
PRISM News

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HOT TOPIC –

FMCSA has been placing increased emphasis on combating the chameleon carrier issue. FMCSA is testing a new program to identify chameleon carriers before issuing for-hire authority. An automatic matching mechanism is being used to check data fields on application forms such as address, phone, fax number, officers' names etc. against existing carrier records before granting a new MC number. The pilot program covers passenger carriers and household goods carriers.

PRISM has been successful in identifying many chameleon carriers through the VIN safety check. Some states have gotten excellent press coverage when they have identified chameleon carriers and denied registration to them. However, some states have not yet passed legislation that allows them to establish that a carrier has re-invented himself and then maintain registration sanctions on those vehicles registered to the carrier.

PRISM states should make every effort to obtain this critical legislation in order to keep unsafe carriers off our highways. The PRISM Procedural Manual contains model Legislation.

The new version of the Procedural Manual to be published later this summer will also contain details on



suggested methods to determine if a new carrier is in fact the old carrier.

PRISM has also developed a new report to identify chameleon carriers that have successfully obtained vehicle registration in states. The team is comparing basic information such as carrier names, addresses, phone numbers, officers' names etc to determine whether the old and new carriers are the same. These reports will be sent to the states quarterly along with the current OOS tracking report for investigation.

The FMCSA Division Offices will work with the states to stop the operation of these unsafe carriers.

The PRISM team would like to have states share any ideas on effective ways to catch the chameleon carriers based on states processes. Please email Tom Lawler with any suggestions and comments – Tom.Lawler@dot.gov.

Registrant Only

The registrant only number, created by PRISM, will be eliminated by FMCSA. The registrant only number has not been used for the purpose for which it was created. Instead, this number has created havoc with the assignment of safety events and with the overall oversight of the motor carrier safety programs.

As mentioned in previous additions of this newsletter, the motor carrier that improperly uses a registrant only number escapes any oversight by FMCSA, including compliance reviews and the new entrant program audit.

A notice in the Federal register is the first step. The PRISM team has drafted the notice and it is currently under legal review. Once it is published, PRISM will send information letters to both the FMCSA Division Administrators and the state DMV offices. FMCSA will research the safety events on the registrant only records and take corrective action. States will need to make relative system and forms changes.

States may request funding to make the changes after they receive the information letter.

CSA 2010 Initiative

The Comprehensive Safety Analysis (CSA) 2010 initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's compliance and enforcement programs is on track to be fully implemented in mid 2010.

Over the last several months, two additional states have joined the pilot process. These are Minnesota and Montana. As a reminder, the steps used to indicate an Out-of-Service status of a carrier (steps 54-64 inclusive) are NOT affected by the CSA 2010 process.

The appendix section of the PRISM System Specification document reflects the complete set of MCSIP Steps resulting from this CSA 2010 initiative.

MCSIP Step Changes

Step 63 - OOSO New Entrant was split into two steps in August 2009. Step 63 was renamed and includes only the carriers that have either refused the audit or have made no contact for the audit. The new step 64 is assigned to carriers that have failed the new entrant audit. Carriers assigned either step are out-of-service.

CVSA Adoption of

CVSA has adopted the FMCSA out-of-service orders into the CVSA Criteria for out-of-service. In April 2009, Law Enforcement began placing out-of-service carriers' vehicles out-of-service at the roadside.

Trip Permit Pilot

Many states issue trip permits for limited travel to carriers that do not apportion their vehicles.

Around the country there are multiple vendors who perform the service of selling these permits to carriers. Presently, we do not include these vendors in the PRISM program system checks for validating the USDOT numbers nor for doing safety checks.

We have discussed the possibility of a pilot project with states to connect these agents' systems to the files necessary to insure issuance of permits only to carriers that are not out-of-service.

If you are interested in participating with PRISM on this project, please contact Tom Lawler at Tom.Lawler@dot.gov

Trip Permit Disclaimer

The pilot project discussed above will not have any reportable results or solutions in the immediate future. Therefore, in the meantime, we are recommending a new policy suggested by one of our PRISM states. Since the trip permits currently could be issued to an out-of-service carrier, we recommend the statement –“This trip permit is void if the carrier responsible for safety of the vehicle above is out-of-service.” This statement will assist Law Enforcement if the vehicle is stopped and checked at the roadside. Law Enforcement will be able to site for non-registration as well as operating under an out-of-service order.

Please add this statement to your trip permit forms when you order new supplies. If these forms are computerized, please add the statement as soon as priority can be obtained.

COMPASS

PRISM states generally use AAMVAnet to access MCMIS in the DMV office. Now MCMIS is available through the single sign-on portal. States can get a COMPASS account and start using the portal. Eventually the AAMVAnet connection will be eliminated.

PRISM State users can apply for a COMPASS portal account using the URL below. Simply click on the “*To register for a portal account, please click here*” link and follow the steps.

Under *STEP 3*, the users must select the “FMCSA State” they are affiliated with along with selecting the “*Organization Affiliated*” for the selected state. If the users requesting the portal account **do not** see the proper organization with which they are affiliated, they should contact FMCSA Technical Support 617-494-3003 or FMCTechSup@dot.gov for assistance and/or resolve.

The URL link listed below will also direct the users to training material on using the COMPASS portal.

If there are any issues, stop the process and call for additional support.

COMPASS Portal link - <https://portal.fmcsa.dot.gov/>

NLETS Connection

On July 31, 2009, PRISM terminated the AAMVA PRISM/NLETS Gateway connection and moved the PRISM Targeted Vehicle files for NLETS queries to the NLETS organization headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona. The queries include the ACQ and AVQ check made by law enforcement officers on the vehicle or carrier's Federal out-of-service status and whether the vehicle is targeted for inspection at the roadside.

Future plans include NLETS accessing the MCMIS database to respond with real-time out-of-service status.

NLETS will also investigate the possibility of triggering automated checks to the PRISM Target file for every commercial vehicle registration plate inquiry.

XML Files

PRISM has created a new PRISM XML file - T0042P. This file contains the entire list of targeted carriers in MCSIP in XML format. It was created to offer the same carriers as the flat file version of the Target File in XML.

The T0041P file contains both the targeted vehicles and the carriers that have a targeted vehicle associated with them, while the T0042P contains all the targeted carriers no matter if there is any targeted vehicle registered to the carriers.

The PRISM Target File (flat file format) is a combination of T0041P and T0042P.

Bar Code Re-

In an effort to ensure all cab cards can be read at the roadside, PRISM re-certifies each states cab cards annually. If you have not been certified for version 3.4.1, please send three copies of your cab cards as specified in the bar code specification to the PRISM team to be re-certified. The change to print the statement - "motor carrier responsible for safety is expected to change" is required by January, 2010.

National Conference

The PRISM conference call was held on July 22, 2009. Topics discussed included:

- Program Status Update and Recent Activities

From May 7, 2008 until now, there are five additional states that received grant approval; seven States + DC have approved implementation plans, and there are 31 states in PRISM Level 1 to 3.

- New Highway Authorization

The Highway authorization Bill has passed the House. The PRISM program will be mandatory by 2013 if the Bill becomes Law.

- GAO report

The GAO final report on the PRISM program provided a favorable review.

- Chameleon Carriers

Activities by FMCSA to detect the Chameleon carriers were presented. States should pass laws that will allow them to maintain the

sanctions against chameleon carriers. See the related article in this newsletter for details.

- Registrant-Only USDOT Numbers

FMCSA plans to eliminate the registrant only entity type in MCMIS. See related article in this newsletter.

- Web Services

The benefits of the PRISM web service for roadside License Plate and USDOT readers is to get the safety status for carriers in real-time.

The SAFER web services contain more Carrier information such as TIN, entity type and MCS150 Update Date, which can be used for the USDOT validation by the IRP Office.

More details on the PRISM web service will be in the new PRISM System Specifications, which will be released soon. PRISM provides a startup package to use the web service.

- XML files

PRISM has a new PRISM File-T0042P that contains the entire list of targeted carriers in MCSIP in XML format. It was created to offer the same carriers as the flat file version of the Target File in XML. See the related article in this newsletter for details.

- MCSIP step change

Step 63 for New Entrants OOS has been split into steps 63 and 64 and will be released soon.
Note: This changed was released.

Step 63 is OOS: New Entrant Revoked – Refusal of Safety Audit/No Contact
Step 64 is OOS: New Entrant Revoked – Failure of Safety Audit

- Expanded PRISM

The expanded PRISM program includes federally regulated vehicles that are not registered in IRP as well as intrastate vehicles. If states are interested to include their non-IRP vehicles, a guideline for the implementation will be sent as requested. Tom will be the person to contact for funding.

- NLETS connection

The modification of the NLETS connection for the AVQ and ACQ queries was explained. See the related article in this newsletter for details.

- MCMIS Portal connection

MCMIS is now available for states through the single sign-on portal. See the related article in this newsletter for details.

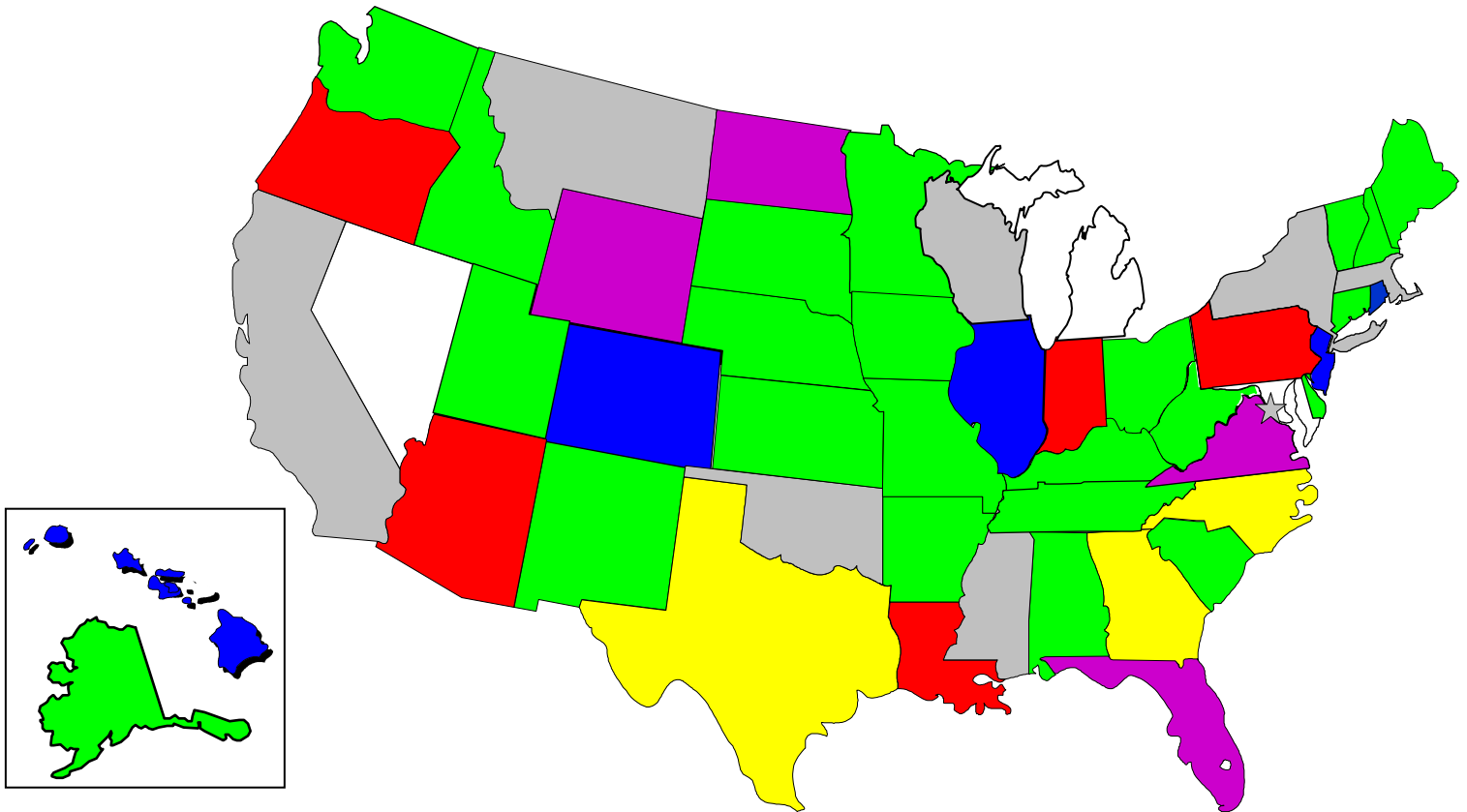
- Grant Applications

States can submit grant applications by the deadline date Sep.1 2009 for the fiscal year 2010. Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered as long as funding is still available.

States' Implementation

Since our last newsletter, significant progress and growth of the PRISM program has taken place. The following states' implementation levels have been upgraded which can be seen on the map on the next page:

Alabama
Alaska
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Idaho
Kansas
Kentucky
Massachusetts
Mississippi
New York
North Dakota
Texas
Virginia
Wisconsin



PRISM Implementation Levels

Grant Approval – BLUE (5 States: CO, HI, IL, NJ, RI)

**States Developing Implementation
Plan for Approval – PURPLE** (4 States: FL, ND, VA, WY)

**States Implementing
an Approved Plan – GREY** (7 States + DC: CA, MA, MS, MT, NY, OK, WI)

PRISM Level 1 – RED (5 States: AZ, IN, LA, OR, PA)
**Collecting/Validating USDOT Number
of Carrier Responsible for Safety**

PRISM Level 2 – YELLOW (3 States: GA, NC, TX)
**Enforcing MCS-150 Update
Checking Carrier Safety Status
Submitting Targeted Vehicles to SAFER**

PRISM Level 3 – GREEN (23 States: AK, AL, AR, CT, DE, ID, IA, KS, KY, ME, MN,
MO, NE, NH, NM, OH, SC, SD, TN, UT, VT, WA, WV)
**Denying, Suspending, Revoking for Federal OOSO
Bar Coding PRISM Specs
Enforcement Stopping Targeted Vehicles**

N/A – WHITE (3 States: MD, MI, NV)

Total PRISM States: 31