

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 31, 2005

Contact: Kelly Chesney
(517) 373-2520

Law tightens ‘hazmat’ endorsement requirements *Secretary of State says changes help protect state, country*

Starting today, commercial drivers applying to haul hazardous materials must first undergo fingerprint and federal background record checks as required under the USA PATRIOT Act, announced Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land.

The fingerprint and background checks also will apply to hazardous materials endorsement renewals beginning May 31.

The new requirements apply to all states and are part of a move to strengthen homeland security and protect against terrorist threats.

“These changes are crucial to strengthening homeland security and defending against terrorist threats,” Land said. “The world has changed since 9-11, and we need to take these precautions in order to protect the citizens of this great state and country. We will work with applicants to make sure that they understand the new process.”

The federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA) oversees the implementation of the new requirements. The TSA has selected Integrated Biometric Technologies to assist states in identifying local companies to process fingerprint and federal background checks.

In Michigan, Integrated Biometric Technologies has chosen Examination Management Services Inc., 27260 Haggerty Road, Suite A21, Farmington Hills. Additional companies will be added to the list in the near future.

(more)

To begin the process, drivers must preregister by submitting an application by Internet or telephone. The online application is available on the TSA Hazmat Web site at www.hazprints.com. Telephone applications can be submitted by calling a toll-free driver help desk at (877) 429-7746. Drivers may also pay the \$94 processing fee with a credit card or an electronic check when they preregister.

Once the application is submitted, drivers must appear in person at one of the companies authorized to collect fingerprints, present a valid driver's license or other document certifying their driver qualifications, have their fingerprints taken, provide any other information required and pay the \$94 fee if they have not already done so. Only a money order made payable to Integrated Biometric Technology, LLC will be accepted.

Drivers appearing at a company for fingerprinting who have failed to preregister will be asked to call in their application information to the toll-free driver help desk before any further action is taken.

The TSA estimates that most background checks will be completed within 30 days. However, the process could take as long as 45-60 days. The TSA will notify all drivers in writing with the results. Drivers must bring the written TSA approval to a Secretary of State office before a hazardous materials endorsement can be issued.

The Department of State issues about 250 new and 1,200 renewed hazardous materials endorsements each month. A hazardous materials endorsement allows drivers to haul products, such as flammable solids, liquids and gases, explosives, poisons or radioactive materials, which pose a risk to health, safety and property during transportation.

More information about the USA PATRIOT Act hazardous materials endorsement requirements is available through the department's Web site at www.Michigan.gov/sos -- click on "Driver License and State ID."

###