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News

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NARUC Affiliate



Flash

National Conference of State Transportation Specialists

Alliance For Uniform Hazmat Transportation Procedures

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Alliance 2005-06

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From the Editor

Spring fever! I think I have it. The symptoms are: Agitation – hard to sit still at my desk; my forehead feels warm; stiff neck from all the left head turns (to look out the window by my desk); continued eye squinting (from the sun we are not use to seeing); the desire to pack my bag and fly north; and the urge to dress in green. The cure: Take two aspirins, pay the doctor bill; quit wearing the heavy wool clothes; buy some new sunglasses; pack a green bag and fly north. We all seem to get this illness and it makes it hard to continue with the day-to-day activities we all must do. The key is to be thankful for our monotonous days; think about how fortunate we are; kiss our kids; (give the dog one too) and then figure out how we can enjoy the restlessness and fever of the springtime to our advantage. The feeling of excitement of what is around the corner may be just what we need in life. Springtime is my favorite time of the year. It is the season that seems to get me going and looking at things in a new light. The new light also shows all the dust and cobwebs accumulated from the long winter. So blow away the dust, move things around, shake things up (not just to confuse the spouse, kids and dog), take a deep breath and enjoy the fever!



Winter NCSTS Meeting in Savannah, Georgia

Great attendance and important state topics made this meeting a very productive one. There are many questions with little answers as it pertains to the passage of the UCR in SAFTEA-LU. At this time, no action has been taken by the USDOT to announce any members of the board. NCSTS formed four UCR Work Groups for the purpose of drafting written procedures, policies, forms, letters, recommendations, working agreements, and any other required documents to recommend to the UCR Board. The work groups will be presenting their completed work to the NCSTS Annual Conference in June. These work groups are: Administration (Avelino Gutierrez-chair), Registration (Sandy Bowling & Barb Hague- co-chairs), Revenue and Fees (Bill Leonard-chair) and Audit and Appeals (Russ Stover & Lynne Jones-co-chairs). If you are interested in working to put together a UCR Proposal, contact the chair of the group.

Some States are also working on enabling legislation to implement the UCR program. The states are: New Mexico legislation has been signed into law, Colorado's has passed the Senate and currently in House, South Dakota has been signed into law, Virginia-passed House and in Senate committee, Alabama has been introduced into

NCSTS Update (continued)

in the House, Oklahoma-in progress in Senate. Copies of the states enabling legislation when available will be placed on the NCSTS web site under "Resources".

NCSTS and industry are very concerned about the demise of the SSRS program under the TEA-LU bill which sunsets the SSRS program on January 1, 2007 without any tie to the UCR program being in place. States are encourage to contact your senator or representative to get this sunset provision extended to 24 months (January 1, 2008) in order to give time to implement the new UCR program.

The meeting activities also included putting together a draft of the agenda for the 48th annual conference which will be held June 11 - 14, 2006 at Birmingham Alabama at the Ross Bridge Resort <http://www.rossbridgeresort.com/>. So mark you calendar and make your reservations early. This will be a very informative meeting. The draft agenda is posted on our web site. Hotel reservations may be made in the following ways:

- 1) Call 1-800-593-6419. Let them know that you are with the NCSTS group arriving around June 9th, 2006; or
- 2) Go to <http://marriott.com/property/propertypage.mi?marshaCode=BHMHV> (our personal reservations page). On the right of the page, you will enter your arrival and departure dates. Then, click in the box labeled GROUP CODE, where you should type the 7 letter code: nctncta. Then click "find." The rate will pop-up and indicate that it is with NCSTS. From there, you can click on "reserve a room" and finish the reservation.

State Update

South Dakota – The passage of SB 25 transfers the authority to regulate motor carriers from the Public Utilities Commission to the Department of Revenue and Regulation. This bill also contains language that enables the department to comply with UCR. For more information see <http://legis.state.sd.us/sessions/2006/bills/SB25STR.htm>

Kansas – The Kansas Corporation Commission and the Kansas Highway Patrol joined together to reduce the number of injury and fatalities by creating a Civil Assessment Penalty Program. This program will assess civil penalties to motor carriers for violations of out-of-service orders. To read the entire press release, see the NCSTS web site under "Resources".

Pennsylvania – The PUC has entered into a pilot program for implementing electronic filing of motor carrier insurance. The Commission is granting a temporary waiver of their insurance regulations for a period of one year. After that time, the Commission will evaluate the program and make final recommendation at that time. See <http://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol36/36-9/373.html>

Did You Know

On our website under "Links" is a section called "**Other State Transportation Links**". Under this title is a link to a document that lists the website addresses for the various states for the various programs. If you have had a change to your website address, please contact Barbara Hague.



HAPPY SAINT PATRICK'S DAY!

Contact Barbara.Hague@modot.mo.gov for comments or items for the newsletter or website.

Update for the Uniform Hazmat Alliance

In January, the Uniform Hazmat Alliance enjoyed another productive meeting in conjunction with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's COHMED Conference in San Diego, in spite of deplorable surroundings. Alliance members were able to slog through our agenda, notwithstanding the most unaccommodating conditions: palm trees, the Pacific Ocean and warm, sunny weather.

We were very pleased with the attendance at our three sessions on "Hazardous Materials Permitting and Registration". Nearly 100 people attended the presentations, which featured Loretta Bitner from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, David Lehmann with the Pipeline and Hazmat Safety Administration, and John Canty representing the Hazmat Alliance. Hopefully, the attendees left with a better understanding of the state and federal hazmat registration and permitting programs, their similarities and differences, and how they are being harmonized.

As you may recall, FMCSA has provided the Alliance with incentive funds for new states that are interested in joining the Alliance. New states can now qualify for grant monies to offset expenses associated with adopting the Uniform Hazmat Program. The Alliance board was pleased to review and approve the grant application from the Missouri Department of Transportation. Their Motor Carrier Services Division believes that a single set of permitting requirements promotes hazmat safety more efficiently than a myriad of state programs. The Alliance looks forward to Missouri's entrance into the cooperative effort.

More recently, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities also applied for an incentive grant. Since the application was received after the January board meeting, the review and approval was conducted by email and a telephone conference of the board. We anticipate working with the great folks in the Land of the Midnight Sun, provided that all business is conducted during Eastern Standard Time.

Looking forward, the Alliance is planning to participate in the upcoming NCSTS meeting in Birmingham. If your state is interested in exploring membership in the most comprehensive hazmat permitting program, please be sure to look for Alliance board members at the June meeting.

Washington D.C. News

URS/UCR Board – USDOT has begun to consider the implications of URS and questions regarding the Boards composition and membership and anticipates naming the board in April, 2006.

Response to the proposed URS Rulemaking FMCSA – 1997-2349 – The states are encouraged to file comments if they have not done so particularly as it deals with PRISM to this rulemaking even though the notice time has elapsed. 175 comments have been made by various states, associations and transportation companies.



Sympathy –Since the last newsletter, we lost a very dear member of NCSTS, Rick Page. Many of us will remember his friendship and his kind and gentle spirit. May he rest in peace.