Wage and Hour Division, Labor

§ 782.5 Loaders.

(a) A “loader,” as defined for Motor Carrier Act jurisdiction (Ex parte Nos. MC–2 and MC–3, 28 M.C.C. 125, 133, 134, 139), is an employee of a carrier subject to section 204 of the Motor Carrier Act (other than a driver or driver’s helper as defined in §§782.3 and 782.4) whose duties include, among other things, the proper loading of his employer’s motor vehicles so that they may be safely operated on the highways of the country. A “loader” may be called by another name, such as “dockman,” “stacker,” or “helper,” and his duties will usually also include unloading and the transfer of freight between the vehicles and the warehouse, but he engages, as a “helper,” in work directly affecting “safety of operation” so long as he has responsibility when such motor vehicles are being loaded, for exercising judgment and discretion in planning and building a balanced load or in placing, distributing, or securing the pieces of freight in such a manner that the safe operation of the vehicles on the highways in interstate or foreign commerce will not be jeopardized. (Levinson v. Spector Motor Service, 300 U.S. 649; Pyramid Motor Freight Corp. v. Ispass, 330 U.S. 695; Walling v. Gordon’s Transport (W.D. Tenn.), 10 Labor Cases par. 62,934, aff’d 330 U.S. 695, certiorari denied 332 U.S. 774; Walling v. Huber & Huber Motor Express, 67 F. Supp. 855; Ex parte Nos. MC–2 and MC–3, 28 M.C.C. 125, 133, 134)

(b) The section 13(b)(1) exemption applies, in accordance with principles previously stated (see §782.2), to an employee whose job involves activities consisting wholly or in part of doing, or immediately directing, a class of work defined: (1) As that of a loader, and (2) as directly affecting the safety of operation of motor vehicles in interstate or foreign commerce within the meaning of the Motor Carrier Act, because in instances when accidents occur, they help the driver in obtaining aid and protect the vehicle from oncoming traffic.

(c) In accordance with principles previously stated (see §782.2), the section 13(b)(1) exemption applies to employees who are, under the Secretary of Transportation’s definitions, engaged in such activities as full- or partial-duty “helpers” on motor vehicles being operated in transporation in interstate or foreign commerce within the meaning of the Motor Carrier Act. (Ispass v. Pyramid Motor Freight Corp., 152 F. (2d) 619 (C.A. 2); Walling v. McGinley Co. (E.D. Tenn.), 12 Labor Cases, par. 63,731, 6 W.H. Cases 916. See also Levinson v. Spector Motor Service, 330 U.S. 649; Pyramid Motor Freight Corp. v. Ispass, 330 U.S. 695; Dallum v. Farmers, Coop Trucking Assn. 46 F. Supp. 785 (D. Minn.).) The exemption has been held inapplicable to so-called helpers who ride on motor vehicles but do not engage in any of the activities of “helpers” which have been found to affect directly the safety of operation of such vehicles in interstate or foreign commerce. (Walling v. Gordon’s Transports (W.D. Tenn.) 10 Labor Cases par. 62,934, 6 W.H. Cases 831, affirmed 162 F. (2d) 203 (C.A. 6), certiorari denied, 332 U.S. 774; Walling v. McGinley Co. (E.D. Tenn.), 12 Labor Cases, par. 63,731, 6 W.H. Cases 916. See also Levinson v. Spector Motor Service, 330 U.S. 649; Pyramid Motor Freight Corp. v. Ispass, 330 U.S. 695; Walling v. Gordon’s Transport (W.D. Tenn.), 10 Labor Cases, par. 62,934, affirmed 162 F. (2d) 203 (C.A. 6), certiorari denied 332 U.S. 774; Walling v. Huber & Huber Motor Express, 67 F. Supp. 855; Ex parte Nos. MC–2 and MC–3, 28 M.C.C. 125, 133, 134)

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§ 782.5  29 CFR Ch. V (7–1–14 Edition)

846; Walling v. Huber & Huber Motor Express, 67 F. Supp. 855; Walling v. Gordon’s Transports (W.D. Tenn.); 10 Labor Cases, par. 62,934, affirmed 162 F. (2d) 203 (C.A. 6) certiorari denied 332 U.S. 774; Tinerella v. Des Moines Transp. Co., 41 F. Supp. 798.) Where a checker, foreman, or other supervisor plans and immediately directs the proper loading of a motor vehicle as described above, he may come within the exemption as a partial-duty loader. (Levinson v. Spector Motor Service, 330 U.S. 695; Walling v. Gordon’s Transports (W.D. Tenn.), 10 Labor Cases, par. 62,934; affirmed 162 F. (2d) 203 (C.A. 6), certiorari denied 332 U.S. 774; Walling v. Huber & Huber Motor Express, 67 F. Supp. 855; Walling v. Silver Fleet Motor Express, 67 F. Supp. 846; Crean v. Moran Transporation Lines, 50 F. Supp. 107, 54 F. Supp. 765 (cf. 57 F. Supp. 212); Gibson v. Glasgow (Tenn. Sup. Ct.) 157 S.W. (2d) 21 (C.A. 5), wherein the court held that employees operating a crane and a mechanical conveyor, it has been held that employees operating such a crane or conveyor in the loading process are not exempt as “loaders” under section 13(b)(1). (Barrick v. South Chicago Coal & Dock Co. (N.D. Ill.), 8 Labor Cases, par. 62,242, affirmed 149 F. (2d) 960 (C.A. 7).) It seems apparent from the foregoing discussion that an employee who has no responsibility for the proper loading of a motor vehicle is not within the exemption as a “loader” merely because he furnishes physical assistance when necessary in loading heavy pieces of freight, or because he deposits pieces of freight in the vehicle for someone else to distribute and secure inplace, or even because he does the physical work of arranging pieces of freight in the vehicle where another
employee tells him exactly what to do in each instance and he is given no share in the exercise of discretion as to the manner in which the loading is done. (See Pyramid Motor Freight Corp. v. Ispass, 330 U.S. 998; Yellow Transit Freight Lines Inc. v. Balven, 320 F. (2d) 495 (C.A. 8); Foremost Dairies v. Ivey, 204 F. (2d) 186 (C.A. 5); Ispass v. Pyramid Motor Freight Corp., 78 F. Supp. 475 (S.D. N.Y.); Mitchell v. Meco Steel Supply Co., 183 F. Supp. 779 (S.D. Tex.); Garton v. Sanders Transfer & Storage Co., 124 F. Supp. 84 (M.D. Tenn.); McKeown v. Southern Calif. Freight Forwarders, 49 F. Supp. 543; Walling v. Gordon's Transports (W.D. Tenn.) 10 Labor Cases, par. 62,934, affirmed 162 F. (2d) 283 (C.A. 6), certiorari denied 332 U.S. 649.) Such activities would not seem to constitute the kind of “loading” which directly affects the safety of operation of the loaded vehicle on the public highways, under the official definitions. (See Ex parte Nos. MC–2 and MC–3, 28 M.C.C. 125, 133, 134).

§ 782.6 Mechanics.

(a) A “mechanic,” for purposes of safety regulations under the Motor Carrier Act is an employee who is employed by a carrier subject to the Secretary’s jurisdiction under section 204 of the Motor Carrier Act and whose duty it is to keep motor vehicles operated in interstate or foreign commerce by his employer in a good and safe working condition. (Ex parte, Nos. MC–2 and MC–3, 28 M.C.C. 125, 132, 133. Ex parte No. MC–40 (Sub. No. 2), 88 M.C.C. 710 (repair of refrigeration equipment.) See also Morris v. McComb, 332 U.S. 422.) It has been determined that the safety of operation of such motor vehicles on the highways is directly affected by those activities of mechanics, such as keeping the lights and brakes in a good and safe working condition, which prevent the vehicles from becoming potential hazards to highway safety and thus aid in the prevention of accidents. The courts have held that mechanics perform work of this character where they actually do inspection, adjustment, repair or maintenance work on the motor vehicles themselves (including trucks, tractors and trailers, and buses) and are, when so engaged, directly responsible for creating or maintaining physical conditions essential to the safety of the vehicle or the highways through the correction or prevention of defects which have a direct causal connection with the safety operation of the unit as a whole. (Walling v. Silver Bros., 136 F. (2d) 168 (C.A. 1); McDuffie v. Hayes Freight Lines, 136 F. (2d) 137; Walling v. Silver Fleet Motor Express, 67 F. Supp. 846; Keeling v. Huber & Huber Motor Express, 57 F. Supp. 617; Walling v. Cumberland & Liberty Mills Co. (S.D. Fla.), 6 Labor Cases, par. 61,184; Esibill v. Marshall (D. N.J.), 6 Labor Cases, par. 61,256; Keegan v. Ruppert (S.D. N.Y.), 7 Labor Cases, par. 61,726; Baker v. Sharpless Hendler Ice Cream Co. (E.D. Pa.), 10 Labor Cases, par. 62,296; Kentucky Transport Co. v. Drake (Ky. Ct. App.), 182 SW (2d) 960.) The following activities performed by mechanics on motor vehicles operated in interstate or foreign commerce are illustrative of the specific kinds of activities which the courts, in applying the foregoing principles, have regarded as directly affecting “safety of operation”: The inspection, repair, adjustment, and maintenance for safe operation of steering apparatus, lights, brakes, horns, windshield wipers, wheels and axles, bushings, transmissions, differentials, motors, starters and ignition, carburetors, fifth wheels, springs and spring hangers, frames, and gasoline tanks (McDuffie v. Hayes Freight Lines, 71 F. Supp. 755; Walling v. Silver Fleet Motor Express, 67 F. Supp. 846; Wolfe v. Union Transfer & Storage Co., 48 F. Supp. 855; Mason & Dixon Lines v. Ligon (Tenn. Ct. App.), 7 Labor Cases, par. 61,962; Walling v. Palmer, 67 F. Supp. 12; Kentucky Transport Co. v. Drake (Ky. Ct. App.), 182 SW (2d) 960.) Inspecting and checking air pressure in tires, changing tires, and repairing and rebuilding tires for immediate replacement on the vehicle from which they were removed.