provincial and territorial governments consider the standards when drafting their transportation safety laws. All carriers operating regulated vehicles in Alberta are responsible for following applicable transportation laws.

More information about the National Safety Code Program and transportation safety laws is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: <http://www.ccmta.ca>.

What is a Safety Fitness Certificate?

A company seeking to start a trucking or busing business may need to obtain an Alberta Safety Fitness Certificate. A Safety Fitness Certificate authorizes a carrier to operate one or more commercial vehicles under the name of their company or their personal name.

The following must get a Safety Fitness Certificate:

- Carriers who operate commercial trucks, tractors, trailers or any combination of them that are registered for a weight of 11,794 kilograms or more and who operate **only** within Alberta;
- Carriers who operate commercial trucks, tractors, trailers or any combination of them that are registered for a weight in excess of 4,500 kilograms and who operate outside of Alberta;
- Carriers who operate commercial vehicles with a manufacturer's seating capacity originally designed for 11 or more persons, including the driver.

It is the carrier's responsibility to ensure they receive a Safety Fitness Certificate with the proper Operating Status.

More information about Safety Fitness Certificates is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm.

What is a Safety Fitness Rating?

A carrier's Safety Fitness Rating represents their standing with the Carrier Services Section of Alberta Transportation with regards to safety. The Rating is displayed on the carrier's Safety Fitness Certificate. There are five different safety ratings:

- Excellent – Carrier has passed a full NSC audit and has demonstrated superior safety performance. Carrier is also a member of the Partners in Compliance (PIC) program;
- Satisfactory – Carrier has passed a full NSC audit and has not appeared on the Alberta Transportation's monitoring list for 12 months;

- Satisfactory Unaudited – This rating is generally assigned to all new carriers where no existing compliance issues are known;
- Conditional – Carrier has demonstrated significant safety issues which must be corrected;
- Unsatisfactory – Carrier’s performance has demonstrated an unacceptable risk to the public. The carrier may no longer register or operate a commercial vehicle registered under Alberta’s NSC program.

More information about Safety Fitness Ratings is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm.

What is the difference between a “Federal” and “Provincial” Operating Status?

It is each carrier’s responsibility to ensure they obtain a Safety Fitness Certificate with the proper Operating Status. Carriers in Alberta may have a “Federal” or “Provincial” Operating Status. This status is shown on the carrier’s Safety Fitness Certificate. Generally speaking:

- A “**Provincial**” Operating Status allows a carrier to operate a commercial vehicle that is registered for a weight of 11,794 kilograms or more. They may also operate a commercial vehicle with a seating capacity originally designed for 11 or more persons, including the driver. Carriers with a “Provincial” Operating Status may **only** operate these vehicles within Alberta.
- A “**Federal**” Operating Status allows a carrier to operate a commercial vehicle that is registered for a weight in excess of 4,500 kilograms. They may also operate a commercial vehicle with a seating capacity originally designed for 11 or more persons, including the driver. Carriers with a “Federal” Operating Status may operate these vehicles inside and/or outside of Alberta.

More information about Operating Status is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/661.htm

How do I apply for a Safety Fitness Certificate?

After they register a regulated vehicle for the first time, the following carriers may receive a temporary 60-day Safety Fitness Certificate from a Registry Agent:

- Carriers registering a commercial truck for a weight of 11,794 kilograms or more;
- Carriers registering a commercial vehicle with a manufacturer’s seating capacity originally designed for 11 or more persons, including the driver.

After receiving a temporary Safety Fitness Certificate, a carrier must complete an application form for a permanent certificate. This form must be submitted to the Carrier Services Section of Alberta Transportation within 60 days.

The application for a Safety Fitness Certificate is available online at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm.

How do I change my Operating Status?

A carrier is able to change their Operating Status if they intend to make **long-term** changes to the way their company operates. Changing the Operating Status of a company may alter a number of ways in which they operate. Different transportation safety laws may apply to a carrier depending on whether they are provincially or federally regulated.

The application for a change of Operating Status is available online at:
www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm.

Who is exempt from obtaining a Safety Fitness Certificate?

The following services do not need to operate under the authority of a Safety Fitness Certificate in Alberta:

- Commercial vehicles that are registered for a weight less than 11,794 kilograms and that operate solely within Alberta;
- Commercial vehicles that are registered for a weight less than 4,500 kilograms and that operate outside of Alberta;
- Commercial passenger vehicles that have a manufacturer's seating capacity designed for fewer than 11 persons, including the driver;
- Commercial vehicles that are primarily used to transport agricultural products within Alberta only. The driver must be a farmer or an employee of the farmer who owns or produces the agricultural product being transported;
- Two or three axle commercial vehicles that are mainly used to transport primary products of a forest, lake or river. The driver or the employer of the driver must have produced the primary product;
- Commercial vehicles to which a Safety Fitness Certificate exemption permit has been issued;
- Commercial vehicles that have been exempted by the Registrar.

More information about Safety Fitness Certificates is available online in our [education manual](#) or at:
www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm.

Does a Safety Fitness Certificate expire?

A permanent Safety Fitness Certificate does not expire. It may, however, be suspended or cancelled by the Registrar at any time if a carrier is found to be non-compliant or if the carrier does not hold valid registration on a regulated vehicle over a 12 month period.

A temporary Safety Fitness Certificate is only valid for 60 days from when the carrier first registers a regulated vehicle.

The application for a permanent Safety Fitness Certificate is available online at:
www.transportation.alberta.ca/638.htm.



What is a Carrier Profile?

The Carrier Profile is a “report card” of the carrier’s compliance to on-road and administrative requirements. It is a summary of the carrier’s performance based on information collected from across Canada and the United States. Only the carrier named in the Carrier Profile, their authorized agent or an enforcement agency can obtain a copy of the full profile information.

Every carrier operating National Safety Code vehicles registered in Alberta has a Carrier Profile.

More information about Carrier Profiles is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/5613.htm

How do I get my Carrier Profile?

A carrier can benefit from reviewing their Carrier Profile on a regular basis. The department can provide two free profiles per year to encourage this practice. Carriers may obtain a copy of their Carrier Profile online through Alberta Transportation’s Online Services, which are available at: <https://www.trans.gov.ab.ca/TravisWebLogin/redirect.htm>.

More information about Carrier Profiles is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/5613.htm

How do I read my Carrier Profile?

A Carrier Profile is made up of many parts which contain different information about a carrier. Detailed information about how to effectively read each part of a Carrier Profile is available online at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/docType276/Production/howtoreadcarrierprofile.pdf

How might I benefit from reading my Carrier Profile?

There are several ways in which carriers may benefit from reviewing their Carrier Profile report, including:

1. Reducing the likelihood of future vehicle collisions by identifying safety issues within their operation;
2. Saving money by reducing future fines, maintenance and insurance costs;
3. Developing a reputation for being a safe and responsible carrier;
4. Maintaining an acceptable Safety Fitness Rating under the NSC Program;
5. Evaluating the effectiveness of their Safety and Maintenance Programs;
6. Proactively improving their overall safety performance.

More information about how a carrier may use their Carrier Profile report to improve the overall safety performance of their company is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/Content/docType276/Production/benefitsofreviewingyourcarrierprofile.pdf

How do I correct an error on my Carrier Profile?

All efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of Carrier Profiles. If a carrier identifies a significant problem with the data on their Profile, they should contact Carrier Services at: 403-340-5444 (toll-free 310-0000) or carrier.services@gov.ab.ca.

When do I report a collision involving one of my commercial vehicles?

“Reportable collisions” in Alberta are collisions which result in death, injury or property damage over \$2,000. All reportable collisions must be reported to the local police. The standards for reportable collisions may be different in other provinces, territories or states.

More information about reportable collisions is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/656.htm.

When does a collision appear on my Carrier Profile?

Collisions will not be displayed on a carrier’s Profile until at least 45 days after the date that the collision occurred. This allows carriers time to request a collision evaluation before the event is displayed on their Carrier Profile.

Reportable collisions contribute to the calculation of a carrier’s Risk Factor monitoring score. If a carrier believes a collision was non-preventable, they may request that the collision be evaluated.

More information about reportable collisions is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/656.htm.

What is the Collision Evaluation Process?

A carrier may request to have a collision evaluated. This evaluation will determine whether a collision was “Preventable” or “Non-Preventable”.

Collisions that have not been evaluated will appear on the Carrier Profile as “Not Evaluated” and may be considered when calculating the carrier’s Risk Factor monitoring score. Collisions that have been evaluated will remain on the profile with no points shown if the collision was deemed “Non-Preventable”. While a collision is being evaluated, the collision may not necessarily be shown on the Profile.

Carriers wanting to have a collision evaluated must complete a [Collision Evaluation Application](#) form. They must attach all necessary information regarding the collision and submit the package to the Carrier Services Section of Alberta Transportation. After the application has been received, Alberta Transportation may forward the package to the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) for evaluation if the collision appears to be preventable. Certified industry personnel may review the application on behalf of the AMTA and evaluate the collision for preventability.

Carriers may have to pay a fee for each Collision Evaluation Application they submit.

More information about Collision Evaluations is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/656.htm.

Monitoring and Intervention

What is Risk Factor monitoring?

Alberta Transportation collects compliance information on commercial carriers in the province. The Carrier Services Section of Alberta Transportation monitors each carrier's on-road data. This information is used to help determine a carrier's Safety Fitness Rating.

The Carrier Services Risk Factor monitoring program is designed to identify approximately 5% of carriers that represent the greatest safety risk to the public based on Carrier Profile data. This process considers conviction, reportable collision and road-side inspection data over a 12 month period. This information is used in a formula, along with the carrier's fleet size, to determine each carrier's Risk Factor score. Those carriers that exceed the specified threshold are placed on monitoring.

Carriers identified on the monitoring report are assigned a monitoring stage of 1-4 based on their Risk Factor score, with stage 4 representing the greatest risk to the public. Carriers who pose a high risk to public safety will be dealt with immediately. This may include the suspension or cancellation of the carrier's Safety Fitness Certificate and vehicle registration(s).

Alberta Transportation will intervene in a progressive manner with all carriers that appear on the monitoring report in an effort to create positive change within their operation.

More information about Progressive Intervention practices and Risk Factor monitoring is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/670.htm.

What is an NSC facility audit?

National Safety Code facility audits are used to find out whether carriers are following transportation laws. Alberta Transportation uses an auditing program called "Assessment of Regulatory Compliance" (ARC). During this audit, an auditor reviews a carrier's safety records. The auditor will assess records according to four main areas of compliance:

- Carrier Safety;

- Driver Safety;
- Drivers' Hours of Service;
- Vehicle Maintenance.

A score will be given to a carrier for each area based on how well they follow transportation laws. Carriers who score poorly on the audit may be subject to intervention actions.

More information about auditing is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/668.htm.

How do I find a certified auditor?

If a carrier receives a letter from Alberta Transportation that states they need to arrange for an NSC Audit, a list of approved auditors and their contact information will be attached to the letter.

When selecting an auditor a carrier should consider things like availability, cost, and whether a particular auditor understands their company. Carriers should contact an auditor as soon as possible so that they meet the audit due date specified by the Registrar.

Carriers may also wish to obtain an audit even if they have not been directed to do so by Alberta Transportation. The results of the audit may provide them with information on where they need to improve their safety and maintenance programs. Audits are a good way to internally monitor the effectiveness of a company's policies and programs.

More information about auditing is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/668.htm. A list of certified auditors is available online at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/5100.htm.

Can I dispute the results of an NSC facility audit?

If it has been identified that an auditor made significant errors, then an audit may be re-opened to correct those errors and the audit may be re-scored. For example, if it has been identified that an auditor applied standards or regulatory requirements to the carrier that do not in any way apply to their operations, then this is considered to be a significant error and the carrier may request that the audit be re-opened.

If an intervention action has been taken by the Registrar because of an audit report, the carrier can ask the Registrar to reconsider that decision. A carrier may appeal the Registrar's decision, within 30 days, to the Transportation Safety Board. A form may be obtained at any Registry Agent for submission to the Board to start an appeal process.

More information about auditing is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/668.htm.

What happens if a carrier is issued a Safety Fitness Rating of “Unsatisfactory”?

If a carrier is issued a Safety Fitness Rating of “Unsatisfactory”, their Safety Fitness Certificate will be cancelled and they will not legally be permitted to operate commercial vehicles regulated under the NSC program, including:

- Federally regulated vehicles registered for or weighing in excess of 4,500 kilograms that operate within or outside of Alberta;
- Provincially regulated vehicles registered for 11,794 kilograms or more that operate solely within Alberta;
- Vehicles with an original manufactured seating capacity of 11 or more persons, including the driver.

A carrier with an “Unsatisfactory” rating is also forbidden from leasing, operating or controlling other vehicles. If a carrier’s Safety Fitness Rating is downgraded to “Unsatisfactory”, no application for another Safety Fitness Certificate may be made for 6 months after the rating is issued.

A Safety Fitness Certificate that has been suspended will remain that way until the carrier takes the required action(s) specified by the Registrar.

More information about Safety Fitness Ratings is available online in our [education manual](#).

Can I appeal the Registrar’s decision to downgrade my Safety Fitness Rating?

A carrier may appeal the Registrar’s decision to the Alberta Transportation Safety Board within 30 days of being downgraded to an “Unsatisfactory” rating. To file an appeal they must purchase an Application for Hearing form from an Alberta Registry Agent and file it with the Board.

An application to appeal the Registrar’s decision does not stop the Registrar’s action(s) unless a “stay” is requested by the carrier and the Board agrees to it.

More information about appeals is available online at: <http://atsb.alberta.ca>.

Federal Hours of Service and Daily Logs

How do I know if I’m supposed to follow federal hours of service regulations?

Hours of service regulations define maximum driving times and minimum off-duty times for commercial vehicle drivers (both bus and truck). These limits were created to prevent fatigue-related incidents. Carriers must include information about hours of service laws in their safety program.

If a carrier is federally regulated (they hold a “Federal” Operating Status and operate one or more vehicles outside of Alberta), they must follow federal hours of service laws. This applies to all regulated drivers, even those that operate solely within Alberta.

A carrier will follow provincial hours of service laws if they are provincially regulated. This means that they operate commercial vehicles only within Alberta.

More information about drivers' hours of service laws is available online in our Reference Guide for Hours of Service Training Development at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm

Is anyone exempt from the federal hours of service regulations?

If a carrier is federally regulated, then they are subject to federal laws and the related exemptions.

The federal hours of service regulations do not apply to drivers of the following vehicles according to Section 2 of the [Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations \(SOR/2005-313\)](#):

1. A 2- or 3-axle vehicle being used for the transportation of primary products of a farm, forest, sea or lake, where the driver or the motor carrier is the producer of those primary products, *or* a return trip after transporting the primary products of a farm, forest, sea or lake, if the vehicle is *empty* or is transporting products used in the principle operation of a farm, forest, sea or lake;
2. An *emergency vehicle* (as defined in the regulations);
3. A vehicle that is engaged in providing relief in the case of a public welfare emergency, as defined in section 5 of the *Emergencies Act*;
4. A commercial vehicle when driven for *personal use* if;
 - the vehicle has been unloaded;
 - any trailers have been unhitched;
 - the distance traveled does not exceed 75 kilometres in a day;
 - the driver has recorded the odometer reading in the logbook;
 - the driver is not subject to an out-of-service declaration.

More information about federal hours of service laws is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm.

When am I required to fill out a log book?

Carriers are required by law to ensure drivers maintain accurate daily logs according to the times they work for each calendar day. A daily log must be kept so that a carrier may ensure a driver does not exceed the federal or provincial driving limitations.

If a driver only operates a commercial vehicle once a week or once a month, they would still be required to comply with hours of service laws every day. This means that a driver must complete logs even for days they do not drive the vehicle.

Carriers and drivers can obtain blank daily logs from truck stops, stationary stores or printing companies.

Drivers may retain a radius record instead of a daily log if they qualify for and meet **all** of the requirements for the 160 kilometer radius record exemption.

More information about log books is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm.

What is the 160 kilometer radius record exemption under federal hours of service laws?

A driver may be exempt from filling out daily logs if they are eligible for the 160 kilometer radius record exemption. In order to qualify for this exemption, a federally regulated carrier must meet **all** of the following requirements:

- The driver operates within a 160 kilometer radius of the driver's home terminal;
- The driver returns to the home terminal each day to begin a minimum of 8 consecutive hours of off-duty time;
- The motor carrier that employs the driver maintains accurate and legible time records showing, for each calendar day, the driver's duty status and elected cycle, the hour at which each duty status begins and ends and the total number of hours spent in each status;
- The driver is not driving under a permit issued under the *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* (SOR/2005-313);
- The motor carrier retains these driver records for a period of at least six months.

This exemption applies ONLY to record keeping requirements. ALL other requirements of the regulations must be met.

More information about the radius exemption requirements under federal hours of service is available online in our [education manual](#) or in Section 81 of the [Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations \(SOR/2005-313\)](#).

What information must be included in a log book that follows federal hours of service laws?

If a carrier is federally regulated, they must keep log book information as required by federal law.

Federal log books must be completed on a graph grid and must contain the following information:

- The date;
- The start time of the day (if different from midnight);
- The name and signature of the driver and, if the driver is a member of a team of drivers, the names of the co-drivers;
- The cycle the driver is following (if not driving under provisions of an oil well service permit);
- The vehicle's unit or license plate number;
- The starting odometer reading of each of the commercial vehicles operated by the driver;
- The total distance in kilometers or miles driven by the driver that day;
- The names and addresses of the home terminal and the principal place of business of every motor carrier by whom the driver was employed or otherwise engaged during the day.

More information about federal log books is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm.

How many hours am I allowed to drive according to federal hours of service laws?

If a carrier's Safety Fitness Certificate states that the carrier operates under "Federal" status, then they are subject to federal laws.

According to Section 12 of the [Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations \(SOR/2005-313\)](#), federal daily driving limits are as follows:

- A driver must have a minimum of 10 hours off-duty in every day (24-hour period);
- A driver may not drive more than 13 hours in a day;
- A driver may not drive more than 13 hours in a work shift;
- A driver may not drive after 14 hours on-duty in a day;
- A driver may not drive after 14 hours on-duty in a work shift;
- A driver may not drive after 16 hours have elapsed since the driver started a work shift;
- A driver must follow one of two federal cycle rules (as specified in the regulations);
- There must be at least 8 consecutive hours off-duty before a driver starts a new work shift.

Other hours of service rules apply to drivers following federal laws. Detailed information about federal hours of service driving limits is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm.

What is "deferred time"?

Drivers working for a federally regulated carrier are eligible to defer time. Drivers may reduce their off-duty requirement of 10 hours in a day by up to 2 hours so long as:

- The deferred hours are not part of the 8 consecutive hours off-duty on Day 1;
- The deferred time is added to the 8 consecutive hours off-duty taken on Day 2;
- The driver takes an additional 2 hours off-duty on Day 2;
- The driver's log book clearly indicates "Deferral Used" and specifies whether the driver is on Day 1 or Day 2;
- The driver complies with all work shift and cycle limits on both days affected.

The deferred time exemption is **not** available if the driver is operating under an Oil Well Cycle Exemption permit or if the driver is operating under **provincial** law.

Information about deferred time is available online in our [education manual](#), online at www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm or in the [Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations \(SOR/2005-313\)](#).

How long must I keep log book records?

A driver is required to submit each completed log to the carrier within 20 days of being produced. The carrier must, within 30 days of receiving the original copy of a daily log, retain that document at their principal place of business. All original log book records must be retained by the carrier for a period of at least 6 months from the

date each log was created. Carriers must also keep supporting documents such as fuel and lodging receipts for the same period.

If a driver is following provincial hours of service laws they must also keep a personal copy of their hours of service records.

Information about log book records is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm.

Am I allowed to use electronic onboard recording devices instead of a log book?

A driver is permitted to use an electronic onboard recording device instead of filling out a log book. The device must still provide all of the required information found in Section 82 of the *Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations* (SOR/2005-313).

An onboard recording device must also be capable of displaying:

- The driving times and other on-duty times for each day when the device is used;
- The total on-duty time remaining and the total on-duty time accumulated in the cycle being followed by the driver;
- The changes in duty status and the time at which each change occurred for each day on which the device is used;
- The times and dates on which the device has been disconnected and reconnected.

Information about onboard recording devices is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm.

What is the Federal Oil Well Service Vehicle Cycle Exemption Permit?

The federal [Commercial Vehicle Drivers Hours of Service Regulations \(SOR/2005-313\)](#) allows qualified motor carriers to obtain a permit which exempts their drivers from the cycle requirements of the regulations. This permit is available to motor carriers who operate vehicles that are directly involved in servicing oil and gas well sites and who meet all of the permit conditions.

Information about permits is available online at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/4489.htm.

Provincial Hours of Service and Daily Logs

How do I know if I'm supposed to follow provincial hours of service laws?

Hours of service regulations define maximum driving times and minimum off-duty times for commercial vehicle drivers (both bus and truck). These limits were created to prevent fatigue-related incidents. Carriers must include information about hours of service laws in their safety programs.

If a carrier is provincially regulated (they hold a "Provincial" Operating Status and operate only within Alberta), they must follow provincial hours of service laws. These laws will apply to the carrier's entire regulated fleet.

A carrier will follow federal hours of service laws if they are federally regulated. This means that they operate regulated commercial vehicles inside and/or outside of Alberta.

More information about hours of service laws is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm

Is anyone exempt from the provincial hours of service regulations?

Provincially regulated carriers are subject to provincial laws and the related exemptions.

The **provincial** regulations do not apply to the following vehicles according to Section 3 of the Alberta [Drivers' Hours of Service Regulation \(AR317/2002\)](#):

1. Emergency vehicles as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*
2. Vehicles engaged in the transportation of goods or passengers for the purpose of providing relief in the case of a natural disaster or a disaster caused by human intervention
3. Vehicles being used primarily to transport an agricultural product where the driver of the vehicle:
 - Is a bona fide farmer who owns or produced that agricultural product
 - Is an employee of that farmer
4. Vehicles that are 2- or 3-axle vehicles that are primarily used for the transportation of primary products of a forest, lake or river, where the driver or the driver's employer is the producer of those primary products
5. Recreational vehicles
6. Urban transit buses
7. Vehicles equipped with a mounted mobile service rig or equipment that is directly used in the operation or the transportation of a mounted mobile service rig
8. Vehicles that are exempted by the Registrar

More information about provincial hours of service laws is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/4652.htm.

When am I required to fill out a log book?

Carriers are required by law to ensure drivers maintain accurate daily logs according to the times they work for each calendar day. A daily log must be kept so that a carrier may ensure a driver does not exceed the federal or provincial driving limitations.

Even if a driver only operates a commercial vehicle once a week or once a month, they would still be required to comply with hours of service laws every day. This means that a driver must complete logs even for days they do not drive the vehicle.

Carriers and drivers can obtain blank daily logs from truck stops, stationary stores or printing companies.

Drivers may retain a radius record instead of a daily log if they qualify for and meet **all** of the requirements for the 160 kilometer radius record exemption.

More information about log books is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/4652.htm.

What is the 160 kilometer radius record exemption?

A driver may be exempt from filling out daily logs if they are eligible for the 160 kilometer radius record exemption. In order to qualify for this exemption, a provincially regulated driver and carrier must meet the following requirements:

- The driver operates within a 160 kilometer radius of the driver's home terminal;
- The driver returns to the home terminal and is released from work within 15 hours from the start of the driver's work shift;
- The carrier that employs the driver maintains and retains for a period of six months accurate time records showing the time that the driver reports to commence the driver's work shift and the time that the driver is released from work.

This exemption applies **ONLY** to record keeping requirements. **ALL** other requirements of the regulations must be met.

More information about the radius exemption requirements under provincial hours of service is available online in our [education manual](#) or in Section 12 of the [Drivers' Hours of Service Regulation \(AR 317/2002\)](#).

What information must be included in a log book that follows provincial hours of service?

If a carrier is provincially regulated, they must keep log book information as required by provincial law.

Provincial log books must be completed on a graph grid and must contain the following information:

- A graph grid in the form set out in the Schedule;
- The date;

- The start time of the day (if different from midnight);
- The name and signature of the driver and, if the driver is a member of a team of drivers, the names of the co-drivers;
- The vehicle's unit or license plate number;
- The starting odometer reading of each of the commercial vehicles operated by the driver;
- The total distance in kilometers or miles driven by the driver that day
- The names and addresses of the home terminal and the principal place of business of every motor carrier by whom the driver was employed or otherwise engaged during the day;

More information about provincial log books is available online in our [education manual](#) or in the [Drivers' Hours of Service Regulation \(AR317/2002\)](#).

How many hours am I allowed to drive according to provincial law?

If a carrier holds a "Provincial" Operating Status and operates only in Alberta, then they are subject to provincial laws.

According to Sections 5 and 6 of the [Drivers' Hours of Service Regulation \(AR317/2002\)](#), **provincial** daily driving limits are as follows:

- A driver may not drive more than 13 hours in a work shift;
- A driver may not drive after 15 hours on-duty in a work shift;
- A driver must take time breaks if they drive for 4 or 6 consecutive hours at a time (as specified in the regulations);
- A driver must have at least 8 consecutive hours of off-duty time prior to starting a new work shift.

Other hours of service rules apply to drivers following provincial laws. Detailed information about provincial hours of service driving limits is available online in our [education manual](#) or in the [Drivers' Hours of Service Regulation \(AR317/2002\)](#).

How long must I keep log book records?

A driver is required to submit each completed log to the carrier within 20 days of being produced. The carrier must, within 30 days of receiving the original copy of a daily log, retain that copy of the log at their principal place of business. All original log book records must be retained by the carrier for a period of at least 6 months from the date the information was recorded in a log. Carriers must also keep supporting documents such as fuel and lodging receipts.

If a driver is following provincial hours of service laws they must also keep a personal copy of their hours of service records.

Information about log book records is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/675.htm.

Am I allowed to use electronic onboard recording devices instead of a log book?

An automatic onboard recording device is permitted instead of the driver maintaining a log book as long as the device still provides all the required information found in Section 9(3) of the *Drivers' Hours of Service Regulation* (AR 317/2002).

Drivers must maintain written or printed records of the information recorded or collected by the automatic onboard recording device. In order for those records to be valid, the driver must sign them.

The driver must be ready to manually prepare a log book if the device does not work. Where a driver is required to maintain a daily log, the driver must be prepared to produce daily logs and supporting documents if requested to do so by a peace officer for inspection.

Vehicle Inspections

What is a daily trip inspection?

Daily trip inspections are required to ensure the active reporting of vehicle defects. Early reporting of problems may prevent vehicles from being operated if they are likely to cause or contribute to a collision or breakdown. This may lead to the better protection of drivers and the motoring public.

Under Section 10 of the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation* (AR 121/2009), vehicles that must undergo daily trip inspections as part of a maintenance program are:

- Commercial vehicles or a combination of commercial vehicles that are registered for a weight of more than 4,500 kilograms;
- Commercial vehicles with a manufacturer's seating capacity originally designed for 11 or more persons, including the driver;
- Trailers as specified in the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation*.

Anyone can be authorized by the carrier to conduct trip inspections. Drivers are not the only individuals who are permitted to carry out this responsibility.

If a major defect has been reported in a trip inspection, it must be repaired before a driver can operate the vehicle again. A record of any repairs made to fix a defect identified in a trip inspection must be created, retained and related to the associated trip inspection form.

More information about daily trip inspections is available online in our [education manual](#) or in the [Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation \(AR 121/2009\)](#).

How do I complete a daily trip inspection?

Generally speaking, a daily trip inspection is conducted using the following process:

- The driver conducts a walk-around inspection of a vehicle or combination of vehicles;

- The inspection is conducted with the use of a schedule which lists the vehicle components and systems that require inspection;
- The driver completes a written report of the inspection (when required);
- The driver records any defects found during the inspection, while en route and at the end of the trip or day;
- The driver reports all defects to the carrier;
- The carrier repairs or resolves any defects before allowing a driver to operate the vehicle again;
- The inspection and report are valid for 24 hours.

Carriers that operate regulated commercial vehicles registered for or weighing between 4,501 – 11,793 kilograms must complete a trip inspection, but are not required to document that inspection or to carry Schedule 1 in Alberta.

More information about how to conduct daily trip inspections is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/1866.htm.

How long do I keep a daily trip inspection report?

A daily trip inspection report:

- Is valid for 24 hours from the time recorded in a trip inspection;
- Must be forwarded to the driver's home terminal within 20 days;
- Must be filed at the carrier's principal place of business within Alberta within 30 days;
- Must be maintained for at least 6 months.

More information about daily trip inspections is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/1870.htm.

What is the Commercial Vehicle Inspection Program (CVIP)?

No regulated commercial vehicle can be operated on a highway unless it has a valid inspection certificate. This certificate is issued under the Commercial Vehicle Inspection Program (CVIP). This program applies to:

- Commercial vehicles that are registered for a weight of 11,794 kilograms or more;
- A combination of vehicles with a combined registered weight of 11,794 kilograms or more;
- Commercial vehicles with a manufacturer's seating capacity originally designed for 11 or more persons, including the driver;
- Any vehicles being towed by an NSC vehicle;
- A vehicle operating under the authority of an Operating Authority Certificate.

Commercial passenger vehicles such as school buses, motor coaches and vans must be inspected once every 6 months. Commercial trucks and trailers must be inspected once every 12 months. CVIP Inspections may only be conducted by a technician and at a facility that has been certified by the Government of Alberta.

More information about CVIP is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/685.htm.

What is a Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) Inspection?

The Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance is an international organization of motor carrier safety officials and industry representatives from the United States, Canada and Mexico. Its main goal is to promote commercial motor vehicle safety.

CVSA inspections may be performed on vehicles and drivers by CVSA certified inspectors. CVSA inspection reports can be used to measure the effectiveness of the carrier preventive maintenance program. CVSA inspection results are also displayed on the Carrier Profile report.

More information about the CVSA is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.cvsa.org.

What vehicle files am I required to keep?

A carrier must maintain the following records for each vehicle used in their business:

- Identification of each vehicle including a unit number, the manufacturer's serial number, or a similar identifying mark;
- Make and year of each vehicle;
- Records of inspection of each vehicle (including repairs and routine maintenance) and the nature of work performed on the vehicle;
- Copy of annual or semi-annual CVIP inspections for each vehicle;
- Copy of trip inspection reports for each vehicle;
- Records pertaining to the carrier's maintenance and inspection program.

All records maintained must be true, accurate and legible and must be maintained at the carrier's main place of business within Alberta. Except for trip inspection reports, all vehicle records must be maintained for the current year and the preceding four years. Trip inspection records must be maintained for at least six months.

More information about required records is available online in our [education manual](#) or in the [Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation \(AR 121/2009\)](#).

Safety and Maintenance Programs

What is a safety officer?

According to provincial law, every carrier must have a designated "safety officer". This person must have complete knowledge and understanding of the carrier's safety program and must have the authority to ensure it is effectively implemented. Even though one person is designated as the safety officer, larger companies may

have multiple persons engaged in ensuring the programs are being effectively implemented. Depending on the size of the company, the safety officer does not need to occupy a full time position and may be assigned other job duties as well.

It is the carrier's responsibility to ensure they are consistently aware of what their safety officer is doing to implement and maintain a safety program. They must ensure the program meets provincial laws and any other laws that apply to the company.

More information about safety officers is available online in our [education manual](#) or in Section 40(2) of the [Commercial Vehicle Certificate and Insurance Regulation \(AR14/2002\)](#).

Who is required to have a Safety and Maintenance Program?

According to Section 40(1) of the *Commercial Vehicle Certificate and Insurance Regulation (AR314/2002)*, carriers who operate National Safety Code (NSC) vehicles are required to have a written safety and maintenance program in place. This includes:

- Carriers who operate commercial trucks that are registered for a weight of 11,794 kilograms or more and who operate **only** within Alberta;
- Carriers who operate commercial trucks, tractors, trailers or any combination of them that are registered for a weight in excess of 4,500 kilograms and who operate outside of Alberta;
- Carriers who operate commercial vehicles with a manufacturer's seating capacity originally designed for 11 or more persons, including the driver.

A carrier's entire regulated fleet must follow the carrier's safety and maintenance program. It is a carrier's responsibility to follow provincial law and to meet safety and maintenance program requirements.

More information about who is required to have a Safety and Maintenance Program is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/3188.htm.

How do I write a Safety and Maintenance Program?

Each carrier and their designated safety officer must create a program that has specific policies and procedures that assist in the safe operation of their business. These policies and procedures must be maintained at all times.

A written Safety and Maintenance Program must meet the specific needs of the company, meet all regulatory requirements, be fully implemented as it is described and be effective at keeping the carrier in full compliance with transportation safety laws. Alberta Transportation provides all carriers with sample Safety and Maintenance programs that they may refer to. These sample programs are available online at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/3188.htm.

More information about how to write a Safety and Maintenance Program is also available online in our [education manual](#).

What should be included in a Safety and Maintenance Program?

According to Section 40(1) of the Alberta [Commercial Vehicle Certificate and Insurance Regulation \(AR314/2002\)](#), a carrier must, at minimum, cover the following subjects in their safety program:

- Speed limits, seatbelt use, drug and alcohol use, defensive driving, load security and fuelling;
- Proper records such as bills of lading, manifests, dangerous goods documents, time records, drivers' daily logs and weigh slips;
- Policies that inform drivers that they must not break transportation safety laws;
- Policies related to driver training, responsibilities, conduct and discipline;
- Instructions for the use of safety equipment including things such as fire extinguishers, goggles, safety glasses and hard hats;
- Training for employees about transportation safety laws and their application and an ongoing program for evaluating their driving skills;
- Retention of complete records for each driver as per Section 41 of the Alberta [Commercial Vehicle Certificate and Insurance Regulation \(AR314/2002\)](#);
- Policies for ensuring that drivers are properly qualified for the type of vehicle(s) they operate (for example, all drivers must hold the correct Operator's licence for the vehicle they operate).

According to Section 6 of the Alberta *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulations* (AR 121/2009), a carrier must, at minimum, provide policies for the continuous and regular inspection, maintenance and repair of the carrier's commercial vehicles. Copies of the carrier's safety and maintenance program must be provided at each location where there are employees who must use it.

More information about safety and maintenance programs is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/3188.htm.

What are the benefits of having a Safety and Maintenance Program?

A written safety and maintenance program may benefit a carrier in various ways regarding compliance, safety and finances. Having an effective safety and maintenance program:

- Helps to ensure the carrier is following provincial and/or federal safety laws;
- Reduces the likelihood that disciplinary action may be taken against the carrier;
- Standardizes procedures that allow for consistently safe operations;
- Assists all employees involved in the maintenance of commercial vehicles to do their jobs safely;
- Ensures the early identification of vehicle defects and the proper repair of those defects;
- Ensures the safety of everyone operating vehicles and equipment;
- Increases the level of safety for the motoring public;
- Prevents the likelihood of collisions or breakdowns and reduces the cost associated with those incidents;
- Assists the carrier in operating more efficiently;
- Contributes to the positive reputation of a carrier.

More information about how a safety and maintenance program may benefit carriers is available online [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/3188.htm.

Passenger Transportation

What is an Operating Authority Certificate?

Carriers who want to operate a bus, shuttle or taxi service may be required to apply for an Operating Authority Certificate. There are different types of Operating Authorities for different types of passenger services.

A carrier must apply for an “intra-provincial” Operating Authority Certificate if they offer a passenger service that operates only within Alberta.

A carrier must apply for an “extra-provincial” Operating Authority Certificate if they offer a passenger service that operates outside of Alberta.

Carriers who want to travel both within and outside of Alberta’s borders must apply for both of these certificates or apply for a single trip permit if authorization is needed only occasionally.

Note: On-demand taxi services do not require an Operating Authority Certificate to transport passengers if they are using a vehicle that was originally manufactured to carry 15 or fewer passengers.

More information about Operating Authority Certificates is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/663.htm.

Does carpooling count as being a shuttle service?

No. Passengers may pay into a “gas fund” that covers the costs of carpooling in a private vehicle so long as the driver is not paid for providing the service. Vehicles used for the purposes of carpooling are not required to register as commercial vehicles.

More information about Operating Authority Certificates is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/663.htm.

Do passenger transportation regulations still apply to non-profit organizations who are shuttling their members from point-to-point?

Yes, all such commercial vehicles must be compliant with the appropriate regulations. Charter, scheduled service, private, industrial or non-profit bus operations may all be required to obtain an Operating Authority Certificate.

More information about Operating Authority Certificates is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/663.htm.

Miscellaneous

What kind of insurance should I have on my vehicles?

The *Commercial Vehicle Certificate and Insurance Regulation* (AR314/2002) sets out the minimum insurance requirements as follows:

- Section 24, **Cargo Insurance** – requires carriers to maintain insurance to cover against loss of or damage to goods transported. Insurance requirements range from \$600 to \$32,000, depending on the GVW of the vehicle;
- Section 25, **Public Liability Insurance** – requires all carriers to maintain at least \$1 million coverage and those transporting certain types of dangerous goods at least \$2 million coverage;
- Section 26, **Passenger Hazard Insurance** – requires carriers conducting a passenger service to maintain passenger hazard insurance of either \$1 million or \$2 million coverage depending on the number of passengers the vehicle can transport;
- Section 27, **Taxi Insurance** – requires carriers that offer a taxi service to maintain insurance that provides for passenger hazard coverage of not less than \$1 million for liability resulting from bodily injury to or the death of one or more persons as a result of any single incident;
- Section 28, **Cargo Insurance (for express shipments)** – carriers offering express shipment services for goods must have cargo insurance of at least \$500 for each piece of cargo to cover loss of or damage to each item.

More information about Safety Fitness Ratings is available online in our [education manual](#) or in the [Commercial Vehicle Certificate and Insurance Regulation \(AR314/2002\)](#).

What are GVW and TARE weights?

The TARE weight of a vehicle means the weight of the vehicle when it is empty or not carrying cargo. The GVW of a vehicle means the licensed maximum weight of the vehicle as per the vehicle's certificate of registration.

More information about weights and dimensions is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/3870.htm.

Do I need to put decals on the sides of my vehicle?

According to Schedule 1, Section 9 of the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation* (AR121/2009), commercial vehicles that are registered for or weighing more than 4,500 kilograms must have the following information displayed on the left and right sides of the vehicle:

- The name or registered logo of the vehicle's owner;

- The vehicle's TARE weight;
- The licensed maximum gross weight of the vehicle (GVW).

The letters and numbers listed on the side of a vehicle must be at least 50 millimeters in height. They must also be a different color from their background so that the information is clearly visible. All information listed on the vehicle must be accurate.

Refer to Schedule 1, Section 9(4) of the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation* (AR121/2009) for exemptions to this requirement.

More information about weights, dimensions and vehicle requirements is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/3870.htm.

How do I get permits?

Alberta Transportation has an online system which allows carriers to quickly and easily apply for permits (including safety permits and weights and dimensions permits). Carriers may also check the status of applications and permits which they have already sent in.

Once a carrier has registered for Alberta Transportation Online Services, they will be able to access the site using their Log-in information. The registration form is available online at www.transportation.alberta.ca/4489.htm.

Carriers who are unable to access these online services may get assistance from approved third party agencies for a fee. More information on using approved third party agencies is available online at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/2737.htm.

For more information on obtaining permits, contact the central permit office at 403-342-7138 (or toll free at 800-662-7138).

Do I need to have emergency equipment in my vehicle?

It is recommended that all commercial vehicles be operated in a safe manner and have the available emergency equipment to do so. All drivers must be properly instructed in the use of all emergency equipment that is provided to them. Only the following legal requirements for safety equipment in vehicles apply:

- **Reflective Triangles**

Section 4 of the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation* (AR121/2009) requires commercial vehicles to carry at least 2 advance warning triangles with the exception of school buses which are required to carry 3. An "advance warning triangle" is a reflective emergency warning device which is visible for a distance of at least 150 metres under normal atmospheric conditions.

Commercial vehicles that are operated solely within the boundaries of an urban area or between that urban area and an abutting urban area are exempt from carrying triangles.

- **Fire Extinguishers**

Section 17 of Schedule 1 of the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation* (AR121/2009) requires that a bus carry at least 1 fire extinguisher. That fire extinguisher must be marked and must have a rating of at least 2A:10B:C.

Section 63 of the *Explosives Regulation* requires that all commercial vehicles carrying Class 1 Dangerous Goods carry a fire extinguisher. That fire extinguisher must be marked and must have a rating of at least 5-BC.

Although not a regulatory requirement, it is strongly advised that all commercial vehicles carry fire extinguishers that are easily accessible to the driver.

- **First-Aid Kits**

Section 16(1) of the *Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation* (AR121/2009) also requires a bus to be equipped with a first aid kit. In the case of a school bus, the first aid kit must meet the requirements of CSA Standard D250. The first aid kit must be readily accessible to the driver.

In the case of all other buses, an Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code Number 3 Safety Kit prescribed under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* must be readily accessible to the driver of the bus.

The type of first aid kit that should be kept in a vehicle is dependent on the details found in Schedule 2 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* which is available online at:

http://humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/WHS-LEG_ohsc_2009.pdf

Although not a regulatory requirement, it is strongly advised that all commercial vehicles carry first aid kits that are easily accessible to the driver.

Do I need to train my drivers?

Each carrier is responsible for making sure employees have the proper training necessary to do their jobs safely. Carriers may provide their own trainings or they may choose to hire a consulting company to do the training for them. The better informed a carrier's employees the less likely an incident is to occur.

More information about training requirements is available online in our [education manual](#) or in Section 41 of the [Commercial Vehicle Certificate and Insurance Regulation](#).

What regulations do I need to follow when I travel outside of Alberta?

When transporting goods outside of Alberta, a carrier must ensure they are registered appropriately in order to do so. An Alberta-based carrier who operates commercial vehicles registered for a weight of more than 4,500 kilograms outside of Alberta must hold a Safety Fitness certificate with a "Federal" Operating Status.

A carrier may also be responsible for ensuring they meet all regulatory requirements enforced in other provinces or countries. Permits may be required in order for a driver to travel in full compliance. Carriers may also need to consider such things as the International Registration Plan and the International Fuel Tax Agreement.

More information about these subjects is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/661.htm.

What is prorate?

The International Registration Plan (IRP) is an agreement between the United States and Canada that allows for the sharing of commercial vehicle registration fees. This plan was created to encourage the fullest possible use of the highway system between member provinces, territories and states.

Federal carriers operating Alberta-plated vehicles can apply through Prorate Services for vehicle registration in other provinces or states. The Alberta government will issue a cab card for each vehicle the carrier operates. The cab card will specify which member IRP locations a vehicle may operate in. All carriers who want to get prorate registration are required to have a Safety Fitness Certificate with a “Federal” Operating Status.

More information about the International Registration Plan and Prorate is available online in our [education manual](#) or at: www.transportation.alberta.ca/561.htm.

Can I use a commercial vehicle for personal use?

Commercial vehicles that are travelling outside of the province only for personal use are not required to have a Safety Fitness Certificate in Alberta. You must, however, contact the jurisdictions outside of Alberta that you intend to travel in and confirm what their requirements are prior to leaving the province with a commercial vehicle.

The driver of that vehicle must be able to demonstrate that they are using that vehicle only for personal use.

How do I report an unsafe or non-compliant carrier?

Alberta Transportation, Carrier Services is always interested in information regarding unsafe or non-compliant drivers and carriers. Please contact Carrier Services at (403) 755-6111 (toll free in Alberta by first dialing 310-0000) and ask for an Investigator to discuss violations concerns. You may also email Carrier Services at carrier.services@gov.ab.ca

Should the violation you are reporting include criminal activity or the use of illegal substances such as drugs or alcohol, Alberta Transportation strongly encourages you to contact the RCMP or the local police. Such violations do not fall under the jurisdiction of Alberta Transportation and must be dealt with by the appropriate authorities.