



Alert 14-03: Update on the Impact and Challenges Brought About by the FMCSA Hours of Service Changes

Background

On July 1, 2013, new Hours of Service (HOS) Rules issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) went into effect. The rules required two changes:

1. The number of hours drivers are allowed to be on duty and the allowable drive hours within a shift are the same. However, drivers are prohibited from driving after eight hours on duty until they have a break of at least 30 minutes. This break requirement does not apply to “short-haul” drivers, i.e., drivers that are exempt from logbook requirements in Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §395.1.
2. The second change affects the 34-hour restart rule. The modification to the rule limits drivers to only one restart in a seven-day period and requires a driver to be off duty on two consecutive days between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. before beginning a new 60- or 70-hour workweek.

The goal of these changes is to reduce accidents, improve road safety for all and trucker health.

Analysis

Although these rules were enacted to improve driver safety, industry observers expect trucking operating costs to increase. Industry-leading trucking firms like Schneider National project that there will be a reduction in worker productivity and available carrier capacity under the additional hours of service changes recently adopted.

In fact, Schneider has issued early reports that demonstrate that truck drivers are being negatively impacted by the recent HOS changes. Their data indicates a 3.1 percent drop in productivity on solo shipments and a 4.3 percent decline on team shipments.

Schneider continues to state that operating safely is at the core of their business. However, Dave Geyer, senior vice president and general manager, went on to state, “safety performance has dramatically improved under the **previous** Hours of Service rules and there is no evidence to support that the most recent changes in the rules have improved safety. Ongoing feedback from its drivers, Schneider reports, is consistent: they do not feel better rested as a result of the recent rule changes.” *[emphasis added]* In addition, according to the American Trucking Association, a recent survey found that 44 percent of fleets believe the HOS changes have made it harder to find drivers.

- Continued -



Summary

Since the new rules were implemented in July 2013, Schneider has found that driver productivity has fallen and capacity has tightened. The firm is concerned that it may have to add additional drivers as a direct result of these new regulations, which is likely to negatively impact its operating costs.

Links for More Information

- *Transport Topics* article on the issue: <http://www.ttnews.com/articles/basetemplate.aspx?storyid=33272&t=Truck-Drivers-Losing-Money-from-Recent-HOS-Changes-Fleet-Leaders-Say>
- *Bulk Transporter* article on the issue: <http://bulktransporter.com/tank-fleets/schneider-data-shows-productivity-taking-costly-hit-hos-changes>

Issued 01/14

The information above is intended to provide interpretative and authoritative information as a service to our members and has been offered in good faith based on the information provided to us. We do not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any such interpretation or information.