

**QUEEN'S PARK UPDATE
REPORT FROM PRESIDENT
PERRY FERGUSON**

This morning Kevin Langs and I met with Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Deb Matthews to discuss competitive procurement in the student transportation industry. We stated that our Association is committed to supporting operators as they learn to respond to RFP's but also reiterated that there needs to be constructive improvements going forward. We shared with her our recent conversations with Minister Sandals and outlined a number of improvements to the process. I indicated that conversations continue with her staff. The Deputy Premier agreed that working with the Minister was the right way to go and indicated she was very supportive of the direction the OSBA is taking.



**REPORT FROM VICE PRESIDENT
LESLIE CROSS**

I along with Rick Donaldson met with Transportation Minister Glen Murray this past Wednesday to talk about the current issues in student transportation. The Minister asked for the OSBA briefing as he wanted to understand firsthand what he was hearing during the recent Liberal Leadership campaign as he travelled the Province. As Perry reports, we also shared the conversations we are having with the Education Minister and her staff. The Minister committed to talk with Minister Sandals and supports our request for a review. We also took the opportunity to indicate that the OSBA has excellent relations with his Ministry and that his predecessor made a number of significant policy announcements last year as requested by our Association. And we will continue to work with his staff on ongoing areas of interest in the months and years ahead.



TRANSPORTATION STATION

MTO implements “Code W” driver licence indicator for commercial drivers not medically qualified to drive in the US

Back in 1998 as part of NAFTA discussions, Canada and the US entered into an agreement to achieve driver licence reciprocity for commercial vehicle (truck and bus) drivers. At that time, US DOT reviewed the commercial driver medical standards in Canada’s National Safety Code and was satisfied that Canadian standards were nearly equivalent to medical fitness regulations in the US federal motor carrier regulations. However, the reciprocity agreement stipulated that Canadian commercial vehicle drivers with specific medical conditions as follows are **not** allowed to drive a commercial bus or truck in the US:

- Diabetes requiring insulin
- Hearing impaired
- Monocular vision
- Epilepsy/seizure history

The 1998 agreement stipulated that both countries would adopt and implement *within 2 years* an international identifier code called “Code W” to be displayed on commercial driver licenses and driver abstracts to identify a driver who is not qualified to drive outside the border of his or her own country. This licence indicator is needed for carriers to ensure they do not dispatch these drivers on US trips.

Unfortunately, provincial and state governments in both countries dragged their feet and nothing happened. Four years ago, OMCA wrote to the Ontario Minister of Transportation and to the president of CCMTA urging them to get on with implementing the “Code W” licence indicator - pointing out that over a decade had passed since the agreement was struck and commercial carriers remain vulnerable if a prohibited driver was to have an accident while driving a truck or bus illegally in the US. OMCA continued to press the Ontario Government (MTO) to show leadership and implement the “Code W” for Ontario drivers even if other provinces and states see fit to ignore the 1998 commitment. MTO has done the right thing and has moved ahead with implementation of “Code W” effective May 26, 2013.

As of May 26th, Ontario drivers holding a class “A”, “B”, “C”, “D”, “E” or “F” licence and who have one of the four medical conditions (above) will have a “Code W” placed on their driver’s licence. Ontario commercial drivers with a “Code W” are prohibited from operating a commercial vehicle in the U.S. Drivers with a “Code W” on their licence can continue to drive commercial vehicles in Canada. The “Code W” indicator will appear on the front of the driver licence card in the “Rest/Cond” field.

Commercial class drivers who have not filed a cyclical medical report and were downgraded to a Class D as a result will also be issued a “Code W”. Class D drivers will be required to file a medical after being downgraded in order to drive in the U.S. in accordance with the Canada/ U.S. Medical Reciprocity Agreement for Commercial Drivers. Effective April 1, 2013 all commercial drivers who fail to file their cyclical medical will be downgraded to a Class G. These drivers will need to file a medical in order to upgrade their driver’s licence.

TRANSPORTATION STATION

Avoid Delays in Filing MTO Medicals – Take Clean Reports to DriveTest Centre

From time to time hear from members about drivers who are downgraded due to late filing of the MTO medical report. Sometimes, medical reports that are sent by the doctor's office or by the driver by mail or fax to MTO end up missing in action. Drivers should be reminded that if the medical is clear, i.e. (on the front of the form, the doctor or nurse practitioner answers "NO" to all questions 2 through 9 and answers "YES" or "NO" to Question 1, the report can be taken in person to any DriveTest office where DriveTest staff can score and load the results on the driver system right then and there. This saves time and avoids the problem of reports getting lost. Also, remind your drivers to always keep a copy of the medical! If the doctor or nurse practitioner checks "YES" to any of the boxes 2 through 9, then the form can't be scored and entered by DriveTest staff, instead, the form must be sent to MTO by fax: (416) 235-3400 or 1-800-304-7889.

OTE—ANOTHER JOINT INDUSTRY SUCCESS

Thanks to all OSBA members who attended last week's 15th annual Ontario Transportation Expo and Trade Show. And a special THANK YOU to all our supplier members who made the Tuesday showcase available to all. Those who attended will have received an invitation to take 3 minutes of your time to complete a conference survey that will be most useful when the OTE Steering Committee meets on May 16th. To complete the survey please go to the link <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/V8SLVK9>

LAST CALL FOR ORDERS

Please contact the OSBA office with all Log Book and Record of Duty Status Book orders for September 2013 **by April 26th**. We need to know how much inventory to order to cover orders for September.

The OSBA member price for these publications are:

- Log Books - \$1.65 per book (form attached)
- Record of Duty Status Books - \$4.35 per book (form attached)

Please email Elizabeth McQuade and **state whether you require your orders now or by the beginning of June!** emcquade@osba.on.ca

Remember orders MUST be in by April 26th!

PRIZE WINNER

George Kotsopoulos from Durham Region Transit was the winner of the Leaf Ticket draw at the Sound Insurance booth at OTE "Compliments of Travelers Insurance".



Calendar of Events April & May

April 2013

| Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat |
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| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

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Upcoming Events

May 8-10, 2013 - OASBO Annual Conference - London, ON

May 12-17, 2013 - Professional Instructor in Driver Education Program - Burlington, ON

May 2013

| Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat |
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Submissions welcome.

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