

TRANSTRENDS

THE TRANSLAW GROUP, INC.

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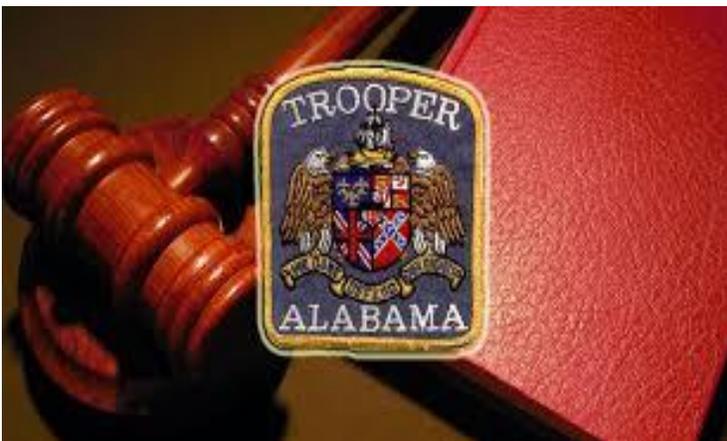


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EX ALABAMA STATE TROOPER ILLEGALLY ACCESSING FMCSA DATABASE



A former employee of the Alabama Highway Patrol has pleaded guilty to accessing information from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration databases without authorization.

Gary Scott Stratton entered a guilty plea in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama on March 8. As part of the guilty

plea, Stratton admitted to:

- Intentionally accessing a computer without authorization.
- Obtaining information contained in a record of a government agency.
- Committing the offense for the purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain.

The offense occurred between June 2018 and January 2019. The Office of Inspector General said Stratton worked as a private consultant for a company that provided motor carrier services in Alabama. The ex-trooper was able to gain access to the FMCSA databases by using credentials he received while working as a state trooper for the Alabama Highway Patrol, the Office of Inspector General said. Apparently, the ex-trooper used his access to benefit clients of the motor carrier services company that employed him.

PRODUCE HAULERS PETITION FMCSA FOR MODIFICATIONS TO HOS AND ELD RULES AND THE PUZZLE EXPANDS



A coalition of producers, handlers, and shippers in the perishable fruit and vegetable industry are petitioning the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to modify the rules regarding hours of service and the electronic logging mandate.

“Our growers, handlers and shippers urge your consideration to ensure the safe and timely delivery of perishable fruits and vegetables,” the coalition wrote in the petition dated March 15.

The coalition includes 24 national and state groups in the fruit and vegetable industry, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, National Watermelon Association, Produce Marketing Association, United Fresh Produce Association, and the Western Growers.

As part of the petition the following modifications were requested:

- Add an allowance for drivers to rest at any point during their trip without this rest time counting against their hours-of-service allotments.
- Exclude loading and unloading times from the 14-hour on-duty hours-of-service calculations.
- Allow drivers to complete their trip, regardless of hours-of-service requirements, if they come within 150 air miles of their delivery point (if delivery takes place on any day beyond the original departure work period).

FMCSA GRANTS MORE HOS EXEMPTIONS AND CONSIDERING AN EXEMPTION FOR ANIMAL HAULERS



A pair of hours-of-service exemption requests are scheduled to appear on the Federal Register.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety

Administration is asking for public comment on a proposal to allow drivers who haul livestock, insects and aquatic animals to extend their driving time beyond 11 hours.

The agency also will grant a petition it received last fall that will provide hours-of-service relief for concrete pavement haulers.

The applicants request approval to, after 10 consecutive hours off duty: drive through the 16th consecutive hour after coming on duty; and drive a total of 15 hours during that 16-hour period. The requests are made on behalf of drivers who transport livestock, insects and aquatic animals. FMCSA requests public comment on the joint applicants' request for exemption.

A joint application for the request was signed by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Livestock Marketing Association, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Beekeeping Federation, American Honey Producers Association and the National Aquaculture Association.

An existing hours-of-service exemption already gives livestock haulers a 150 air-mile radius before the clock starts. The joint proposal requests that the 15- and 16-hour limits would begin after a livestock hauler travels outside the 150 air-mile radius. The exemptions would apply to all livestock, insect, and aquatic animal transporters and their drivers.

The FMCSA plans to unveil in the coming months a potential rulemaking that would reform hours-of-service regulations for all commercial drivers. The agency issued an advance notice of proposed rulemaking last August. FMCSA hosted four public listening sessions and received about 5,200 comments.

FREE WHEELING



A truck driver was treated for injuries after one of the front wheels from a black sedan came off and crashed through the windshield of a Peterbilt on Interstate 78 near Allentown, Pa., on Saturday, March 16.

Generally, this type of accident happens when the truck wheel flies off and hits a car. TRANSTRENDS remembers such an incident on Route 24 South in Taunton, MA many years ago when a truck wheel came flying by the car. TRANSTRENDS was not surprised when the truck was identified. Horrendous safety record and this was before CSA!

15 STATES LOOK TO INCREASE FUEL TAX



During the past six years nearly 30 states have raised or reformed their fuel tax rates. Despite the progress toward addressing transportation funding needs legislators in more states continue to pursue additional revenue enhancements.

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association believes increasing the fuel tax is the

most equitable way for states to generate additional revenue. Below is a list of many states so far this year to have legislation introduced, or talks, to adjust fuel tax rates.

Alabama	Minnesota
Arizona	Mississippi
Arkansas	New Hampshire
Hawaii	New Mexico
Illinois	Ohio
Indiana	Wisconsin
Iowa	Wyoming
Maine	

**COURT SIDES WITH DRIVER FIRED
FOR REFUSING UNPERMITTED OVERWEIGHT LOADS**



OBVIOUSLY NOT THE VEHICLE INVOLVED IN THIS ITEM

A federal appeals court affirms a lower court's ruling that a Connecticut trucker who refused to haul unpermitted overweight loads was wrongfully terminated by his employer.

On Feb. 6, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit agreed with a district court's decision awarding Connecticut truck driver Michael Kennedy more than \$260,000 in a wrongful termination case. Both courts denied Harwinton, Conn.-based

Supreme Forest Products' motion to dismiss and motion for a new trial.

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