BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

- - -

In the Matter of Wayman :

Patterson Notice of Apparent : Case No.

Violation and Intent to : 17-2233-TR-CVF

Assess Forfeiture.

- - -

PROCEEDINGS

Before Kerry Sheets, Attorney Examiner, held at the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, 180 East Broad Street, Hearing Room 11-C, Columbus, Ohio, on Thursday, February 8, 2018, at 1:30 P.M.

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                 On behalf of the Staff of the
 5
                  Public Utilities Commission
 6
                  of Ohio.
 7
            Mr. Wayman Patterson
 8
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            Detroit, Michigan
                                48122
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                 Appearing Pro se.
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1 Thursday Afternoon, 2 February 8, 2018. 3 4 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: The Public 5 Utilities Commission of Ohio has set for hearing 6 at this time and place Case No. 17-2233-TR-CVF 7 In the Matter of Wayman Patterson Notice of 8 Apparent Violation and Intent to Assess Forfeiture. 9 10 My name is Kerry Sheets, I am the 11 Attorney Examiner for the Commission and I have 12 been assigned to hear this case. 13 May I now have the appearances of 14 the parties, please, starting with Staff. 15 MR. MARGARD: Thank you, Your Honor. 16 On behalf of the Transportation Staff of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, Mike 17 18 DeWine, Ohio Attorney General, William Wright, 19 Section Chief Public Utilities Section, by 20 Assistant Attorney General Werner L. Margard, 30 2.1 East Broad Street, 16th Floor, Columbus, Ohio. 2.2 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Thank you. Mr. 23 Patterson, state your name and address, please. 24 MR. PATTERSON: My name is Wayman 25 Patterson, 17630 Melvindale, Michigan 48122.

6 1 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Very good. Do 2 you have any preliminary matters to take care of this morning? This afternoon. 3 MR. MARGARD: No, your Honor. 4 5 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Do you have 6 witnesses to call? MR. MARGARD: I do. Thank you, Your 7 Honor. I would like to begin by calling Ed 8 9 Adkins to the stand, please. 10 (WITNESS SWORN) 11 12 INSPECTOR EDWARD ADKINS 13 called as a witness, being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 14 15 DIRECT EXAMINATION 16 By Mr. Margard: 17 Mr. Adkins, state your name, Q. 18 please. Edward Adkins. 19 Α. 20 Q. And by whom are you employed? 2.1 Α. The Ohio State Highway Patrol, State 22 of Ohio. What is your position, what is your 23 Q. 24 role with the State Highway Patrol? 25 Α. I am a Motor Carrier Enforcement

Proceedings 7 1 Inspector. 2 Would I appropriately address you as Q. 3 Inspector then? Α. Yes, sir. 4 5 Q. Thank you, sir. And out of what 6 Post do you operate? 7 Α. I work out of District 3. I usually 8 work out of Post 18, 52, 77. So anywhere in 9 District 3. 10 Q. Which is located where, please? 11 Cleveland. Α. 12 Very good. Thank you, sir. What Q. 13 are your job duties and responsibilities as an 14 Inspector? 15 To enforce the Motor Carrier Α. regulations on commercial vehicles and hazmat 16 17 vehicles within the State of Ohio. 18 And how long have you been Q. 19 performing that job? 20 Α. A little over two years. 2.1 Ο. Do you have any special training or 22 certifications to perform that job?

FMCSA for inspection of trucks and hazmat

Yes. I was certified through the

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Α.

vehicles.

- Q. Thank you, sir. Were you on duty in that capacity on July 19th of 2017?

 A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And in the course of your duties did you have an opportunity to inspect a vehicle being operated by the Respondent, Mr. Patterson?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And as a result of that inspection did you prepare an examination report?
- 10 A. Yes, sir, I did.

11 (EXHIBIT MARKED FOR THE PURPOSE OF 12 IDENTIFICATION)

MR. MARGARD: Your Honor, I have marked for purposes of identification as Staff Exhibit No. 1 a copy of the Driver/Vehicle Examination Report dated July 19, 2017. I have provided the Bench and the reporter with a copy, and I have placed a copy before the witness.

19 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Thank you.

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MR. MARGARD: Thank you.

- Q. Inspector Adkins, do you have before you what's been marked Staff Exhibit No. 1?
 - A. Yes, I do.
- Q. Do you recognize that document?

- A. Yes, I do.
- Q. Is that a copy of the examination report that you prepared following your inspection of a vehicle operated by Mr.
- 5 | Patterson?

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- A. Yes, it is.
 - Q. And if you would please just take a moment to review it and let us know, if you would, please, if you believe this is a true and accurate copy of the report that you prepared?
- 11 A. Yes, it is.
 - Q. Thank you. Tell me, sir, where were you stationed or where were you positioned, what was your specific job assignment at the time of this inspection?
 - A. This day I was at the westbound scales on Interstate 76 in Medina County.
- Q. Were you located inside the scale station?
- 20 A. Yes, I was.
- Q. You were not in a car then, you were within side the building; is that correct?
- A. Correct.
- Q. Okay. When did you first notice the vehicle operated by Mr. Patterson?

A. As he approached the building.

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- Q. And is this something you are observing out the window, or were you observing this on a monitor of some sort?
- A. I was observing it through the window. The whole front of the building is all windows.
- Q. Very good. And what caused you to conduct an inspection?
- A. As he was crossing the scales I noticed he was not wearing a seat belt.
- Q. And when you say he was not wearing a seat belt, do you mean across his chest?
 - A. That's correct.
 - Q. Okay. And how were you able to ascertain that he was not wearing a seat belt at that time?
 - A. He was wearing a red shirt and the seat belt was black in color.
- Q. And when did you determine that the seat belt was black?
- A. Once I could see it up in the corner past the shoulder.
- Q. I see. When you noticed that he was not wearing a seat belt what action did you

take?

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- A. I activated the red light which in turn tells the driver because there is a sign to proceed around back. I also got on the speaker and advised the driver to go around back.
 - O. And did Mr. Patterson do so?
 - A. Yes, he did.
- Q. And I trust that you approached the vehicle and conducted an examination at that time?
- 11 A. Yes, I did.
 - Q. What was the extent of your examination at that point?
- A. Very first thing I do when there is
 a seat belt violation is I ask why did you not
 have your seat belt on. And his response was I
 had just left the shipper, which was Morton
 Salt, the last exit right before the scales.
 - Q. And approximately how far would that be from the scales?
 - A. About two to three miles.
- Q. And did you make note of that conversation in your report, sir?
- A. Yes, I did.
- Q. Did he offer any other explanation

to you?

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- A. No, he didn't.
- Q. Did you conduct any further inspection, either of the driver, his records or the vehicle at that time?
- A. Yes. I went ahead and did a Level 2 inspection, which includes paperwork, log books, and the lights, tires, outside of the vehicle.
- Q. You noted no other violations; is that correct?
- A. No, I didn't.
- Q. And following your inspection you provided a copy of this report to Mr. Patterson?
 - A. Yes, I did.
 - Q. Is there anything else in regarding this inspection that you think the Judge needs to know in order to be able to make a determination on this violation?
 - A. No.
- MR. MARGARD: Thank you. Your
 Honor, I have no further questions for this
 witness.
- 23 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Mr. Patterson,
 24 do you have any questions for this witness?
 25 MR. PATTERSON: No, I don't.

13 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: None? 1 2 MR. PATTERSON: No. 3 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: You are excused. THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir. 4 MR. MARGARD: Your Honor, I will 5 call Mr. Rod Mosher. 6 7 (WITNESS SWORN) 8 9 ROD MOSHER 10 called as a witness, being first duly sworn, testified as follows: 11 12 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Be seated. 13 DIRECT EXAMINATION 14 By Mr. Margard: 15 Q. Sir, can you please state your name? 16 A. My name is Rod Mosher. 17 And by whom are you employed and in Q. 18 what capacity, please? 19 I am employed by the Public 20 Utilities Commission of Ohio. I am the Chief of 2.1 Compliance within the Transportation Department 2.2 for the Commission. 23 And what are your duties and Q. 24 responsibilities as the Chief of Compliance? 25 Α. My job is to basically oversee the

civil forfeiture process for the transportation section.

- Q. And can you briefly describe your background and experience for us, please, sir?
- A. Yes. I spent nearly 30 years with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Most of that time working in the area of commercial enforcement.

When I retired from the Patrol I came here. I have been here roughly a year in this capacity.

- Q. Did you have the opportunity to conduct motor vehicle inspections in your previous capacity or previous job?
 - A. Yes.

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- Q. And do you still conduct inspections from time to time?
- 18 A. I do, yes.
- Q. Prior to testifying today have you had an opportunity to review the file maintained by the Commission with respect to this violation?
- A. Yes, sir, I have.
- Q. You had an opportunity then to review what's been marked as Staff Exhibit No.

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- 2 A. I have No. 2, No. 3.
- Q. I am sorry. The inspection report that was marked as Exhibit 1.
 - A. I do, yes.
 - Q. Thank you.
 - A. I have it here.
 - Q. I will get to the other ones. Thank you, sir.
- 10 A. Okay
- Q. Before we do I would like you to
 explain, if you would, please, briefly for us,
 how a civil forfeiture is calculated for
 violations of motor carrier safety regulations.
 - A. Okay. All the way back to the beginning, once the inspector uploads the inspection it goes into a federal database and from the database it comes to the Public Utilities Commission.

If there are violations on the inspection then it comes into a database or a program called OMSAS. Depending on those violations, what they are, we may assess forfeiture amounts. The way we determine whether or not to assess is what group

the violations are in. All violations are one of five groups. Group 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4.

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Those groups are basically determined by their risk for causing a crash and the general overall safety of the vehicle and motoring public. In this particular case a safety belt is a Group 4 violation.

- Q. Are these groups part of a schedule or some kind of a standardized fee schedule that is maintained by the Commission?
- A. The schedule that we use, or the format that we use was initially adopted by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance and we use that as a model.
- Q. And are the dollar amounts contained in the Commission's schedule consistent with the recommended fines or penalties recommended by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance?
 - A. They are, yes.
- Q. And this procedure is the same procedure you use for all motor carrier safety violations; is that correct?
- A. The procedure is automated. So all inspections are treated the same.
- Q. Okay. Thank you, sir.

Following the determination of whether or not a forfeiture assessment is to be made what occurs next?

A. We will send the Respondent one of two letters. If there is no fine amount or forfeiture amount attached they will get a letter that we generally call an NAV which is stating the violations, but no associated forfeiture.

If there are forfeiture amounts attached they get a Notice of Intent to Assess Forfeiture letter, we call an NIF.

MR. MARGARD: Thank you. Your Honor, I have marked for purposes of identification as Staff Exhibit No. 2 a Notice of Apparent Violation and Intent to Assess Forfeiture dated July 20, 2017.

I have provided a copy of that to the court reporter, to the Bench, and to the witness.

21 (EXHIBIT MARKED FOR THE PURPOSE OF 22 IDENTIFICATION)

ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Thank you.

Q. Mr. Mosher, do you have before you what's been marked as Staff Exhibit No. 2?

A. I do.

- Q. And is this a copy of the Notice of Intent to Assess Forfeiture that was sent to Mr. Patterson in this case?
 - A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Can you tell us what happens following the mailing of this notice?
- A. The Respondent has a couple options.

 One is to just pay the forfeiture. The other is to contest it by requesting a conference.
- Mr. Patterson did do that in this case. He requested a phone conference and that was held with him by one of my employees, Mr. Tom Persinger.
- Q. And if the matter is not resolved at that stage what is the next step in the process?
- A. The next step is to send the
 Respondent a letter that we call an NPD, or
 Notice of Preliminary Determination, which just
 basically says we had this conference, we were
 unable to resolve it and here is what the
 Commission intends to do as a result.
- MR. MARGARD: Your Honor, I have
 marked for purposes of identification as Staff
 Exhibit No. 3 a Notice of Preliminary

- Determination dated October 5th, 2017 addressed to Mr. Patterson.
- 3 (EXHIBIT MARKED FOR PURPOSES OF 4 IDENTIFICATION)
- Q. Mr. Mosher, do you have before you what's been marked Staff Exhibit No. 3?
 - A. Yes, sir, I do.
 - Q. Is that a copy of the Notice of Preliminary Determination served upon the Respondent in this case?
- 11 A. Yes, sir, it is.
- Q. Now, in looking at Staff Exhibit No.

 2 and 3 I note the Group 4 designation that you

 described earlier. Have you had an opportunity

 to review these notices?
- 16 A. Yes, sir.

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- Q. And are the forfeiture amounts that are proposed here correct and accurately determined based on the process that you described earlier?
- A. Yes. Safety belt is a Group 4 violation and it is \$100.
- Q. In your opinion did the Respondent receive all of the notices that he was entitled to receive pursuant to Commission procedures?

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            A. Yes, he did.
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                 MR. MARGARD: Thank you. Your
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     Honor, I have no further questions for this
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     witness. Thank you.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Mr. Patterson,
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     do you have any questions for this witness?
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                 MR. PATTERSON: No, sir.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: You are excused.
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                 MR. MARGARD: Your Honor, I have no
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     further witnesses. That concludes my case in
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     chief. And I would respectfully move the
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     admission of Staff Exhibits 1, 2 and 3.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Very well. I
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     will admit those exhibits into evidence at this
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     time.
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                 (EXHIBITS ADMITTED INTO EVIDENCE)
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Mr. Patterson,
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     do you have testimony you wish to present?
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                 MR. PATTERSON: I do.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Do you want to
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     say something up here? Come forward
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                 (WITNESS SWORN)
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                     WAYMAN PATTERSON
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     called as a witness, being first duly sworn,
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testified as follows:

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ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Be stated. Go ahead and present your testimony in a narrative style. And speak up for the reporter.

MR. PATTERSON: Okay. I had just left Morton Salt, had 45,000 plus pounds in my truck. As a DOT regulation we are all required a commercial driver's license, commercial drivers are required to make sure that we put our seat belts on before we even start the truck. This is what I did when I left Morton Salt.

As I approached the weigh station, they have signals, green, red and an X. For you to stop, X is stop and green is to go. And the lanes split.

As I approached the scale before I even got on the scale the light read X for me to stop. I immediately stopped when the X was shown and I seen the X when I stopped. I didn't know what was going on.

So, my first impression was I may have to get out or exit the truck for an issue. So, what I did was at that moment my truck was stopped, I didn't move anywhere. So what I did

was I took my seat belt off because I thought I had to exit the vehicle.

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The officer came around to the truck while I was still on the scale. I apologize, before I got to the scale. He came around to my side of the truck door. And I asked him was there a problem. He specifically stated that you took your seat belt off. I said, well, I thought I had to get out of the vehicle.

He told me, well, I need you to pull around back, back of the building. So, I said okay.

So I followed the instructions.

I pulled around to the back of the building.

And I explained to him this is my first time entering the weigh station, when I had to be stopped. And I don't have any reason why I was stopped. So I am asking him please give me a reason why I was stopped. He didn't give me a reason at all.

But the only thing he kept

telling me was my seat belt wasn't on. And I

said, well, sir, I took the seat belt off when I

stopped at the X. I said is there any reason,

is there any way you can bypass this because

this is not something that is a real clear violation because as long as my vehicle is not mobile, not moving, I am not required to have my seat belt on.

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Now, when I start moving, yes, I am required to put my seat belt on, which is what I did when I left the weigh station I put my seat belt back on.

He set in his vehicle for 20, 25 minutes afterwards and he started writing up a report. He brought me the report afterwards while I was sitting in the truck in the back of the building.

When he brought me the report he told me that it was just a warning. That was it. And I said do I have to pay any type of fine or anything? He said, no, it's just a warning. I said okay. That was it, I left.

I took the report back to my company, which is where I was working, I was working Falcon Transport. I took that report back to my company. They said the same thing to me. It was just a warning because there was no citation number on it for a case.

So I said, okay, this is my first

time reviewing a DOT ticket report because I never got one before.

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So, afterwards, a week or so later they told me that -- the company told me that they had received 21 points for this report. I was fired for that.

I said 21 points, that is a lot of points for a safety belt. And the company was not very happy with it. I explained to them what happened at the Ohio weigh station because I immediately got on the phone with my driver manager about it.

And they told me the company received 21 points for this violation. I said it's not really a violation because I was not mobile. And DOT regulations required that I be mobile for me to be in violation if I did not have my seat belt on, and I was not, I was stationary.

I took the seat belt off before I got onto the scales because I was stopped. I thought I had to exit the vehicle. I told them the same thing I explained to him, the officer.

I thought it was just a warning. So when they sent me these notices in the mail I

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thought it was games being played. They said I had to pay a $100 fine for this violation, but the officer told me it was just a warning citation.
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And I was told by the Commission in the conference that they didn't issue warring citations. And I was kind of confused. That is why I asked for a hearing, go all the way with it.

So, the officer was not being very honest here at all period. He said Level 2 inspection. On the paper it says Level 3. He never gave me an inspection, he just basically pulled me over and gave me a citation for the seat belt that I took off before I entered the scales.

That was it. That situation lasted about 30, 40 minutes. He sat in his vehicle while I sat in the back in the truck.

Afterwards I left.

I can't remember the DOT regulations for that seat belt situation where the vehicle has to be mobile before a ticket can be issued for not wearing a seat belt. And I was stationed so I wasn't required to wear my seat

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     belt while I was stationary in the truck.
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     can't remember -- I was studying it before I got
     here, but I can't remember the citation for it.
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                 But, I was stationary when I took
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     that seat belt off.
                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Does that
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     complete your testimony?
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                 MR. PATTERSON: Yes, sir, it does.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Do you have any
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     questions?
                 MR. MARGARD: Just a few. Thank
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     you, your Honor.
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                    CROSS-EXAMINATION
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     By Mr. Margard:
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            Ο.
                 Mr. Patterson, how long have you
     been a commercial vehicle driver? How long have
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     you had your license?
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                 I got my driver's license for a
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     commercial vehicle exactly May 15, 2017.
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            Ο.
                 So you had only had it for a couple
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     of months at the time of this inspection; is
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     that right?
23
            A. Right.
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            Q. Had you ever been inspected for any
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     reason prior to this incident?
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            A. No, I hadn't.
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                Have you ever had occasion to pull
            Q.
     into a weigh station prior?
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                 Yes. I have pulled into a weigh
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            Α.
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     station.
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               Had you had occasion to pull into
            Ο.
 7
     this specific weigh station before?
                First time.
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            Α.
            Q. This was the first time?
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                That was the first time.
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            Α.
                 MR. MARGARD: Okay. That is all I
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    have for the witness. Thank you, Your Honor.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: No more
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     questions?
                 MR. MARGARD: Not for this witness,
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     no, sir.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: You are excused.
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                 MR. PATTERSON: Thanks.
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                 MR. MARGARD: I would, however, Your
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     Honor, like to recall Inspector Adkins.
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                 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Very good. You
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     are still under oath.
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                 INSPECTOR ADKINS: Okay.
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                 INSPECTOR EDWARD ADKINS
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recalled as a witness, being previously duly sworn, testified as follows:

3 FURTHER DIRECT EXAMINATION

4 By Mr. Margard:

- 5 Q. Inspector Adkins, you were present
 6 during Mr. Patterson's testimony; is that
 7 correct?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Before I get to specifics, how
 10 frequently are you assigned to work at this
 11 weigh station?
- 12 A. Pretty frequently.
- Q. And had that been the case prior to this inspection?
- 15 A. Yes.
- Q. So you are very familiar with that weigh station and how it operates; is that correct?
- 19 A. Yes, sir.
- Q. You heard Mr. Patterson describe the weigh station as he approached it. Do you recall that description?
- 23 A. Yes, sir.
- Q. Does that accurately reflect how the weigh station is configured?

A. No, sir.

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- Q. And how is it different, please?
- 3 There is only one lane. When you Α. cross the scales you cannot split off until you 4 pass the scales. There is no X, there is no 5 6 arrow, green X, just a green light. Once you go 7 over the scales if you went around back the 8 green light will turn red. There is no X, and 9 we get on the speaker and advise them to go in 10 back.
- Q. And any time the red light is
 activated, I presume that is activated from
 inside the station?
- 14 A. Yes, it is.
- Q. Do you always use the speaker to speak to the driver?
- 17 A. Yes, we do.
- Q. Do you ever approach the driver while they are on the scale?
- 20 A. Yes.
- Q. Do you recall whether you did so in this instance?
- A. I can't recall if I did or not.
- 24 | I have done it before in the past.
- Q. It's possible that you may have?

A. Yes.

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- Q. Would you have seen or do you recall, let me ask you that, do you specifically recall seeing Mr. Patterson pull on to the weigh station, pull up to the scale?
 - A. Specifically him?
 - Q. Yes.
 - A. I do not.
- Q. Do you recall with respect to this inspection ever seeing him take off the belt while he was on the scale?
- A. No. We see them from probably 20 to 30 feet before they approach the building. We are always looking out the window. We will see that someone doesn't have their seat belt on, we will watch them cross the scales and they will cross the scales before they are stopped.

This was an instance where I stopped him, went past the scales, right on top of the scales, stopped and then I walked out immediately and asked him why he didn't have his seat belt on when he was crossing the scales.

- Q. And while moving; is that correct?
- A. That's correct.
 - Q. While operating; is that correct?

A. Correct.

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- Q. Okay. Mr. Patterson also noted that the inspection report indicates that this was a Level 3 inspection as opposed to a Level 2 inspection. What is the difference between those?
- A. Level 3 is a driver only inspection, where we inspect the driver and their paperwork.
- Q. And at least with respect to your inspection of the driver from the time that you first noticed him he was not wearing a seat belt while operating the truck; is that correct?
 - A. That's correct.

MR. MARGARD: Thank you. Your Honor, I have no further questions.

ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Mr. Patterson,
do you have any questions for this witnesses?

MR. PATTERSON: No, sir.

19 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: Anything more?

MR. MARGARD: Thank you, Your Honor.

21 I have nothing further.

22 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: You are excused.

MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, sir.

24 ATTORNEY EXAMINER: If there is

25 nothing more today I will consider this case

submitted on the record. I thank you all for coming. MR. MARGARD: Thank you, your Honor. (At 2:00 P.M. the hearing was concluded) CERTIFICATE I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the proceedings taken by me in this matter on February 8, 2018, and carefully compared with my original stenographic notes. Michael O. Spencer, Registered Professional Reporter.

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

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in

Case No(s). 17-2233-TR-CVF

Summary: Transcript In the Matter of Wayman Patterson Notice of Apparent Violation and Intent to Assess Forfeiture, hearing held on February 8, 2018. electronically filed by Mr. Ken Spencer on behalf of Armstrong & Okey, Inc. and Spencer, Michael O. Mr.