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**AB-525 Basic Inspection of Terminals program: agricultural vehicles.** (2025-2026)

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**Assembly Bill No. 525**

**CHAPTER 61**

An act to amend Sections 34500.6 and 34501.12 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

[ Approved by Governor July 28, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State July 28, 2025. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 525, Lackey. Basic Inspection of Terminals program: agricultural vehicles.

Existing law, the Basic Inspection of Terminals (BIT) program, makes it unlawful for a motor carrier to operate specified vehicles, such as motortrucks of 3 or more axles that are more than 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating, truck tractors, or other motortrucks regulated by the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Public Utilities Commission, or the United States Secretary of Transportation, without identifying to the Department of Motor Vehicles all terminals, as defined, where the vehicle may be inspected by the department and where vehicle inspection and maintenance records and driver records will be made available for inspection. Existing law, until January 1, 2026, excludes an agricultural vehicle, as defined, from being subject to the BIT program.

This bill would extend the exemption of agricultural vehicles from the BIT program until January 1, 2031.

Under existing law, the Department of the California Highway Patrol, in consultation with the Department of Motor Vehicles, on or before January 1, 2022, shall report to the Governor and the Legislature about the impact of excluding an agricultural vehicle, as defined, from being subject to the BIT program. The report shall include, but is not limited to, information about collisions involving excluded vehicles and any traffic safety issues associated with excluded vehicles. The report shall be submitted pursuant to Section 9795 of the Government Code.

This bill would delete this obsolete provision.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 34500.6 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

**34500.6.** (a) For purposes of this division, an agricultural vehicle is a vehicle or combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating or a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,000 pounds or less if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) Is operated by a farmer, an employee of a farmer, or an instructor credentialed in agriculture as part of an instructional program in agriculture at the high school, community college, or university level.

(2) Is used exclusively in the conduct of agricultural operations when operating in commerce.

(3) Is not used in the capacity of a for-hire carrier or for compensation.

(4) The towing vehicle has a gross weight rating of 16,000 pounds or less.

(5) Is used solely in intrastate commerce.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2031, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2031, deletes or extends that date.

**SEC. 2.** Section 34501.12 of the Vehicle Code, as amended by Section 14 of Chapter 226 of the Statutes of 2024, is amended to read:

**34501.12.** (a) Vehicles and the operation thereof, subject to this section, are those described in subdivision (a), (b), (e), (f), (g), or (k) of Section 34500, except an agricultural vehicle as defined in Section 34500.6.

(b) It is unlawful for a motor carrier to operate any vehicle of a type described in subdivision (a) without identifying to the department all terminals, as defined in Section 34515, in this state where vehicles may be inspected by the department pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (a) of Section 34501 and where vehicle inspection and maintenance records and driver records will be made available for inspection. Motor carriers shall make vehicles and records available for inspection upon request by an authorized representative of the department. If a motor carrier fails to provide vehicles and records, an unsatisfactory terminal rating shall be issued by the department.

(1) The number of vehicles that will be selected for inspection by the department at a terminal shall be based on terminal fleet size and applied separately to a terminal fleet of power units and trailers, according to the following schedule:

Fleet Size	Representative Sample
1 or 2	All
3 to 8	3
9 to 15	4
16 to 25	6
26 to 50	9
51 to 90	14
91 or more	20

(2) The lessor of any vehicle described in subdivision (a) shall make vehicles available for inspection upon request of an authorized representative of the department in the course of inspecting the terminal of the lessee. This section does not affect whether the lessor or driver provided by the lessor is an employee of the authorized carrier lessee, and compliance with this section and its attendant administrative requirements does not imply an employee-employer relationship.

(c) (1) The department may inspect any terminal, as defined in Section 34515, of a motor carrier who, at any time, operates any vehicle described in subdivision (a).

(2) The department shall establish a performance-based truck terminal inspection selection priority system. In adopting the system's rules, the department shall incorporate methodologies consistent with those used by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, including those related to the quantitative analysis of safety-related motor carrier performance data, collected during the course of inspection or enforcement contact by authorized representatives of the department or any authorized federal, state, or local safety official, in categories, including, but not limited to, driver fatigue, driver fitness, vehicle maintenance, and controlled substances and alcohol use. The department shall also incorporate other safety-related motor carrier performance data in this system, including citations and accident information. The department shall create a database to include all performance-based data specified in this section that shall be updated in a manner to provide real-time information to the department on motor carrier performance. The department shall prioritize for selection those motor carrier terminals never previously inspected by the department, those identified by the inspection priority selection system, and those terminals operating vehicles listed in subdivision (g) of Section 34500. The department is not required to inspect a terminal pursuant to this section after a terminal receives a satisfactory compliance rating as the result of a terminal inspection conducted by the department pursuant to this section or Section 34501, or if the department has not received notification by the system of a motor carrier operating while exceeding the threshold of the inspection selection priority system. Any motor carrier that is inspected and receives less than a satisfactory compliance rating, or that falls below the threshold of the selection priority system, shall be subject to periodic inquiries and inspections as outlined in subdivision (f), and these inquiries and inspections shall be based on the severity of the violations.

(3) As used in this section and Section 34505.6, subdivision (f) of Section 34500 includes only those combinations in which the gross vehicle weight rating of the towing vehicle exceeds 10,000 pounds, but does not include a pickup truck or any combination never operated in commercial use, and subdivision (g) of Section 34500 includes only those vehicles transporting hazardous material for which the display of placards is required pursuant to Section 27903, a license is required pursuant to Section 32000.5, or for which hazardous waste transporter registration is required pursuant to Section 25163 of the Health and Safety Code. Notwithstanding Section 5014.1, vehicles that display special identification plates in accordance with Section 5011, historical vehicles, as described in Section 5004, implements of husbandry and farm vehicles, as defined in Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 36000) of Division 16, and vehicles owned or operated by an agency of the federal government are not subject to this section or Section 34505.6.

(d) It is unlawful for a motor carrier to operate, or cause to be operated, any vehicle that is subject to this section, Section 34520, or Division 14.85 (commencing with Section 34600), unless the motor carrier is knowledgeable of, and in compliance with, all applicable statutes and regulations.

(e) It is unlawful for a motor carrier to contract or subcontract with, or otherwise engage the services of, another motor carrier, subject to this section, unless the contracted motor carrier has complied with subdivision (d). A motor carrier shall not contract or subcontract with, or otherwise engage the services of, another motor carrier until the contracted motor carrier provides certification of compliance with subdivision (d). This certification shall be completed in writing by the contracted motor carrier in a manner prescribed by the department. The certification, or a copy of the certification, shall be maintained by each involved party for the duration of the contract or the period of service plus two years, and shall be presented for inspection immediately upon the request of an authorized employee of the department. The certifications required by this subdivision and subdivision (b) of Section 34620 may be combined.

(f) (1) An inspected terminal that receives an unsatisfactory compliance rating shall be reinspected by the department within 120 days after the issuance of the unsatisfactory compliance rating.

(2) If a motor carrier's Motor Carrier of Property Permit or Public Utilities Commission operating authority is suspended as a result of an unsatisfactory compliance rating, the department shall not conduct a reinspection for permit or authority reinstatement until requested to do so by the Department of Motor Vehicles or the Public Utilities Commission, as appropriate.

(g) A motor carrier issued an unsatisfactory terminal rating may request a review of the rating within five business days of receipt of the notification of the rating. The department shall conduct and evaluate the review within 10 business days of the request.

(h) The department shall publish performance-based inspection completion data and make the data available for public review.

(i) This section shall be known, and may be cited, as the Basic Inspection of Terminals program or BIT program.

(j) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2031, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2031, deletes or extends that date.

**SEC. 3.** Section 34501.12 of the Vehicle Code, as amended by Section 15 of Chapter 226 of the Statutes of 2024, is amended to read:

**34501.12.** (a) Vehicles and the operation thereof, subject to this section, are those described in subdivision (a), (b), (e), (f), (g), or (k) of Section 34500.

(b) It is unlawful for a motor carrier to operate any vehicle of a type described in subdivision (a) without identifying to the department all terminals, as defined in Section 34515, in this state where vehicles may be inspected by the department pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (a) of Section 34501 and where vehicle inspection and maintenance records and driver records will be made available for inspection. Motor carriers shall make vehicles and records available for inspection upon request by an authorized representative of the department. If a motor carrier fails to provide vehicles and records, an unsatisfactory terminal rating shall be issued by the department.

(1) The number of vehicles that will be selected for inspection by the department at a terminal shall be based on terminal fleet size and applied separately to a terminal fleet of power units and trailers, according to the following schedule:

Fleet Size	Representative Sample
1 or 2	All
3 to 8	3
9 to 15	4
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26 to 50	9
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91 or more	20

(2) The lessor of any vehicle described in subdivision (a) shall make vehicles available for inspection upon request of an authorized representative of the department in the course of inspecting the terminal of the lessee. This section does not affect whether the lessor or driver provided by the lessor is an employee of the authorized carrier lessee, and compliance with this section and its attendant administrative requirements does not imply an employee-employer relationship.

(c) (1) The department may inspect any terminal, as defined in Section 34515, of a motor carrier who, at any time, operates any vehicle described in subdivision (a).

(2) The department shall establish a performance-based truck terminal inspection selection priority system. In adopting the system's rules, the department shall incorporate methodologies consistent with those used by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, including those related to the quantitative analysis of safety-related motor carrier performance data, collected during the course of inspection or enforcement contact by authorized representatives of the department or any authorized federal, state, or local safety official, in categories, including, but not limited to, driver fatigue, driver fitness, vehicle maintenance, and controlled substances and alcohol use. The department shall also incorporate other safety-related motor carrier performance data in this system, including citations and accident information. The department shall create a database to include all performance-based data specified in this section that shall be updated in a manner to provide real-time information to the department on motor carrier performance. The department shall prioritize for selection those motor carrier terminals never previously inspected by the department, those identified by the inspection priority selection system, and those terminals operating vehicles listed in subdivision (g) of Section 34500. The department is not required to inspect a terminal pursuant to this section after a terminal receives a satisfactory compliance rating as the result of a terminal inspection conducted by the department pursuant to this section or Section 34501, or if the department has not received notification by the system of a motor carrier operating while exceeding the threshold of the inspection selection priority system. Any motor carrier that is inspected and receives less than a satisfactory compliance rating, or that falls below the threshold of the selection priority system, shall be subject to periodic inquiries and inspections as outlined in subdivision (f), and these inquiries and inspections shall be based on the severity of the violations.

(3) As used in this section and Section 34505.6, subdivision (f) of Section 34500 includes only those combinations in which the gross vehicle weight rating of the towing vehicle exceeds 10,000 pounds, but does not include a pickup truck or any combination never operated in commercial use, and subdivision (g) of Section 34500 includes only those vehicles transporting hazardous material for which the display of placards is required pursuant to Section 27903, a license is required pursuant to Section 32000.5, or for which hazardous waste transporter registration is required pursuant to Section 25163 of the Health and Safety Code. Notwithstanding Section 5014.1, vehicles that display special identification plates in accordance with Section 5011, historical vehicles, as described in Section 5004, implements of husbandry and farm vehicles, as defined in Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 36000) of Division 16 and vehicles owned or operated by an agency of the federal government are not subject to this section or Section 34505.6.

(d) It is unlawful for a motor carrier to operate, or cause to be operated, any vehicle that is subject to this section, Section 34520, or Division 14.85 (commencing with Section 34600), unless the motor carrier is knowledgeable of, and in compliance with, all applicable statutes and regulations.

(e) It is unlawful for a motor carrier to contract or subcontract with, or otherwise engage the services of, another motor carrier, subject to this section, unless the contracted motor carrier has complied with subdivision (d). A motor carrier shall not contract or subcontract with, or otherwise engage the services of, another motor carrier until the contracted motor carrier provides certification of compliance with subdivision (d). This certification shall be completed in writing by the contracted motor carrier in a manner prescribed by the department. The certification, or a copy of the certification, shall be maintained by each involved party for the duration of the contract or the period of service plus two years, and shall be presented for inspection immediately upon the request of an authorized employee of the department. The certifications required by this subdivision and subdivision (b) of Section 34620 may be combined.

(f) (1) An inspected terminal that receives an unsatisfactory compliance rating shall be reinspected by the department within 120 days after the issuance of the unsatisfactory compliance rating.

(2) If a motor carrier's Motor Carrier of Property Permit or Public Utilities Commission operating authority is suspended as a result of an unsatisfactory compliance rating, the department shall not conduct a reinspection for permit or authority reinstatement until requested to do so by the Department of Motor Vehicles or the Public Utilities Commission, as appropriate.

(g) A motor carrier issued an unsatisfactory terminal rating may request a review of the rating within five business days of receipt of the notification of the rating. The department shall conduct and evaluate the review within 10 business days of the request.

(h) The department shall publish performance-based inspection completion data and make the data available for public review.

(i) This section shall be known, and may be cited, as the Basic Inspection of Terminals program or BIT program.

(j) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2031.