


U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

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Interpretation for Part 383.91 Commercial motor vehicle groups.

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Vehicle groups and endorsements

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Question 1: May a State expand a vehicle group to include vehicles that do not meet the Federal definition of the group?

Guidance: Yes, if: a. A person who tests in a vehicle that does not meet the Federal standard for the Group(s) for which the issued CDL would otherwise be valid, is restricted to vehicles not meeting the Federal definition of such Group(s); and b. The restriction is fully explained on the license.

Question 2: Is a driver of a combination vehicle with a [GCWR](#) of less than 26,001 pounds required to obtain a CDL even if the trailer [GVWR](#) is more than 10,000 pounds?

Guidance: No, because the [GCWR](#) is less than 26,001 pounds. The driver would need a CDL if the vehicle is transporting HM requiring the vehicle to be placarded or if it is designed to transport 16 or more persons.

Question 3: Can a State which expands the vehicle group descriptions in [§383.91](#) enforce those expansions on out-of-State [CMV](#) drivers by requiring them to have a CDL?

Guidance: No. They must recognize out-of-State licenses that have been validly issued in accordance with the Federal standards and operative licensing compacts.

Question 4: What [CMV](#) group are drivers of articulated motor coaches (buses) required to possess?

Guidance: Drivers of articulated motor coaches are required to possess a Class B CDL.

Question 5: Do tow truck operators need CDLs? If so, in what vehicle group(s)?

Guidance: For CDL purposes, the tow truck and its towed vehicle are treated the same as any other powered unit towing a non-powered unit:

—If the [GCWR](#) of the tow truck and its towed vehicle is 26,001 pounds or more, and the towed vehicle alone exceeds 10,000 pounds [GVWR](#), then the driver needs a Group A CDL.

—If the [GVWR](#) of the tow truck alone is 26,001 pounds or more, and the driver either (a) drives the tow truck without a vehicle in tow, or (b) drives the tow truck with a towed vehicle of 10,000 pounds or less [GVWR](#), then the driver needs a Group B CDL.

—A driver of a tow truck or towing configuration that does not fit either configuration description above, requires a Group C CDL *only* if he or she tows a vehicle required to be placarded for hazardous materials on a “subsequent move,” i.e. after the initial movement of the disabled vehicle to the nearest storage or repair facility.

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