

## INCVA - Questions & Answers

June 7, 2013

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**Q. What is the International Non-apportioned Commercial Vehicle Agreement (INCVA)?**

- A. INCVA is a free registration reciprocity agreement between signatory states and Canadian provinces to provide light commercial vehicles, charter buses, and vehicles with restricted plates the ability to temporarily operate into other jurisdictions (hosts) using their registration and license issued in their home (base) jurisdiction without requiring additional fees or permits (free reciprocity).

INCVA was developed through the efforts of the INCVA working group established by the International Registration Plan's Board of Directors. INCVA is designed as a companion agreement to the International Registration Plan (IRP), but does not affect the IRP agreement, to provide for all commercial vehicles that are either not eligible for registration under IRP (vehicles displaying restricted plates with associated time/geographic/commodity limitations) or for which registration under IRP is optional (2 axle vehicles under 26,000 lbs. and charter buses).

**Q. Why is INCVA necessary?**

- A. The rules and requirements for hosted light commercial and restricted plated vehicles are often unclear and uncertain for jurisdictional staff, law enforcement and vehicle operators. INCVA would replace the patchwork of existing allowances for free registration reciprocity into one uniform agreement which would be both readily accessible and binding. As a result, it would bring clarity and certainty for jurisdictional staff, law enforcement and vehicle operators.

**Q. Who benefits if my jurisdiction joins INCVA?**

- A. INCVA will provide clarity and certainty for jurisdictional staff, law enforcement and vehicle owners. All registration provisions for out-of-jurisdiction visiting light commercial vehicles, charter buses and restricted plated vehicles will be accessible, accurate and always current.

**Jurisdictions** will benefit through reduced administration and associated costs. **Law enforcement** will benefit because the rules and requirements will be clear and accessible at scales and at roadside. **Vehicle owners**, both travelling from your jurisdiction and into your jurisdiction, will benefit as they can easily self-determine in advance whether or not they require trip permits. It will also reduce inter-jurisdictional trade barriers for your commercial vehicle owners. Overall, it will reduce administrative burdens for your jurisdictional staff, your law enforcement personnel, and commercial vehicle owners.

**Q. What vehicles does INCVA cover?**

- A. Licensed motor vehicles used for a commercial purpose that meet one of the following criteria:
- under 26,000 lbs. (11,794 kg) with 2 axles,
  - charter buses, regardless of weight, as defined by INCVA and IRP,
  - restricted plated vehicles (vehicles of any weight displaying a plate with an associated time, geographic area, distance or commodity restriction – e.g., farm, motor dealer, or historic plated vehicles), and
  - government plated vehicles, including public mass transit vehicles,

**Q. Will my jurisdiction lose revenue by joining INCVA?**

A. No. INCVA is designed to allow a jurisdiction to specify the level of free reciprocity it provides. That can match what is already provided through existing agreements, statute or policy. Even if existing levels of reciprocity are unchanged, joining INCVA will reduce administrative burdens by providing clarity and certainty for jurisdictional staff, law enforcement and vehicle owners as to when free reciprocity is provided and when free reciprocity isn't provided and permits must therefore be obtained.

**Q. Why not integrate free reciprocity into the IRP Agreement?**

A. IRP doesn't provide the flexibility for exclusions, limits, conditions and allowances required to have a single source agreement for free reciprocity. The level of participation in INCVA can range from a little to a lot, whereas IRP is an all or nothing type agreement and being a member of IRP is, in essence, mandatory for a range of reasons including federal legislation and economic necessity. Consequently, including the scope of free reciprocity provided for under INCVA into the IRP would force all jurisdictions to take on a level of reciprocity they may not be prepared to accept.

**Q. Are there fees or dues for a jurisdiction to participate in INCVA?**

A. No, nor are there provisions to charge or assess a fee under INCVA. INCVA requires very little on-going administration. IRP, Inc. administers INVCA as part of its motor carrier services function.

**Q. Why should I join if my jurisdiction has strict limits on free reciprocity?**

A. Participating in INCVA ensures clarity and certainty for jurisdictional staff, law enforcement and vehicle owners regarding a jurisdiction's free reciprocity allowances, whatever they may be.

**Q. Would INCVA benefit a jurisdiction whose neighboring jurisdictions are not yet INCVA signatories?**

A. Yes. INCVA provides a starting point to provide clarity and certainty as to your jurisdiction's allowances for hosted commercial motor vehicles. While the benefits of the agreement are greater when neighboring jurisdictions are also signatories, there are still benefits for your based plated commercial vehicle operators when they travel internationally (US or Canada) or longer distances from home. By being an early adopter, your jurisdiction's participation will encourage neighboring jurisdictions to consider and sign-on to enjoy the benefits of INCVA.

**Q. What rules apply if my jurisdiction joins INCVA but my neighboring jurisdiction doesn't?**

A. The provisions of INCVA only apply between signatory jurisdictions. Where one jurisdiction is a member of INCVA and its neighbor is not, then prior agreements or arrangements continue to apply between the member and non-member jurisdiction.

**Q. What is the process for a jurisdiction to join INCVA?**

A. The person with the appropriate authority in a jurisdiction signs Appendix B (Resolution adopting INCVA) of INCVA and sends it to Tim Adams, CEO of IRP Inc. ([t.adams@irpinc.org](mailto:t.adams@irpinc.org)). Under the terms

of INCVA, the reciprocity provisions will come into effect 30 days after Appendix B is received. IRP Inc. will notify all other member jurisdictions of new membership.

**Q. Why aren't trailers included?**

A. IRP already includes some free reciprocity for trailers. Further, many jurisdictions' statutes also already outline the allowances for foreign trailers not covered under IRP. In the research done by the INCVA working group, trailers were not identified as an area of concern and had the potential to unnecessarily complicate INCVA.

**Q. What if my jurisdiction has a very specific definition of "commercial motor vehicle"?**

A. Signatories can specify what the agreement does or doesn't apply to in the Appendix and therefore the applicability of INCVA for your jurisdiction can be tailored to fit your specific definition of commercial motor vehicle. If, for example, your statutes treat pick-up trucks that are less than 10,000 lbs. GVW similarly to passenger cars, the appendix could either provide differently for these pick-ups from other larger commercial vehicles or exclude them from INCVA altogether.

**Q. Is there a dispute resolution mechanism within INCVA?**

A. No. If there is an area of contention or question of interpretation, a jurisdiction can provide clarifying language in the Appendix to stipulate exactly how the Agreement is applied in their jurisdiction. Given the flexibility this provides, it was determined unnecessary to have a formal dispute resolution mechanism.

**Q. If my jurisdiction joins INCVA, do I need to withdraw from prior agreements?**

A. No. Similar to what happened to prior prorated licence agreements when your jurisdiction joined IRP, INCVA will supersede the portions of agreements dealing with the commercial vehicles as defined in INCVA. The INCVA working group had found that many jurisdictions are not aware that they are still members of historic formal agreements, arrangements and MOUs. Jurisdictions are advised to research what reciprocity they currently provide to ensure when joining INCVA that they do not inadvertently cancel existing reciprocity that is relied upon by commercial vehicle operators.

**Q. What is mirror reciprocity and can INCVA accommodate mirror reciprocity?**

A. Mirror reciprocity refers to the concept that only the same level of reciprocity provided for our vehicles in your jurisdiction will be provided for your vehicles in our jurisdiction. Yes, INCVA can accommodate mirror reciprocity simply by having a jurisdiction stipulate it in the appendix. Where mirror reciprocity is not stipulated, INCVA provides reciprocity similarly to how most jurisdictions deal with passenger cars and recreational vehicles where the host jurisdiction provides the same allowances for all vehicles, regardless of the allowances of the base plated jurisdiction.

**Q. What are restricted plated vehicles?**

- A. Vehicles of all weights that have geographic, distance or commodity limitations. Also included are government plated vehicles and public transit vehicles. *Restricted plates include, by way of example, farm or fishing plates, motor dealer industry plates such as demonstration, repairers and transporter plates, as well as historic, vintage or collector plates*

**Q. What rules apply for hosted restricted plated vehicles?**

- A. The rules of the host jurisdiction applicable to an equivalent plate type issued by the host jurisdiction apply. For example, if your jurisdiction issues a farm plate and limits the use of that farm plate only to carrying the goods of that farmer, then these rules will apply to any hosted farm plated vehicle. This ensures that enforcement will be knowledgeable about applicable operation restrictions and also ensures a level playing field for restricted plated vehicles operating in a host jurisdiction.

Where not otherwise specified in the appendix, inter-jurisdictional and intra-jurisdictional reciprocity is provided to restricted plated vehicles the same as any other non-apportioned vehicle under the terms of the agreement. Jurisdictions may, however, further specify limits and conditions applicable to restricted plated vehicles.

**Q. As a member of the Canadian Agreement on Vehicle Registration (CAVR), what are the benefits for my province to join INCVA?**

- A. INCVA is based in large part on the principles and practices under CAVR. INCVA improves on CAVR by (1) removing the conflicts between CAVR and the IRP agreement; (2) clarifying the provisions for intra-jurisdictional operations; (3) extending the benefits of CAVR to allow operation into US member signatory jurisdictions and vice-versa; (4) providing greater flexibility for restricted plated farm and industrial vehicles.

**Q. Why does the Agreement provide for exclusions rather than require uniformity?**

- A. INCVA is meant to be a single source agreement encompassing all aspects of hosted light commercial and restricted plated vehicle operations. While most jurisdictions allow some degree of inter-jurisdictional operations, they vary widely for intra-jurisdictional operations. The flexibility INCVA provides means that all Canadian and US jurisdictions can join the Agreement and thereby provide clarity and certainty through one single accessible and binding agreement.

**Q. If a jurisdiction chooses to provide free reciprocity for intra-jurisdictional operations, will it lose permit revenue?**

- A. Most likely not. The INCVA working group examined British Columbia's 2007 experience of adopting free intra-jurisdictional reciprocity (point to point within the province) for hosted vehicles. BC found there was a large decrease in the number of permits sold, yet the permit revenue had only a minor decline in the first year then increased again in subsequent years. The vast majority of BC permit revenue comes from heavy commercial vehicles. The vehicles covered under free reciprocity agreements generally obtain a high number of low value (but administratively burdensome for

jurisdictions and vehicle operators alike) permits. Those that operate frequently within other jurisdictions continue to be required to purchase permits or prorate under IRP when operating beyond what is allowed under INCVA. All that said, a jurisdiction can choose whether or not to provide intra-jurisdictional reciprocity under INCVA.

**Q. Instead of INCVA, why not just consolidate existing practices on an informational website?**

A. The information in guidebooks and websites is not always accurate and is not binding. As jurisdictional practices change, published information becomes more unreliable. As well, often historical reciprocity agreements or arrangements for reciprocity are still in force further creating confusion and uncertainty as to what applies and what doesn't. With INCVA and its appendix, all the free registration reciprocity for commercial motor vehicles is in one single binding agreement, providing clarity and certainty for jurisdictions, vehicle operators and law enforcement.

**Q. Our jurisdiction has special agreements for adjoining cities, is this still possible under INCVA?**

A. Yes. INCVA is designed to accommodate bilateral agreements. It's possible to provide unrestricted reciprocity in a defined area (e.g., within 15 miles of a jurisdictional boundary) but limit reciprocity outside of this area. INCVA would provide greater clarity and certainty for vehicle owners and law enforcement as all free reciprocity would be found in a single source agreement. Because INCVA supersedes all other agreements, the provisions of a bilateral agreement would need to be included in the jurisdiction's appendix entry.

**Q. Will commercial vehicles under 26,000 lbs. (11,794 kg) still be able to register under IRP?**

A. Yes. INCVA doesn't change any of the provisions of IRP. INCVA is structured to provide for limited temporary operations in host jurisdictions and therefore many light commercial vehicle or charter bus owners will still choose to register under IRP, especially if they do routine operations in multiple jurisdictions. For those that are only operating temporarily in host jurisdictions, INCVA provides an alternative to the administrative and record keeping requirements under IRP, for vehicle owners and jurisdictions alike.

**Q. Does INCVA require any changes to the IRP agreement?**

A. No. There is nothing in INCVA that would require changes to the IRP agreement. Further, it is made clear in INCVA that should there be a conflict between IRP and INCVA, the IRP prevails.

**Q. Who developed INCVA?**

A. INCVA was developed through four years of research and consultations by jurisdictional representatives and industry advisors of the INCVA working group. The working group was established by the International Registration Plan's Board of Directors.

**Q. Who can I contact if I have more questions?**

A. Please feel welcome to contact any member of the INCVA working group. The roster, complete with contact information, can be found at [www.irponline.org](http://www.irponline.org).