



TIA ON THE HILL

The Latest News and Updates from TIA's Government Affairs Department



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Advocacy Alert: Cross Border Mandate

The Biden Administration last week threw another wrench in the supply chain by mandating all foreign nations entering the country be vaccinated. This mandate comes into affect after two years of non-U.S. citizen truck drivers performing essential cross-border trucking without such requirement. This version of the order was handed down with no exception list, which means essential workers must comply with the order.

TIA has been an leading voice and advocate against this mandate by engaging with Congressional staff, issuing a strong press release to media, penning a letter to the Secretary of Homeland Security, and activating all grassroots and social media verticals. TIA is leading the charge on this initiative. Our own President and CEO Anne Reinke has now done numerous media interviews on this topic.

The American supply chain is already bending. Capacity remains tight as the backlogs at the ports continue and delays. This comes at a time when some estimates show a 100,000-driver deficit. Now is not the time to bar drivers from entering the country because of a vaccine mandate. This at the same time the vaccine requirement on U.S. citizens was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

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TIA President and CEO, Anne Reinke says this on the mandate, “Americans are struggling right now, at the grocery store, at the pump, and diners across the country. One way to make this drastically worse is overnight to take tens of thousands of truck drivers and forbid them from entering the country, leaving countless amounts of essential freight and the doorstep of our country. Today, the Biden administration did just that.” We will continue to call for a reversal on this policy in addition to congressional oversight into the thinking of this.

FMC Holds Briefing on Data Exchange

On January 25, 2022, the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) led by Commissioner Carl W. Bentzel held a meeting with industry stakeholders regarding the data and visibility, specifically focusing on chassis throughout the supply chain. The guest speakers spoke about the vast data that is available but noted there is a lack of organization of the data making it difficult to use and decipher, which in turn hurts visibility. A major focal point of this discussion was identifying ways to forecast supply and demand and knowing where the pressure points are for resource allocation.

One major aspect the stakeholders spoke about as it relates to the problem of chassis shortages is that customers do not “respect” turn time and providers must “control” turn time. Stakeholders spoke about considering labor shortages, skyrocketing demand, and capacity issues. All of this is to ensure that the chassis get returned and accessible to the next available customer.

Data sharing and accessibility were reoccurring issues on the call. TIA members have repeatedly talked about the issue of visibility into the supply chain and EDI or electronic data interchange. Reigning in all of the different data points that come from ocean liners to the port terminals, to the drayage trucks and warehouse, etc, into a flowing EDI to allow for efficiency. This will help mitigate the shortages because we are quickly able to gain access to what available equipment is out in use, and where it is in the supply chain. Another common theme was forecasting, the ability to know in advance what’s coming and going in real-time. It greatly improves resource allocation and lets companies plan accordingly in real-time. Chairman Carl Bentzel who led the task force meeting inquired with the group about gaps that exist right now as it relates to data. The participants on the call mentioned that even though data has vastly improved, there are gaps in data. One participant said “we must monitor effectively: as it relates to GPS accessibility. There isn’t always a shortage, sometimes they just aren’t moving.”

We know that every port is different, and data needs to be translated to supply chain stakeholders, specifically the carriers, beforehand arriving at the port campus. FMC is looking at standardized data. These are industry minimum standards that are helpful to make uniform information across all ports regardless of size. It was also stated that ocean carriers must provide certain information to other countries' port authorities however that is not the case in the U.S. port authorities. TIA will continue to monitor this space to ensure our members are protected from any regulatory or legislative change.

FMCSA Releases Updated UCR Fee Structure

Last On January 24, 2022, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) published a notice of proposed rulemaking to update the fee structure and fee reduction for the Unified Carrier Registration (UCR) for 2023.

The UCR Plan and the 41 States that participate in the UCR Agreement establish and collect fees from motor carriers, motor private carriers of property, brokers, freight forwarders and leasing companies. The UCR Plan and Agreement are administered by a 15-member board of directors (UCR Board); 14 appointed from the participating States and the industry, plus the Deputy Administrator of FMCSA. TIA's Vice President of Government Affairs Chris Burroughs is one of the 14 appointed members of the UCR Board of Directors. The following chart will outline all the levels of registration fees for all parties involved in the UCR Plan.

TIA members are included in the 0-3 CMV category and their fee would be reduced to \$43 in 2023 down from \$59 in 2022.

Currently 41 states are participating in the UCR, but you must register even if you are not domiciled in one of those participating base states, simply select a participating state. Register today by visiting the UCR webpage, www.ucr.gov.

For more information, please contact TIA Advocacy (advocacy@tianet.org, 703.299.5700).

Secretary of Transportation Releases Safety Plan

The Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Pete Buttigieg released last week, a plan to address the skyrocketed number of deaths by vehicle in our country. The 42-page report entitled "National Roadway Safety Strategy," is a comprehensive look at the data, factors, and commonalities between casualties on our roads. The report states that 38,680 people died on American roads in 2020, which is a 7.2% increase from 2019. In his report, Secretary Buttigieg states it as an action item for increasing safety on the highway. "Increase commercial motor vehicle highly visible traffic enforcement against risky driver behavior focused on high crash locations."

TIA members know all too well about safety in the supply chain, whether it be double brokering, illicit dispatch services, or a motor carrier selection process that is outdated and broken. The federal government could take steps TODAY to increase safety. Specifically, the broken motor carrier safety rating process remains in place, even though the number of unrated carriers continues to rise. The FMCSA should release an updated Safety Fitness Determination rulemaking, that develop a rule to replace the current on-site, manual audits conducted by FMCSA that result in 90% of carriers being unrated and replace it with a system based on data.

TIA continues to advocate for this change in addition to H.R. 3042 which would create a standard that would give clarity to anyone selecting a carrier. The bill enjoys the most bi-partisan support in its history. We look forward to building on this and keeping safety in mind throughout the process.