State News

Governor Wants Input from Businesses on Regulatory Burdens & How to Improve Them
Governor McMaster will be holding a series of roundtable style meetings with local business leaders across South Carolina during the month of June. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss regulatory matters and other issues that make doing business difficult.

SCTA – through its members - wants to participate by weighing in, particularly as it pertains to owning/operating CMVs and employing CDL drivers. Please provide feedback immediately so that SCTA can be prepared to submit/transmit your concerns to Governor McMaster. Click here to Take the Survey

Public Meeting in Georgetown County June 6 Concerning Proposed Roundabout
The SCDOT has scheduled a public information meeting Tuesday, June 6, 2017, for the proposed roundabout at Waverly Road and Petigru Drive in Georgetown County. The meeting will be from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Waccamaw High School cafeteria, 2412 Kings River Road, Pawleys Island. The meeting will have a drop-in type format with displays for viewing and citizens will have the opportunity to provide written comments. Click here for more details.

SCDOT Public Involvement Portal
There is a new feature on the SCDOT website that increases transparency and makes it easier to learn about projects in your area. The Public Involvement Portal allows easy access for you to:

Project Viewer: this user-friendly map shows SCDOT projects in your area
Current Projects: lists of usually larger-scale projects by area, with links to more information
Public Meeting Calendar: information about upcoming public meetings in your area
Email signup: receive notifications about public comment periods

Technical College of the Lowcountry Seeks CDL Instructor
The Technical College of the Lowcountry is beginning to implement a CDL program and is currently seeking a CDL instructor. Details on the position can be found.

Industry News

Entry-Level Driver Training Clears Review, Implementation to Proceed
The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has completed its regulatory review of the Entry-Level Driver Training final rule and has determined the implementation will proceed as planned. The final rule, which spells out new training requirements for drivers seeking a commercial driver’s license, has been under review by FMCSA since February 1 under the terms of President Trump’s “Regulatory Freeze Pending Review” Memorandum.

Clearance of this rule from review allows implementation of this rule to proceed as planned. When fully implemented, drivers seeking to obtain a CDL for the first time will need to complete a training course from an
approved training organization before they are able to take the required CDL skills test. Training courses must adhere to new federal minimum standards which outline required theory (classroom) and behind-the-wheel training. BTW training includes time spent on a driving range as well as road driving.

The new federal rules do not stipulate a minimum number of hours a driver must spend in the classroom setting or in behind-the-wheel training. Instead, drivers will have to demonstrate competence in both areas in order to receive a completion certificate. Drivers seeking a CDL will need to comply with the new rules beginning February 7, 2020.

For a complete summary, click here. For a brief Frequently Asked Questions guide, click here.

**Pilot Program to Study Sleeper Berth Flexibility in HOS Regs**
Following incremental steps toward such a study in recent years, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration will formally announce Tuesday a pilot program intended to gauge the feasibility and safety aspects of adding split sleeper berth options to hours of service regulations.

FMCSA says it seeks at least 200 drivers to participate in the study. Drivers will be studied for up to 90 days, per a Federal Register entry slated for publication June 6.

Current regulations allow drivers, as an alternative to a straight 10-hour off-duty period, to take an eight-hour sleeper berth period to break up their 14-hour on-duty limit and their 11-hour drive-time limit. Drivers using this provision must take a two-hour off-duty period after exhausting their 11-hour drive-time limit. The two-hour off-duty period counts against drivers’ 14-hour limit for the on-duty period broken up by the two-hour break.

The agency’s split sleeper berth pilot program seeks to determine the effects other split sleeper berth options, such as 5-5, 6-4 and 7-3, would have on drivers and their ability to operate. The study’s outcome could dictate whether FMCSA decides to pursue reforms to hours of service regulations pertaining to split sleeper berth flexibility.

Public comments about the study are being accepted for 60 days, giving carriers and drivers the chance to provide the agency with input about the study and how it should proceed. The comment period opens Tuesday and will be available at the regulations.gov rulemaking portal via Docket No. FMCSA-2016-0260.

**FMCSA Drops Plans to Study Insurance Minimums for Carriers**
The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has abandoned its plans to consider an increase in minimum bodily injury and property damage insurance levels for motor carriers, freight forwarders and brokers. In an announcement on June 2, the agency said that after reviewing comments on its November 2014 advance notice of proposed rule (ANPRM) to consider increasing minimum financial responsibility levels it presently has “insufficient data or information to support moving forward” with the ANPRM.
The ANPRM did not specify insurance levels but asked carriers and brokers to answer dozens of detailed questions — such as what they currently pay in premiums; whether rates are determined by driver, credit or safety history; and whether carriers get discounts for a certain number of vehicles in a fleet.

It also said it intended to explore what percentage of fleets, based on size and the type of operation of the carrier already have liability coverage that exceed the minimum financial responsibility requirement and by how much.

Currently, for most carriers the minimum coverage requirement is $750,000. Those specializing in hazardous materials must have either $1 million or $5 million depending on what they haul. Those minimum levels, however, have been in place since 1985 and FMCSA said it intended to write a new insurance rule because “inflation has greatly increased medical claims costs and related expenses.”

“Based on the information provided, FMCSA is not able to determine (1) potential increases in insurance premiums associated with increased financial responsibility limits, or (2) the impact of an increase in minimum financial responsibility requirements on insurance company capital requirements set by insurance regulators to ensure there are sufficient reserves to minimize the risk of insolvency and protect consumers,” the June 2 advance Federal Register announcement said.

Source: Transport Topics

Truck Driver Input Needed on Parking Issues in and around Atlanta, GA

The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), the trucking industry’s not-for-profit research organization, is assisting the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to better understand new or improved truck parking solutions to serve professional drivers traveling in, through and around the Atlanta, Georgia region.

ATRI is now seeking truck driver input through an online survey. Please encourage your drivers to take a few minutes to participate in this critical research

Click here to take the Survey.

ATRI Seeks For-Hire Motor Carrier Operational Cost Data

The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) today issued a data call for the annual update to its Operational Costs of Trucking report. The brief online questionnaire seeks to capture basic cost information from for-hire motor carriers such as driver pay, fuel costs, insurance premiums and lease or purchase payments.

For-hire motor carriers are encouraged to provide confidential operational cost data through ATRI's survey by Friday, June 29, 2017, available online at www.atri-online.org. The results of this study will be available later this year, but survey respondents will receive an advance copy of the report.
Federal News

Senators to Question Chao on Infrastructure, Budget
Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao is headed to Capitol Hill to field questions from senators critical of the Trump administration’s 10-year infrastructure plan and proposal to reduce funding for transportation programs. The country’s top transportation officer will face this questioning before the Senate Commerce Committee on June 7.

In her first appearance on Capitol Hill since the unveiling of Trump’s budget request and infrastructure plan, Chao is scheduled to touch on concerns over air traffic control systems and other programs at the Federal Aviation Administration.

A $1 trillion, 10-year infrastructure funding proposal that was made part of the budget request would be propped up by $200 billion in federal spending to incentivize private-sector investments. Relying on private backers to pay for large-scale infrastructure projects has been rejected by lawmakers from rural states, such as Commerce Committee Chairman John Thune (R-S.D.). (His committee has jurisdiction over trucking policy.) Thune has said that rural highways lack the requisite traffic volume for viable tolling facilities.

Meanwhile, House Republican leaders began considering options for ensuring funding for the federal government for fiscal 2018. Lawmakers focused on overhauling tax policy and crafting a long-term infrastructure funding plan are uncertain there would be time to consider individual fiscal 2018 funding bills, such as the one that would keep DOT funding beyond Sept. 30.

Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) emphasized a commitment for advancing funding bills for each agency separately. “We intend to work as quickly as possible, while maintaining the highest standard of responsibility, to complete the fiscal year 2018 appropriations bills in a timely fashion,” Frelinghuysen said. “It is up to this Congress to provide needed proper funding to federal programs to maintain our national security and to uphold our common American values.”

Source: Transport Topics.

Other States’ News

TX to Allow Limited 100K on...7 Axles
Starting in 2018, Texas will increase the weight limits for trucks hauling intermodal containers, allowing loads up to 100,000 pounds to travel within a 30-mile radius of their point of entry on the Gulf of Mexico.

The new law will allow six-axle combination intermodal trucks to weigh up to 93,000 pounds and seven-axle trucks to weigh up to 100,000 pounds. Current Texas law allows gross weights up to 84,000 pounds with a permit.

Permits will be required to haul intermodal containers at the increased weight limits. The permits will cost carriers $6,000 a year. Half of the fee will go to the state’s highway fund, and the other half will be distributed to counties, cities and the Texas Department of Transportation.
The permit only allows the trucks to operate on state and local highways and does not authorize them for interstates or load-restricted loads and bridges.

The permits stipulate that loads must begin and end at a port authority or port of entry on the Gulf of Mexico, and the loads cannot go outside a 30-mile radius from the port authority or port of entry.

Welcome to the SCTA Group Insurance Trust!

A-1 Transfer & Recycling – Duncan, SC
Cardinal Transport, Inc. – Simpsonville, SC
H & S Oil Co., Inc. – Andrews, SC
Whitaker Transportation Co., Inc. – Spartanburg, SC

The SCTA Group Insurance Trust can help your company avoid the ACA Community Rating and join a large group pool of trucking companies to help control costs. Any South Carolina based trucking company and companies that directly support the trucking industry can participate in the plan. Contact Scott Woodberry to learn more!

**Traffic Notices**

The eastbound lanes of US 52 (Meeting Street/Carner Avenue), between Burton Lane and Spruill Avenue, will remain closed until Monday, June 19th, 2017. The ongoing closure of the US 52/Meeting Street/Carner Ave, between Burton Lane and Spruill Avenue, is being extended until Monday, June 19th for eastbound thru traffic into Charleston.

The closure of the eastbound lanes was originally required to demolish the former I-26 Exit 218 ramps to and from Spruill Avenue. The decision was made to extend these lane closures for utility relocation, drilled shaft installation, and embankment work associated with construction of the new Port Access Road I-26 Interchange ramps. While lane closures are an inconvenience the traveling public, closing the eastbound lanes and flagging the westbound lanes provides a safer environment for workers and those traveling through and around the area.

All eastbound thru traffic will be detoured via Burton Lane to Spruill Avenue while local traffic will allowed access up to Hackemann. Thru trucks should not be using neighborhood streets. Westbound traffic, towards North Charleston, will be provided a single lane of traffic traveling at a significantly reduced speed.
Optional Public Affairs/Advocacy Contribution for 2017 - “NOT TRUCKPAC”

You will notice a new line item on your 2017 dues invoice. This is for an optional contribution to support SCTA’s public affairs, image, advocacy, and outreach efforts in 2017. We ask that you go above and beyond your dues so SCTA can go above and beyond general member services. (This contribution does not go to TruckPAC.)

We plan to increase our overall advocacy efforts in the promotion of “Trucking” in 2017 including education & outreach initiatives to cultivate a new generation of truck drivers and technicians. Your additional support will not only help us with this new endeavor, but it will also help us maintain the professional staff necessary to carry out our mission; Foster relationships with elected officials/state government agencies and keep them abreast of our issues and positions; Cultivate Grassroots; and maintain memberships and support other coalitions and organizations that helps us develop unified alliances.

We look forward to serving you in 2017 and appreciate your continued investment in SCTA.