
PRISM News

Volume 3 Issue 1

September 2003

Hot Topic -- Change IRP Schedules A & C

Previously, we have discussed the change to the MCS-150 update process. Carriers who update MCMIS directly (or through another state) within 12 months to the first day of the new registration period are not required to submit an MCS-150 at the time of initial registration. It is still a requirement to validate the USDOT Number, which requires the collection of the TIN, as well as the USDOT Number. In the past, the TIN was taken from the MCS-150 provided with the application. Since the MCS-150 is no longer required in some situations, the TIN must be included on the IRP schedules A and C. Be sure to put this on your to do list for the next printing of your schedules.

States on Board

As of September 2003, thirty-two States have signed grant agreements to participate in the Performance and Registration

Information Systems Management (PRISM) program. Two additional States have also submitted a Letter of Intent to implement the program.



Quarterly Conference Call

The PRISM quarterly conference call was held on August 28, 2003. In order to accommodate the many participants, two separate calls were conducted. Topics discussed included:

- Welcome New States to PRISM

Alabama and Virginia have been awarded grants and Nebraska has been approved for a grant. Arkansas, West Virginia, Massachusetts, and Missouri have submitted letters of intent.

Since the calls, grants have also been signed with Arkansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, and West Virginia.

- PRISM Procedural Manual

There is an updated version of the manual. The updates are mainly adding the MCS-150A requirements and updating a few forms. The manual will be available on the Safer FTP site in mid-September.

- MCS-150 File Generation Schedule

The MCS-150 file is on the secure FTP site. The file availability schedule will be published in this newsletter periodically (see page 3).

- Barcode Standards

There are always many questions concerning this subject matter at the PRISM training sessions with the states. Dick Spring will be reviewing the standards being used by the primary vendors and the states with independent IRP systems. If there are any recommendations to change the standards, these will need to be balloted in order to change appendix E of the IRP.

- Safer 4.2

The Safer 4.2 version went into production in mid August. However, this new version does not allow the vehicles from CVIEW to be put on the target file as the older version did. VOLPE will be addressing this issue so that CVIEW XML transmissions will put the vehicles on the target file just the same as EDI or the IE mailbox. Spring 04 is the target date for completion.

- Implementation Reviews

FMCSA plans to begin these reviews in the near future. The reviews will be used to educate and point the states in the right direction when they may not be completely meeting the requirements. It will also help in developing a best practices listing for the PRISM requirements.

- New “Required” Fields for Issuance of USDOT Number

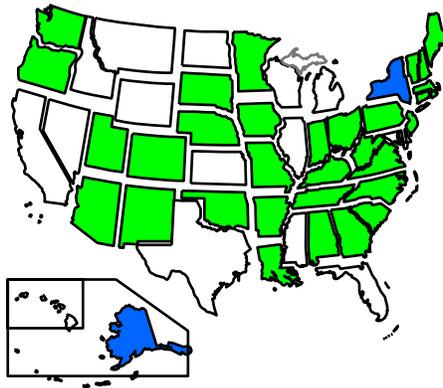
The telephone number and the TIN are now required fields in MCMIS. The addition of these fields will assist with the validation of USDOT numbers through PRISM and aid Federal and State staff in their efforts to contact carriers.

- PRISM Implementation Committee

The next committee meeting is scheduled for November 13 in conjunction with the IRP board meeting in Tampa, Florida. Agenda items are being

solicited. Please send any items to Ruth Skluzacek of Iowa.

For more information, contact Susan.Alonzi@fmcsa.dot.gov



PRISM Grant State
PRISM - Letter of Intent State

PRISM Procedural Manual, August 2003

The FMCSA PRISM Team has completed a revision to the PRISM Procedural Manual that will be available by mid-September through PRISM Technical Support. This new manual contains the latest recommendations for form changes, procedure changes and other details concerning implementation of the PRISM Procedures. Anyone wanting a copy of the manual should contact PRISM Technical Support to obtain a user name and password to access the manual on the Safer FTP website - Saferftp.volpe.dot.gov.

State Corner

Maine PRISM Implementation Experience By Garry Hinkley

The State of Maine has been a PRISM participant for a couple of years now. In Maine, the program is the joint responsibility of the Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles and the Maine Bureau of State Police. PRISM has encouraged the two agencies to work together even more closely.

PRISM fits nicely with Maine's goal of improving the quality of motor carrier information and improving highway safety. Maine requires a DOT number for all motor carrier related credentials including interstate, intrastate commercial vehicle registrations, fuel tax licenses, operating authority credentials, and overlimit permits. The DOT number is captured on all motor carrier-related summonses and accident reports. The ability to issue intrastate and interstate DOT numbers to our carriers has helped improve customer service, even as we improve the quality of our data. Better data and better access to data means better roadside enforcement.

The MCS-150 update process has been integrated into our IRP renewal process. The MCS-150's are printed and mailed with the IRP renewal packets. The implementation of the MCS-150 requirement has been relatively pain-free and has been accepted by our carriers.

3

Maine still has much to do to finish PRISM implementation. The technological issues have been the hardest to solve. It is important to have the full support of top management in all affected agencies in order that the required systems changes receive the necessary support.

The PRISM implementation process in Maine has been a very positive experience.

PRISM System Specifications, April 2003

In April, the FMCSA PRISM Team distributed a revised version of the PRISM System Specifications, version 2.0, to all jurisdictions who had completed the PRISM Training & Implementation Planning Meetings.

This version of the PRISM Systems Specs is very different from earlier versions. The file layout for the MCS-150 File that is now available from the Volpe SFTP Facility is included; and a completely rewritten PRISM Requirements and Process Specifications Section takes the place of the earlier Process Description Section.

All of the transfer mechanisms that were available in the prior release of PRISM will still be supported. In addition, the files outlined in that document will be able to be pulled from and

pushed to the PRISM Central Site via a secure FTP server that we are providing. Let Volpe know if you would be interested in participating in a test of that capability. It is our desire to not roll out any new IE Mailbox accounts, as used in the PRISM pilot program, but instead convert everyone to secure FTP.

Other new capabilities will allow CVISN States that use EDI to participate in the PRISM program using their CVIEW systems via established SaferData e-mail accounts. However, significant changes to the CVIEW systems running on the State's side would need to be made. The release of SAFER v4.2 allows CVIEW States to transmit and receive data with SAFER via XML. However, PRISM States will need to be aware that in its initial release, SAFER v4.2 vehicles submitted via XML will not be included on the PRISM Target File. The Volpe PRISM Technical Support will begin to remedy this problem by next spring. A work around is available for the short term that must be developed in coordination with the PRISM Central Site. Please contact PRISM Technical Support if you are interested in pursuing this route.

We will also be publishing the address of a new PRISM Web Inquiry site that will mimic the inquiry capabilities outlined in the UNI interactive transaction processing section of the system spec but will use a web browser instead of the AAMVANet UNI method of querying the database.

The new PRISM Requirement and Process Specification shows each systems-related PRISM requirement and all approved alternatives that can be used to satisfy that requirement. While the alternatives other than the PRISM files have less detail concerning the processing, there are references where users can find additional detail. The PRISM Team urges State personal to review these new System Specifications to see if any changes in operating procedures might be required.

Copies of the April 2003 PRISM System Specifications can be received by contacting PRISMTechnicalSupport@volpe.dot.gov.

MCS-150 File Generation Schedule

Since May 2003, the PRISM Central Site has been generating and making available a monthly PRISM MCS-150 File on the FMCSA secure FTP site maintained at the Volpe Center. The layout of the file has been added to section four in the latest PRISM System Specification. This file is available to satisfy the PRISM requirement to perform initial and renewal IRP processing for carriers seeking to register vehicles in a PRISM State.

To access the file, States need to decide on a method to download it from the SFTP site by contacting the PRISM Technical Support staff to set up a

4

connection. The latest schedule listing dates that the file will be available is listed below.

Data As Of	Available for Download
September 30, 2003	October 8, 2003
October 21, 2003	October 29, 2003
November 11, 2003	November 19, 2003
December 2, 2003	December 12, 2003
December 31, 2003	January 8, 2004
January 21, 2004	January 29, 2004
February 11, 2004	February 19, 2004
March 4, 2004	March 12, 2004

2003 PRISM Briefings and Training

Briefings:

February: Arkansas
June: Massachusetts
July: Wisconsin

Training:

February: Alabama
May: West Virginia
July: Nebraska
August: Arkansas

PRISM Bar Code Standard

The FMCSA PRISM Team is beginning a Project to develop a PRISM Bar-Code Standard. The PRISM Procedural Manual identifies the fields that should

be bar-coded and the conditions under which certain fields should not be bar-coded. Because of upcoming changes in the field length of several MCMIS fields and the difficulties that some PRISM States have experienced in getting reliable bar-code information, an effort will be made to review all available information and update the information that is outdated or incorrect. We expect to contact the PRISM States that are currently bar-coding their cab cards and discuss with them any changes that they would like made in the bar-coding formats or procedures.



Other States' News

Alabama received Overview and Implementation Guideline training this year and was awarded a PRISM grant in June.

Alaska has submitted a letter of intent.

Arizona's revised PRISM Implementation Plan was approved by FMCSA.

Arkansas received Overview and Implementation Guideline training in August and was awarded a PRISM grant in September.

Colorado, a pilot state, continues to participate in the program.

Connecticut's revisions to its PRISM Implementation Plan were approved by FMCSA.

Georgia continues to participate in the PRISM program and added the new entrant procedures to its registration process this year.

Indiana continues to work toward full implementation of its revised plan.

Iowa, a pilot state, continues to participate in the PRISM program. Iowa took the lead in preparing a presentation for the IRP managers at the meeting in Canada last Spring.

Kentucky continues to participate in the PRISM program and is working toward full implementation of their Plan.

Louisiana is beginning to implement the first year requirements of PRISM. FMCSA notification letters were sent to all LA based carriers to remind them that under PRISM carriers are required to provide their USDOT number to register vehicles.

Maine continues to strive toward full PRISM implementation. See State Corner in this edition of the PRISM newsletter.

Massachusetts received a PRISM briefing in June and recently submitted a Letter of Intent to implement PRISM. MA was awarded a PRISM grant in September.

Minnesota continues to work toward full implementation of its revised plan. MN will use CVIEW.

5

Missouri submitted a Letter of Intent to implement PRISM and was awarded a PRISM grant in September.

Nebraska received a briefing from the PRISM Team in June and Implementation training in July. NE was awarded a PRISM grant in August.

New Mexico's PRISM Implementation Plan was approved by FMCSA in June. The State is currently working on implementation.

New Hampshire's PRISM Implementation Plan was approved by FMCSA in September 2002. The State continues to work on implementation.

New Jersey is finalizing its PRISM Implementation Plan and is expected to submit it to FMCSA for approval in the near future.

New York is revising its PRISM Implementation Plan and is expected to forward it to FMCSA for approval in the near future.

North Carolina's PRISM Implementation Plan has been approved and the State is working toward implementation. The State plans to use CVIEW.

Ohio's Implementation Plan was approved by FMCSA in 2002. The State continues to work on implementation.

Oklahoma's PRISM Implementation Plan was approved by FMCSA in 2002.

Pennsylvania continues to participate in PRISM and is pursuing full implementation of the requirements.

Rhode Island's PRISM Implementation Plan was approved by FMCSA in 2002. The State continues to work on implementation.

South Carolina has modified their IRP schedules to capture USDOT numbers and began capturing the USDOT numbers in their system in January 2003. SC printed the MCS-150 information on the renewal package in February.

South Dakota continues to work toward implementation of their plan.

Tennessee's PRISM Implementation Plan was approved by FMCSA in 2003. The State is now working toward full implementation.

Utah is working closely with its IRP contractor to begin implementing changes to fulfill the PRISM requirements. The PRISM Team conducted a review of the PRISM requirements with the State in July of this year.

Vermont received approval of its PRISM Implementation Plan in February 2003. The State is now working toward full implementation of PRISM.

Virginia submitted a Letter of Intent to implement PRISM and was awarded a PRISM grant in August.

Washington's PRISM Implementation Plan was approved in 2002 and the State is working toward full implementation.

West Virginia received Implementation Guideline training in May 2003. The State's Implementation Plan was approved

and a PRISM grant was awarded to WV in September.

Wisconsin received a briefing on the PRISM program in July 2003.

