

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Saskatchewan Trucking Association Concerned Over Safety Implications of New Class 1 Driver Exemption

[Regina, SK June 3, 2024] — The Saskatchewan Trucking Association (STA) expresses its reservations regarding the newly announced exemption for Class 1 drivers in Saskatchewan, effective May 21, 2024. The exemption allows temporary foreign workers from jurisdictions with reciprocal agreements with SGI, employed in the agricultural sector, to operate Class 1 vehicles in the province for a period of 12 months using their home jurisdiction's Class 1-equivalent license.

While the STA acknowledges the importance of facilitating the labour needs of the agricultural industry, we are deeply concerned about the potential safety implications of this exemption. The absence of competency-based testing or experience requirements from the reciprocity jurisdiction raises significant safety concerns for all road users in Saskatchewan.

Safety on our roads is paramount, and ensuring that all drivers, regardless of their origin, meet rigorous competency standards is essential for protecting lives and preventing accidents. The temporary nature of this exemption does not alleviate our concerns, as even a short-term compromise on safety standards can have long-lasting repercussions.

"The safety of our roads and highways is non-negotiable," said Susan Ewart, President of the Saskatchewan Trucking Association. "While we understand the need to address labour shortages in the agricultural sector, we cannot compromise on safety. All drivers must demonstrate their ability to operate Class 1 vehicles safely through comprehensive testing and experience requirements."

The STA urges the provincial government to reconsider this exemption and implement measures that prioritize safety without hindering the agricultural industry's ability to access necessary labour. We remain committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to find solutions that balance the needs of the economy with the safety of our communities.

About the Saskatchewan Trucking Association:

The Saskatchewan Trucking Association (STA) is the leading voice of the trucking industry in Saskatchewan, representing carriers of all sizes and sectors. The STA is dedicated to advancing the interests of its members and promoting a safe, efficient, and sustainable trucking industry in the province.

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