



September 2015

with Carrier Services

Making sure the wheels on the bus go round

For the month of September and into October, transport officers are helping ensure children get to school safely by inspecting hundreds of school buses at locations across the province. School bus inspections are a priority for transport officers during the back-to-school season. And in general, traffic safety stakeholders focus on school-related transportation issues in September.

Officers will be examining safety essentials, including: steering, brakes, seats, exhaust systems, emergency exits, tires and lighting. Transport officers can issue traffic violation tickets for equipment defects and/or they can issue a more serious out-of-service violation. Out-of-service means that repairs must be made before the

vehicle is allowed to continue. With children’s safety paramount all year long, inspections are also conducted at regular intervals throughout the school year. School buses are required to have a mandatory government Commercial Vehicle Program Inspection (CVIP) every six months.

Drivers can also do their part in keeping children safe by using caution when sharing the road with school buses. When a school bus turns on its red flashing lights, drivers are reminded to stop. When the amber flashing lights are on, motorists must reduce their speed to no more than 60 kilometres per hour as they pass the bus on either side.

The penalty for failing to slow down or stop for a school bus when required is \$543 plus six demerit points.

As the leaves begin to fall and Alberta’s summer drifts away for another year, road safety remains a priority for the Alberta Government.



Operating Authorities: who needs them?

Commercial carriers that provide passenger transportation services (e.g. with a bus or van) in Alberta may be required to hold an Operating Authority Certificate in addition to a Safety Fitness Certificate. Groups that currently may be required to hold an Operating Authority Certificate include:

- Corporations transporting their own employees;
- Daycares/Nursery schools when transporting children more than once a week and/or charging for the service;

- Commercial scheduled service providers;
- Governments – cities, towns, etc. (excluding transit);
- Government providing Community Service (e.g. transporting seniors or other community groups); and
- Non-government and non-profit Community Service Groups transporting members of the community.

Depending on the type of passenger transportation service being offered, carriers may also need to register

their vehicles with a specific type licence plate class and may also need to obtain passenger hazard insurance.

If you provide one or more of the services listed here or want more information about Operating Authority requirements in Alberta, please contact Carrier Services at 403-340-5444.

More information is also available at: transportation.alberta.ca

Evaluating transportation safety

National Safety Code (NSC) audits are used to determine whether carriers are following transportation safety laws that have been put in place to protect Alberta motorists.

To complete an NSC audit, Alberta Transportation's Public Safety Investigators and Certified Third Party Auditors use a program called the "Assessment of Regulatory Compliance" (ARC).

During an audit, the carrier's level of on-road and administrative compliance is evaluated to determine how safely the company operates on provincial highways.

Using the ARC program, auditors examine carrier records relative to four main categories:

1. Carrier Safety

This primarily includes an evaluation of the carrier's safety program, management practices, insurance policies, general compliance with transportation safety laws, and Dangerous Goods control records.

2. Driver Safety

This includes an evaluation of the carrier's driver files, licence disclosures, driver collision and conviction records, annual driver evaluations and evidence of any corrective action taken to address non-compliance.

3. Drivers' Hours of Service

This primarily includes an evaluation of driver logbooks and/or other time records (e.g. radius records) and supporting documents.

4. Vehicle Maintenance

This includes an evaluation of the carrier's written maintenance program, routine preventative maintenance policies, commercial vehicle inspection certificates, trip inspection reports and follow-up repairs, and records of vehicle defects.

The time needed to complete an audit depends on the carrier's fleet size, type of operation and overall level of compliance.

For more information about NSC audits, visit: transportation.alberta.ca

Unified Registration: operating in the US

If a Canadian transportation company wants to operate in the US, they will be required to apply for a USDOT number.

The Unified Registration System (URS) is a new electronic system in the United States that combines multiple registration processes, information technology systems and forms into a single online registration process.

Canadian carriers that operate in the US will now be required to use form MCSA-1 for new applications and renewals. The new form is different from the original and can **only be filled out online**.

All new applicants will be charged a fee for a USDOT number. If a carrier's USDOT number goes inactive or has been revoked, there will be a re-instatement fee.

If a company wants to operate in the US as a new for hire operation, the cost would be \$300 for the USDOT number plus \$300 for US operating authority.

Companies that are Exempt for Hire or transport certain Hazardous Materials (Dangerous Goods) will also be required to file insurance with the USDOT.

For more information, visit fmcsa.dot.gov or call the USDOT/FMCSA Montana Division at 406-449-5304.

Carrier Services, Alberta Transportation
4920 - 51 Street Red Deer, AB T4N 6K8
Phone: 403-340-5444 (toll-free in Alberta by first calling 310-0000) Fax: 403-340-4806

DID YOU KNOW?



The United States adopted new rules for the lease and interchange of passenger-carrying commercial vehicles.

These rules will ensure that unsafe passenger carriers cannot evade enforcement efforts by entering into questionable lease arrangements.

For more information, visit www.fmcsa.dot.gov



The Alberta Government offers Professional Driver Improvement Courses. These courses are offered online and in the classroom and were developed specifically for those who drive commercial vehicles as a profession.

The purpose of these courses is to develop responsible drivers that are knowledgeable of safe driving practices.

For more information, visit transportation.alberta.ca

Subscribe to this bulletin!
transportation.alberta.ca