Frequency: Continuous.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: The estimated total annual burden for all respondents is 83,200 hours. This involves responses from 52 State Departments of Transportation or equivalent with an estimated average time of 1,600 hours per respondent over the course of a year. This estimate only includes the burden on the respondents to provide information that is not usually and customarily collected.

Authority: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995; 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended; and 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued on: February 20, 2007.

James R. Kabel,

Chief, Management Programs and Analysis Division.

[FR Doc. E7–3196 Filed 2–23–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

[Docket No. FHWA–2007–26843]

Agency Information Collection Activities: Request for Comments for New Information Collection

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The FHWA has forwarded the information collection request described in this notice to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval of a new information collection. We published a **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day public comment period on this information collection on November 24, 2006. We are required to publish this notice in the **Federal Register** by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Please submit comments by March 28, 2007.

ADDRESSES: You may send comments within 30 days to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, Attention DOT Desk Officer. You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including: (1) Whether the proposed collection is necessary for the FHWA's performance; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways for the FHWA to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the collected information; and (4) ways that the burden could be minimized, including the use of electronic technology, without reducing the quality of the collected information. All comments should include the Docket number FHWA–2007–26843.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions concerning the FHWA Motorcycle Crash Causation Study, please contact Carol Tan, Ph.D, Office of Safety Research and Development (HRDS), at (202) 493–3315, Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center, Federal Highway Administration, 6300 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA 22101, between 9 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. For questions concerning the Pilot Motorcycle Crash Causes and Outcomes Study, please contact Paul J. Tremont, Ph.D, Office of Behavioral Safety Research, NTI–131, at (202) 366–5588, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590, between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Motorcycle Crash Causation Study and Pilot Motorcycle Crash Causes and Outcomes Study.

Background: In 2005, 4,553 motorcyclists were killed and 87,000 were injured in traffic crashes in the United States, increases of 13 percent, and 14 percent respectively from 2004. Per vehicle mile traveled in 2004, motorcyclists were about 34 times more likely to die, and 8 times more likely to be injured in a motor vehicle crash than were passenger car occupants. Per 100 million miles traveled, in 2004, motorcyclist fatalities were 77 percent higher than they were in 1994. This compares with a decrease of 22 percent in fatality rates for occupants in passenger vehicles over the same period. These data show that the motorcycle crash problem is becoming more severe.[1]

Congress has recognized this problem and directed the DOT to conduct research that will provide a better understanding of the causes of motorcycle crashes. Specifically, in Section 5511 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU) Pub. L. 109–59, Congress directed the Secretary of Transportation to provide grants to the Oklahoma Transportation Center (OTC) for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive, in-depth motorcycle crash causation study that employs the common international methodology for in-depth motorcycle crash investigation developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).[2] SAFETEA–LU authorized $1,408,000 for each of fiscal years 2006 and 2007, but provided for an equal match by the Grantee (Sections 5511 and 5101). The Secretary delegated authority to FHWA for the Motorcycle Crash Causation Grants under Section 5511 (71 FR 30831).

Coordination of FHWA Main Study and NHTSA Pilot Study

Prior to the SAFETEA–LU directive by Congress to administer a full-scale study of motorcycle crash causes, NHTSA awarded a contract to conduct a pilot study of Motorcycle Crash Causes and Outcomes. The intent of this pilot study is to examine appropriate applications of the OECD methodology to motorcycle crashes in the United States. This pilot test is needed before any full-scale study could be conducted because the OECD methodology has not previously been implemented in the United States, and also because this methodology incorporates some options for collecting crash and control sample data that are affected by logistical and budget constraints.

The authorization of funds by Congress for a full-scale motorcycle crash study provided an opportunity for the NHTSA pilot study to become closely coordinated with the FHWA full-scale study. As a result, the pilot study will test the procedures FHWA will consider using as it implements the OECD methodology. Additionally, it may be possible for the pilot study to transition directly into the main study, thereby allowing the main study to avoid many startup costs (e.g., site selection, training, coding manual development, data form development, etc.) that it otherwise would have incurred. This will allow the main study to capture a larger sample of crashes with the available funding. Recognizing these advantages, the DOT intends to submit a single request to OMB for approval of both of these studies. This notice is the first step in that combined approval request.

Project Working Group Guidance

A project working group consisting of representatives from the motorcycle industry and from the motorcycle community was formed to provide input into the study design. A working group meeting was held in Denver on June 15–16, 2006. At this meeting, consensus was reached that all the relevant OECD variables would be captured in both the

[1] More detailed information on motorcycle crashes can be found in Traffic Safety Facts—Motorcycles, published by NHTSA and available on its Web site at: *http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/NCSA/TSF2005/MotorcyclesTSF05.pdf.*

[2] The OECD methodology may be obtained by sending a request to *jtrc.contact@oecd.org.*

NHTSA pilot and FHWA full-scale studies, that some of these variables would need to be modified to conform to U.S. requirements, and that other variables would need to be added to provide necessary data related to the U.S. roadway environment.

Proposed Data Acquisition Methodology

Use of Parallel and Complementary Procedures

The OECD describes two complementary procedures to be performed for acquiring the data needed to understand the causes of motorcycle crashes. The first of these is the traditional in-depth crash investigation that focuses on the sequence of events leading up to the crash, and on the motorcycle, rider, and environmental characteristics that may have been relevant to the crash. The second procedure, known as the case-control procedure, complements the first. It requires the acquisition of matched control data to allow for a determination of the extent to which rider and driver characteristics, and pre-crash factors observed in the crash vehicles, are present in similarly-at-risk control vehicles.

Such a dual approach offers specific advantages to the understanding of crashes and the development of countermeasures. The in-depth study of the crash by itself allows for analysis of the events antecedent to the crash, some of which, if removed or altered, could result in a change in subsequent events that would have led to a non-crash, or reduced crash severity outcome. For example, an in-depth crash investigation may reveal that an automobile approaching an intersection was in a lane designated for straight through traffic only, but the motorist proceeded to make a left turn from that lane into the path of an oncoming motorcycle. That finding can, by itself, be used to develop countermeasures, and does not require matched control data. However, acquiring matched control data from similarly-at-risk riders and drivers provides additional critical information about crash causes that cannot be obtained if only crashes are examined. The main purpose of acquiring matched data is to allow for inferences to be made regarding risk factors for crash causes. A brief explanation is provided here so that those less familiar with case-control procedures will understand the advantage of acquiring controls.[3]

Consider a hypothetical situation where it is observed that the proportion of motorcycle riders involved in crashes that have a positive Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) is the same as the proportion of matched (similarly-at-risk) control motorcycle riders not involved in crashes. And assume that the proportion of passenger-vehicle motorists who crash with motorcycles at a positive BAC is greater than matched control passenger-vehicle motorists. These data considered together would suggest that for crashes involving passenger vehicles and motorcycles, alcohol is a bigger risk factor for passenger vehicle drivers than it is for motorcycle riders. That is, the relative risk of crash involvement attributable to alcohol in motorcycle-automobile crashes is greater for passenger-vehicle motorists than for motorcyclists. Other risk factors for crashes (i.e., age, gender, riding and driving experience, fatigue level) for both motorcyclists and motorists can also be examined in this manner. If scaled interval measurements of risk factor levels are obtained (for example, if the level of alcohol is measured, not just its presence or absence), then it becomes possible to calculate functions showing how risk changes with changes in the variable of interest. Such risk functions are highly useful in the development of countermeasures.[4]

Issues Related to Sampling

Characteristics of the Crash Sample

To properly acquire in-depth crash data, it is necessary to find a location in the country that experiences the full range of motorcycle crash types that occur under a wide range of conditions and with a wide range of motorcycle rider characteristics. The location must also have a sufficiently high frequency of motorcycle crashes to allow acquisition of the crash data in a reasonable amount of time. It is anticipated that it will be possible to find a single location meeting these requirements.

It is not necessary that the crash types observed (or other composite indices or parameters of interest) be drawn from a nationally representative sample, because it is not the intent of FHWA to make projections of the national incidence of the causes of crashes involving motorcycles from this study. Rather, the focus will be on identifying the antecedents and risk factors associated with motorcycle crashes. If it is deemed necessary, FHWA and NHTSA may utilize their alternative databases that incorporate certain of the key variables that will be acquired in this study, and those databases could be used in conjunction with this study's data to make national estimates of population parameters of interest.[5]

In addition, the crash investigations will be conducted on-scene, while the involved operators and vehicles are still in place. To accomplish this safely, it is understood that the controlling police agency would need to first secure the crash scene, and gather any evidence and data for their own investigation. One way for this project to capture its on-scene data, would be for researchers to accompany early police responders to the scene, and under police guidance, acquire those OECD data elements not captured by the police. If this procedure imposes additional costs on the police agency having jurisdiction over the crash, then the project would consider compensation to the police agency for those costs in accordance with a prearranged agreement. This on-scene collection approach provides access to physical data that is less disturbed by rescue and clean up activities. It also facilitates the collection of interview data while memories are unaffected. This quick-response approach is most effective when a census of applicable crashes is selected for inclusion.

Characteristics of the Control Sample

While the occurrence of a crash involving a motorcycle in the study site is sufficient for it to be selected into the study, selecting the similarly-at-risk controls is not as straightforward. The OECD recommends several options for acquiring matched controls; including interviewing motorcyclists who may be filling up at nearby gas stations, taking videos of motorcyclists who pass the

[3] This being a study of crashes involving motorcycles, data will be acquired from both crash-involved motorcycles and also motor vehicles involved in those crashes as countermeasures may be developed separately for each that could lead to a reduction in crashes involving motorcycles. Similarly, when control data are acquired, data from similarly-at-risk motorcycle rider controls and similarly-at-risk automobile driver controls will also be acquired. This way a balanced picture of the causes of crashes involving motorcycles and other vehicles will emerge.

[4] Certainly other outcomes besides the one presented are possible, and other comparisons are of interest. For example it would be useful to compare crash-involved motorcyclists to non-crash involved motorcyclists and crash-involved passenger vehicle motorists to non-crash involved passenger-vehicle motorists. These comparisons would allow for estimates of changes in relative risks for riders and drivers independently.

[5] There is a lengthy precedent for studying crashes using case-control methods including the Grand Rapids study, (Borkenstein, R.F., Crowther, F.R., Shumate, R.P., Ziel, W.B. & Zylman, R. (1974). The Role of the Drinking Driver in Traffic Accidents (The Grand Rapids Study). Blutalkohol, 11, Supplement 1), and of course the Hurt study, (Hurt, H.H., Jr., Ouellet, J.V., and Thom, D.R. (1981). Motorcycle Accident Cause Factors and Identification of Countermeasures Volume I: Technical Report).

crash scenes, and interviewing motorcyclists at the location of the crash location at the same time of day, same day of week, and same direction of travel. The first of these methods suffers from the shortcoming that a rider or motorist filling his fuel tank is not presented with the same risks, in the same setting, as is the crash-involved rider and motorist. To illustrate, consider a motorcycle rider who is hit from the rear by a passenger vehicle motorist on a Friday at 1 a.m.. There is a reasonable chance that alcohol is involved in this crash, but to estimate the relative risk it will not help to measure the BAC of passenger vehicle motorists (and motorcyclists) at a nearby gas station. Passenger-vehicle motorists and motorcyclists will need to be sampled at the location of the crash on the same day of the week, at the same hour, and from the same travel direction. Even if the suspected risk factor is not alcohol, but some other variable (e.g., distraction associated with cell phone use), it is still highly advantageous to acquire the comparison data at the crash locations (matched on time and direction), rather than somewhere else.

Using the second method mentioned above, acquiring the risk sample by taking video at the crash scenes provides a similarly-at-risk pool, and it also allows for many controls to be acquired at low cost. Its chief disadvantage is that it does not allow capture of some of the key risk factors for crashes (*e.g.*, BAC), while others (*e.g.*, fatigue) may be very difficult to capture. However, some risk factors could be acquired later by contacting the riders and drivers if license tag numbers are recorded, and so this method could be used to supplement the safety zone interview (described below).

The final method, the voluntary safety research interview, involves setting up a safety zone at the crash location, one week later at the same time of day, and asking those drivers and motorcyclists who pass through to volunteer in a study. With this method, Certificates of Confidentiality are presented to each interviewed driver and rider and immunity is provided from arrest. The main advantage of this method is that the key variables that are thought to affect relative crash risk can be acquired from drivers and riders who are truly similarly-at-risk. A final decision on the means of acquiring control data has not been made.

Information Proposed for Collection

The OECD protocol includes the following number of variables for each aspect of the investigation:

Administrative log	28
Accident typology/configuration	9
Environmental factors	35
Motorcycle mechanical factors	146
Motorcycle dynamics	32
Other vehicle mechanical factors	9
Other vehicle dynamics	18
Human factors	51
Personal protective equipment	34
Contributing environmental factors	8
Contributing vehicle factors	13
Contributing motorcycle factors	57
Contributing human factors	50
Contributing overall factors	2

Note that multiple copies of various data forms will be completed as the data on each crash-involved vehicle and person and each control vehicle and person are acquired. This increases the number of variables above the sum of what is presented above. There are also diagrams and photographs that are essential elements of each investigation that are entered into the database. In prior OECD implementations, about 2,000 data elements in total were recorded for each crash.

Estimated Burden Hours for Information Collection

Frequency: This is a one-time study.

Respondents: This study will be based on all crashes occurring within the sampling area; however, this burden estimate is based on what we know about fatal crashes. The plan calls for data to be captured from up to 1200 crashes with motorcycle involvement, and for all surviving crash-involved riders and drivers to be interviewed. Two control riders will be interviewed for each crash-involved motorcyclist, and one rider and one driver will be interviewed for each rider and motorist in multi-vehicle crashes. Passengers accompanying crash-involved riders and passenger-vehicle drivers will also be interviewed. The final crash sample size will depend on the rate at which crashes can be acquired in the selected site(s) and other matters related to logistics and the final budget. However, the study will acquire crashes on a sample size that exceeds the requirements of the OECD methodology, and will be of sufficient size to meet the goals of the study.

The following table shows the sampling plan and estimated number of interviews assuming 1200 crashes are investigated.

A maximum total number of crashes to be investigated is 1200.

Crash Interviews:	
Single vehicle motorcycle crashes =	540
Multi-vehicle (2-vehicle) motorcycle crashes (660*2) =	1320
Passenger interviews motorcycle (.10*540 + .10*660) =	120
Passenger interviews cars (.68*660) =	449
Total Crash Interviews (540 + 1320 + 120 + 449) =	2429
Control interviews:	
Controls for single vehicle motorcycle crashes (2*540) =	1080
Controls for multi-vehicle motorcycle crashes (1*660 + 1*660) =	1320
Passenger Interviews =	0
Total Control Interviews =	2400
Grand Total Crash plus Control Interviews (2429 + 2400) =	4829

Estimated Average Burden per Interviewee: Crash interviews are estimated to require about 25 minutes per individual interviewed. To the extent possible, crash interviews will be collected at the scene, although it is likely that some follow-ups will be needed to get completed interviews from crash involved individuals. Control individuals' interviews will be completed in a single session and are also expected to require about 25 minutes per individual.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: Burden hours estimates are based on the total of 2,429 crash interviews to be conducted at an average

length of 25 minutes each and 2,400 control interviews to be conducted at an average length of 25 minutes each for a total one-time burden on the public of 120,725 minutes or 2012 hours. It should be noted that this burden estimate is increased from the estimate appearing in the 60-day notice because a trial interview showed the need for more time to capture all of the OECD required elements.

Electronic Access: Internet users may access all comments received by the U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL–401, by using the universal resource locator (URL): *http://dms.dot.gov*, 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. Please follow the instructions online for more information and help.

Authority: The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995; 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended; and 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued on: February 20, 2007.

James R. Kabel,

Chief, Management Programs and Analysis Division.

[FR Doc. E7–3197 Filed 2–23–07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA–2007–26653]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Vision

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of applications for exemptions; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces receipt of applications from 28 individuals for exemptions from the vision requirement in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. If granted, the exemptions would enable these individuals to qualify as drivers of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in interstate commerce without meeting the Federal vision standard.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before March 28, 2007.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Department of Transportation (DOT) Docket Management System (DMS) Docket Number FMCSA–2006–26653 using any of the following methods:

- *Web Site: http://dmses.dot.gov/submit.* Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site.
- *Fax:* 1–202–493–2251.
- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Nassif Building, Room PL–401, Washington, DC 20590–0001.
- *Hand Delivery:* Room PL–401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to *http://www.regulations.gov*. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

Instructions: All submissions must include the Agency name and docket number for this Notice. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to *http://dms.dot.gov* including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading for further information.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to *http://dms.dot.gov* at any time or Room PL–401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The DMS is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. If you want acknowledgment that we received your comments, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard or print the acknowledgement page that appears after submitting comments on-line.

Privacy Act: Anyone may search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or of the person signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review the DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477; Apr. 11, 2000). This information is also available at *http://dms.dot.gov*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Mary D. Gunnels, Chief, Physical Qualifications Division, (202) 366–4001, *maggi.gunnels@dot.gov*, FMCSA, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Room 8301, Washington, DC 20590–0001. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315, FMCSA may grant an exemption for a 2-year period if it finds ''such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption.'' FMCSA can renew exemptions at the end of each 2-year period. The 28 individuals listed in this notice each have requested an exemption from the vision requirement in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(10), which applies to drivers of CMVs in interstate commerce. Accordingly, the Agency will evaluate the qualifications of each applicant to determine whether granting the exemption will achieve the required level of safety mandated by statute.

Qualifications of Applicants

Michael W. Anderson

Mr. Anderson, age 48, has loss of vision in his left eye due to a retinal detachment in 1998. The best corrected visual acuity in his right eye is 20/20 and in the left, 20/400. Following an examination in 2006, his ophthalmologist noted, ''In my opinion, Mr. Anderson's vision is stable and is probably sufficient for driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle.'' Mr. Anderson reported that he has driven straight trucks for 25 years, accumulating 715,000 miles. He holds a Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL) from New Mexico. His driving record for the last 3 years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

Manassah E. Baker

Mr. Baker, 54, has a prosthetic right eye due to a traumatic injury sustained as a child. The visual acuity in his left eye is 20/20. Following an examination in 2006, his ophthalmologist noted, ''In my medical opinion, he has sufficient vision to perform the driving tasks required to operate a commercial vehicle.'' Mr. Baker reported that he has driven straight trucks for 2 years, accumulating 50,000 miles, and tractor-trailer combinations for 20 years, accumulating 2.1 million miles. He holds a Class A CDL from Florida. His driving record for the last 3 years shows no crashes and no convictions for moving violations in a CMV.

Thomas H. Barnhart, Jr.

Mr. Barnhart, 59, has a corneal scar in his right eye due to a traumatic injury. The best corrected visual acuity in his right eye is 20/50 and in the left, 20/20. Following an examination in 2006, his optometrist noted, ''Mr. Barnhart appears to have sufficient visual acuity and visual fields to operate a commercial vehicle.'' Mr. Barnhart reported that he has driven straight trucks for 40 years, accumulating 4 million miles, tractor-trailer