

# Effectiveness of CDL Third-Party Testing



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

Kelly Stowe

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

# 2023

ANALYSIS,  
RESEARCH, &  
TECHNOLOGY  
FORUM

VIRTUAL EVENT

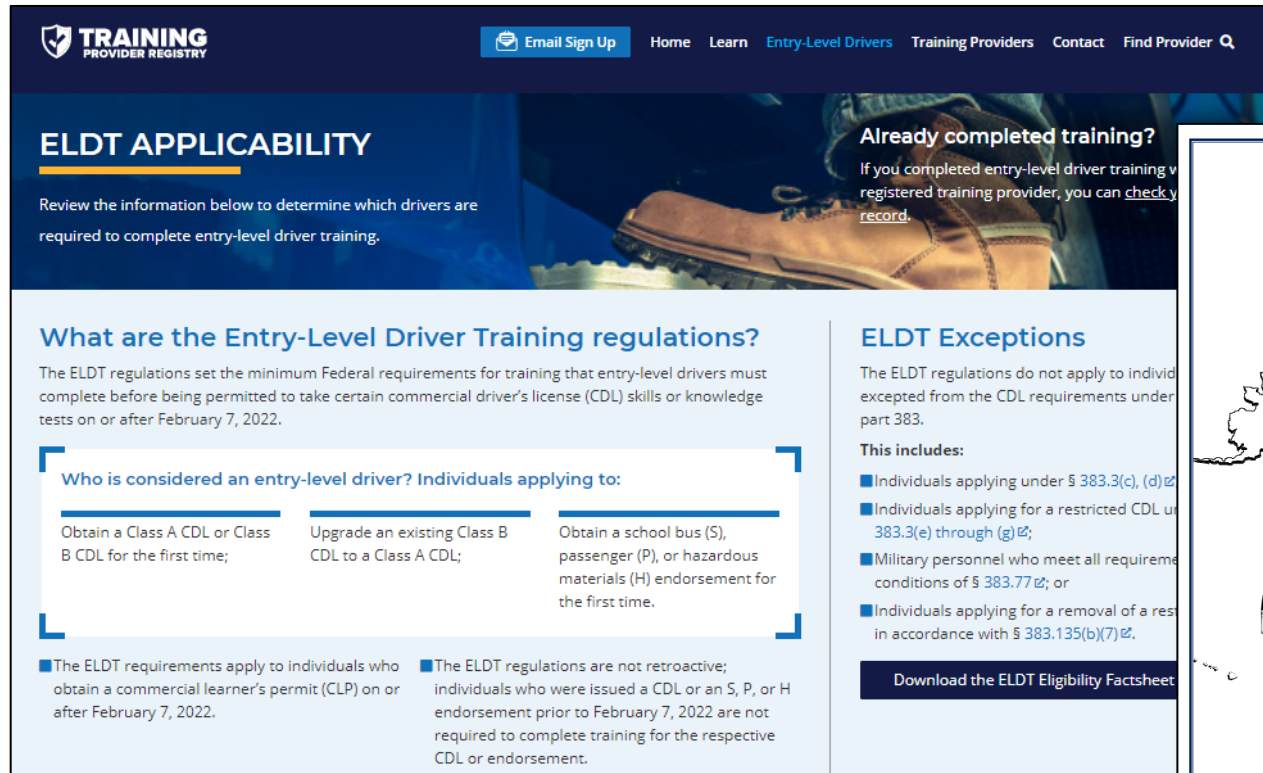


# Background: Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Testing and Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT)

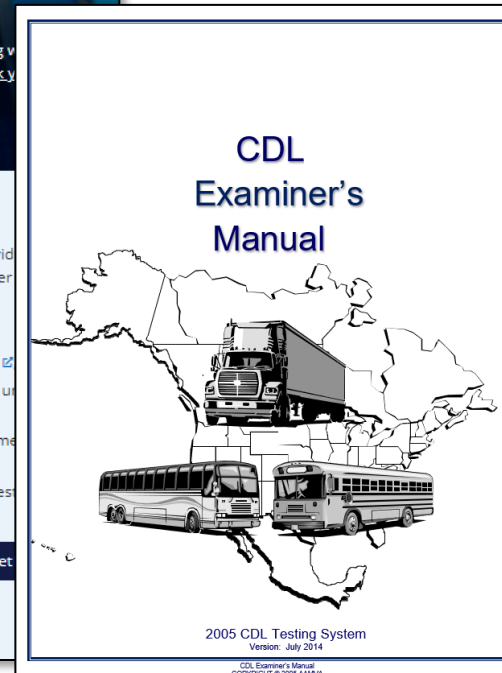
The majority of States leverage **third parties** to conduct CDL skills tests

## § 383.75 Third party testing.

(a) *Third party tests.* A State may authorize a third party tester to administer the skills tests as specified in subparts G and H of this part, if the following conditions are met:



The screenshot shows the 'TRAINING PROVIDER REGISTRY' website. The main heading is 'ELDT APPLICABILITY'. Below it, there is a section titled 'What are the Entry-Level Driver Training regulations?' and another titled 'ELDT Exceptions'. A callout box asks 'Who is considered an entry-level driver? Individuals applying to:' and lists three categories: 'Obtain a Class A CDL or Class B CDL for the first time;', 'Upgrade an existing Class B CDL to a Class A CDL;', and 'Obtain a school bus (S), passenger (P), or hazardous materials (H) endorsement for the first time.' There are also two bullet points at the bottom regarding the applicability and retroactivity of ELDT requirements.



The cover of the 'CDL Examiner's Manual' features a map of the United States with a semi-truck, a school bus, and a passenger bus overlaid on it. The text on the cover includes 'CDL Examiner's Manual', '2005 CDL Testing System', and 'Version: July 2014'.

FMCSA has established **minimum standards** for CDL training and CDL knowledge and skills tests

# Study Objectives

---

**1**

**Determine the effectiveness of third-party testing programs for CDL skills tests**

**2**

**Determine the effectiveness of minimum training and testing standards for CDL knowledge and skills tests**

# Methodology

---



## Survey

50 States + DC

- Will inform site selection for future data collection activities
- Two States from each AAMVA region (8 total) will be selected based on established criteria



## Data Analysis

8 States

- Will assess:
- Examiner pass rates, safety issues
  - Pre- and post-ELDT driver histories, pass rates
  - AAMVA CDL Test Model safety benefits



## Virtual Interviews

8 States

- Will inform:
- Qualitative description of States' current CDL training and testing programs
  - Quantitative data analysis



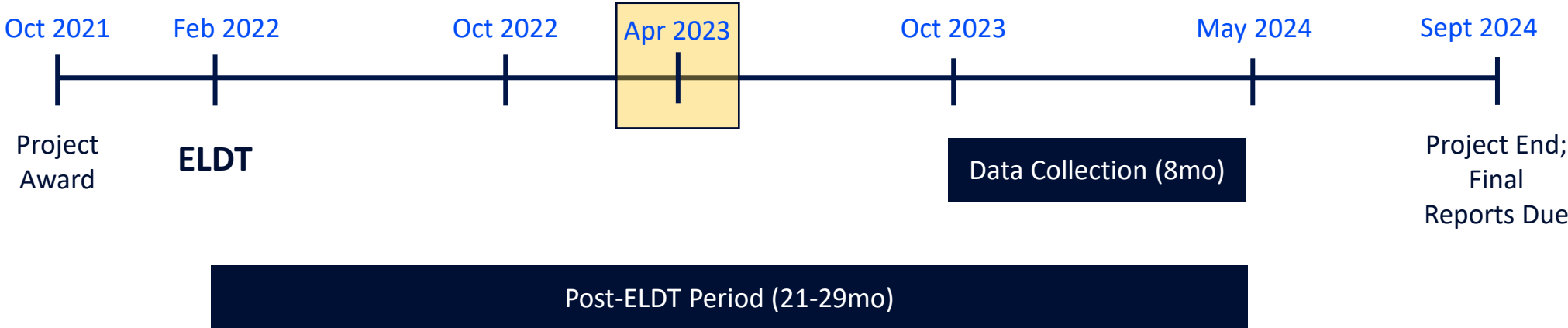
## Site Visits

4 States

- Will include:
- Observations of CDL tests conducted by third-party and State examiners
  - Informal conversations with examiners and SDLA personnel

# Next Steps

- FMCSA is awaiting approval from the Office of Management and Budget to collect information for this study.
- Data collection is expected to begin in October 2023.



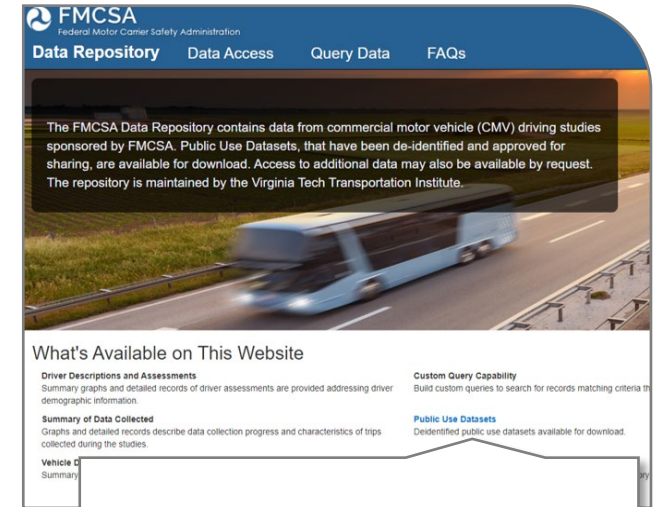
# Anticipated Outcomes



Final report on effectiveness of third-party CDL skills testing



Final report on effectiveness of minimum training and testing standards



De-identified, public-use dataset

# Contact Information

---

**Kelly Stowe**

General Engineer, Research Division

**Kelly.Stowe@dot.gov**