




Memorandum

Date: February 20, 2019

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement | FMCSA's Oversight of Commercial Driver Medical Certificates | Project No. 19S3007S000
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

From: Barry J. DeWeese 
Assistant Inspector General for Surface Transportation Audits

To: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administrator

According to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) data, fatalities in crashes involving large trucks or buses grew from 4,397 in 2012 to 4,879 in 2017, an 11-percent increase. One key area of addressing motor carrier safety is to ensure that commercial drivers maintain a valid medical certificate, which confirms they are healthy enough to safely operate the commercial vehicle. However, since August 2014, Office of Inspector General criminal investigations have resulted in eight indictments and six convictions as a result of fraud in the medical certification process.¹

FMCSA's Office of Medical Programs requires commercial drivers with a commercial driver's license (CDL) to submit a current medical examiner's certificate to State driver licensing agencies. A U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) physical exam for commercial driver medical certification is valid for up to 24 months. In January 2015, FMCSA established a database to receive digital copies of medical certificates directly from medical examiners. In addition, FMCSA is implementing a process for States to receive medical certificate information directly from DOT. FMCSA maintains a list of all physicians and other medical professionals authorized to conduct medical examinations and certifications of CDL holders in its National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners.

¹ For example, an August 2017 indictment of a medical examiner in Georgia resulted in more than 600 truck operators having to renew their FMCSA medical certifications.

Given the rise in motor carrier fatalities and the significant safety risk posed by fraudulent medical certificates, we are initiating this audit. Our audit objectives are to evaluate FMCSA's procedures for: (1) oversight of its medical certificate program, including commercial driver medical certificate data quality, and (2) validating information in its National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners.

We plan to begin the audit immediately and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. We will conduct our work at FMCSA Headquarters in Washington, DC, and other locations. If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-366-5630 or Kerry R. Barras, Program Director, at 817-978-3318.

cc: DOT Audit Liaison, M-1
FMCSA Audit Liaison, MCPRS