

**THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF KANSAS**

Before Commissioners:      Dwight D. Keen, Chair  
                                     Shari Feist Albrecht  
                                     Susan K. Duffy

In the Matter of the Investigation of **Savannah**      )  
**Traders LLC of Overland Park, Kansas,**      )  
Regarding the Violation of the Motor Carrier      )  
Safety Statutes, Rules and Regulations and the      )      Docket No. 19-TRAM-429-PEN  
Commission's Authority to Impose Penalties,      )  
Sanctions and/or the Revocation of Motor      )  
Carrier Authority.      )

**ORDER APPROVING STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

The above-captioned matter comes before the State Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas (Commission) for consideration. Having examined its files and records, and being duly advised in the premises, the Commission finds and concludes as follows:

**I.      BACKGROUND**

1.      On April 16, 2019, Commission Staff (Staff) Special Investigator Wade Patterson conducted a compliance review on Respondent's motor carrier operations. As a result of the review, Investigator Patterson identified two (2) violations of the Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

2.      On May 2, 2019, the Commission issued a Penalty Order in this docket assessing a \$3,350 civil penalty against Respondent.

3.      On July 30, 2019, the Commission issued its *Order Suspending Intrastate Motor Carrier Operations* (Suspension Order).

4.      On August 9, 2019, Savannah Traders LLC filed its Request for Hearing on the Suspension Order with the Commission.

5. On August 15, 2019 and in subsequent communications thereafter, Charles Mulengo, Manager of Savannah Traders LLC, Mike Hoeme, Transportation Division Director, and Ahsan Latif, Litigation Counsel for Staff (Staff), informally discussed the possibility of a settlement. During the informal discussions, Staff and Respondent were able to reach mutually agreeable terms in anticipated settlement of the issues. It was agreed that Staff would subsequently reduce the terms to writing and forward the draft to Respondent for approval and signature.

6. The parties signed a Stipulated Settlement Agreement and submitted a Joint Motion for its approval to the Commission on September 11, 2019. In the Stipulated Settlement Agreement, Respondent stipulates to the violations as set out in the Commission's Penalty Order. Staff agreed to reduce the civil penalty to \$850 to be paid within thirty days of the issuance of this order.

7. Failure to make the payment will result in the immediate suspension of Respondent's authority without further notice.

8. Respondent further agreed to submit to one follow-up safety compliance review within 18 months of the date of this Order.

9. Respondent agreed to attend a Commission-sponsored safety seminar within 90 days of the date of this Order and will provide Litigation Counsel with proof of attendance. In signing the Stipulated Settlement Agreement, the parties agree that the Agreement constitutes a reasonable and fair resolution of the outstanding issues raised in this proceeding.

## **II. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

10. The Commission finds that the terms and provisions of the Stipulated Settlement Agreement and the dismissal of the civil penalty contained therein constitute a reasonable and appropriate final resolution of this matter.

11. The Commission concludes that settlements are favored by the law. *Bright v. LSI Corp.*, 254 Kan. 853, 869 P.2d 686 (1994). A settlement of issues, all or part, with or without unanimous agreement, will be entertained by the Commission.

12. The Commission further concludes that pursuant to K.S.A. 2017 Supp. 66-1,108b, 66-1,111, 66-1,112, 66-1,114, 66-1,114b and 66-1,115, the Commission is given full power, authority and jurisdiction to supervise and control motor carriers, as defined in K.S.A. 2017 Supp. 66-1,108b, doing business or procuring business in Kansas, and is empowered to do all things necessary and convenient for the exercise of such power, authority and jurisdiction. The Commission may fine, sanction, suspend, cancel or revoke a carrier's authority in accordance with K.S.A 2017 Supp. 66-1,129a, 66-1,130 and 66-1,142b. Further, the Commission has the authority to investigate a party in accordance with K.A.R. 82-1-237.

13. The Commission has reviewed the Stipulated Settlement Agreement attached to the Joint Motion for Approval of Stipulated Settlement Agreement of the parties and concludes that the terms and provisions therein are an appropriate and reasonable disposition of this matter. The Commission therefore adopts and incorporates by reference the terms of the Agreement.

### **THE COMMISSION THEREFORE ORDERS THAT:**

A. The Joint Motion to Approve the Stipulated Settlement Agreement entered into by Savannah Traders LLC and Staff is hereby granted. The terms of the Stipulated Settlement Agreement are approved and are hereby incorporated by reference.

B. Any party may file and serve a petition for reconsideration pursuant to the requirements and time limits established by K.S.A. 77-529(a)(1).<sup>1</sup>

C. The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter and the parties for the purpose of entering such further order or orders as it may deem necessary.

**BY THE COMMISSION IT IS SO ORDERED.**

Keen, Chair; Albrecht, Commissioner; Duffy, Commissioner

Dated: 09/18/2019



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Lynn M. Retz  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> K.S.A. 66-118b; K.S.A. 77-503(c); K.S.A. 77-531(b).

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**STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

This Stipulated Settlement Agreement (Agreement) is entered into by and between the Staff of the Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas (Staff and Commission, respectively), and Savannah Traders LLC (Respondent). Its effective date will be the date the Commission enters an order approving or amending the terms of the Agreement.

**I. JURISDICTION**

1. Pursuant to K.S.A. 2017 Supp. 66-1,108b, 66-1,111, 66-1,112, 66-1,114, 66-1,114b and 66-1,115, and amendments thereto, the Commission is given full power, authority and jurisdiction to supervise and control motor carriers, as defined in K.S.A. 2017 Supp. 66-1,108, doing business or procuring business in Kansas, and is empowered to do all things necessary and convenient for the exercise of such power, authority and jurisdiction.

2. Pursuant to K.S.A. 2017 Supp. 66-1,129a, 66-1,130 and 66-1,142b, and amendments thereto, the Commission may suspend operations, revoke or amend certificates, and initiate sanctions or fines against every motor carrier and every person who violates any provision of

Kansas law in regard to the regulation of such motor carriers and persons, or who fails to obey any order, decision or regulation of the Commission.

3. The Commission has the authority, pursuant to K.A.R. 82-1-237, to investigate a party under its jurisdiction.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

4. Under the above jurisdiction and authority, on April 16, 2019, Commission Staff (Staff) Special Investigator Wade Patterson conducted a compliance review on Respondent's motor carrier operations. As a result of the review, Investigator Patterson identified two (2) violations of the Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

5. On May 2, 2019, the Commission issued a Penalty Order in this docket assessing a \$3,350 civil penalty against Respondent.

6. On July 30, 2019, the Commission issued its *Order Suspending Intrastate Motor Carrier Operations* (Suspension Order).

7. On August 9, 2019, Savannah Traders LLC filed its Request for Hearing on the Suspension Order with the Commission.

8. On August 15, 2019 and in subsequent communications thereafter, Charles Mulengo, Manager of Savannah Traders LLC, Mike Hoeme, Transportation Division Director, and Ahsan Latif, Litigation Counsel for Staff (Staff), informally discussed the possibility of a settlement. During the informal discussions, Staff and Respondent were able to reach mutually agreeable terms in anticipated settlement of the issues. It was agreed that Staff would subsequently reduce the terms to writing and forward the draft to Respondent for approval and signature.

## **III. TERMS OF THE STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT**

9. The parties agree that the Commission has jurisdiction and authority over this matter.

10. The parties also agree that adoption of this Agreement is in the public interest and that the Commission should approve the stipulations as set forth below.

11. Respondent stipulates to the violations as listed in the Commission's Penalty Order, which are hereby incorporated by reference.

12. Staff recommends waiver of portions of the civil penalty at their discretion after conducting negotiations with Respondent. Thus, Staff recommends Respondent's \$3,000 civil penalty, for the carrier's operations of a commercial motor vehicle that has been declared and marked as "out of service" without it being repaired, be reduced to \$500, bringing Respondent's total civil penalty to \$850.

13. On January 3, 2019, based on negotiations with Respondent, Respondent agreed to drop the Request for Hearing and accept the waiver of \$2,250 of the original \$3,350 civil penalty assessed in the May 2, 2019, Penalty Order.

14. Respondent stipulates that he has submitted a corrective action plan to bring the motor carrier operation into compliance with both state and federal motor carrier safety regulations and will maintain such compliance into the future.

15. Respondent, therefore, agrees to pay fines totaling \$850 for the above violations within 30 days of the issuance of an order approving this agreement. Payments shall be made payable to the Kansas Corporation Commission and mailed to the Kansas Corporation Commission, Legal Division, 1500 S.W. Arrowhead Road, Topeka, Kansas, 66604-4027. ***Respondent shall include the docket number of these proceedings (19-TRAM-429-PEN) in the memo field of the payment. Respondent understands and agrees that failure to make the payment will result in the immediate suspension of the carrier's operating authority (if then applicable) without further notice.***

16. Respondent acknowledges that at least one safety compliance review will be conducted within 18 months from the date this Agreement is approved or amended pursuant to entry of an order by the Commission. Staff will contact Respondent at a later date to determine an appropriate time for this review.

17. Respondent further agrees to attend a Commission-sponsored safety seminar within the next ninety (90) days from the date this Agreement is approved or amended pursuant to entry of an order by the Commission. Respondent agrees to provide Litigation Counsel with written proof of attendance. A schedule of dates and locations for the safety seminar can be found at the Commission's website at [http://www.kcc.state.ks.us/trans/safety\\_meetings.htm](http://www.kcc.state.ks.us/trans/safety_meetings.htm).

18. Respondent understands that failure to pay the stipulated civil penalty as set out in ¶15 above, could result in the suspension of its authority without further notice and the Commission could submit the matter for judicial enforcement or enforcement through the Kansas Attorney General's Office.

19. Staff agrees to recommend to the Commission that this Agreement be approved. Staff further agrees that upon approval by the Commission, and barring default proceedings pursuant to K.S.A. 2017 Supp. 77-520, as described in ¶ 15 above, this Agreement shall constitute a final resolution of this matter.

#### **IV. RESERVATIONS**

20. This Stipulated Settlement Agreement fully resolves issues specifically addressed between the parties. The terms of this Agreement constitute a fair and reasonable resolution of the issues addressed herein.

21. The terms and provisions of this Agreement have resulted from negotiations between the signatories and are interdependent. In the event the Commission does not approve the terms of



the Agreement in total, any party has the option to terminate this Agreement and, if so terminated, none of the signatories hereto shall be bound by, prejudiced, or in any way affected by any of the terms or provisions hereof, unless otherwise provided herein.

22. Unless (and only to the extent) otherwise specified in this Agreement, the signatories to this Agreement shall not be prejudiced, bound by, or affected in any way by the terms of this Agreement: (1) in any future Commission or court proceeding; (2) in any proceeding currently pending before the Commission under a separate docket; and/or (3) in this proceeding, if the Commission decides not to approve this Agreement in total or in any way conditions its approval of the same. This paragraph is not meant to limit future enforcement of this Agreement, should either party fail to fulfill all terms and provisions.

23. Unless (and only to the extent) otherwise specified in this Agreement, this Agreement does not prejudice or waive any party's legal rights, positions, claims, assertions or arguments in any proceedings in this docket, or any other proceeding before the Commission or in any court.

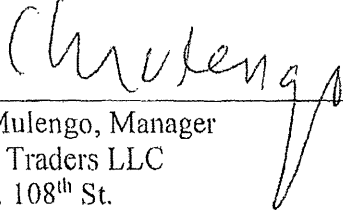
24. If the Commission approves this Agreement in its entirety and incorporates the same into a final order in this docket, the parties agree to be bound by its terms and the Commission's order incorporating its terms as to all issues addressed herein, and will not appeal the Commission's order.

25. This Stipulated Settlement Agreement shall be binding on all parties upon signing.

IN WITNESS WHERETO, the parties hereby execute and approve this Stipulated Settlement Agreement by subscribing their signatures below.

By:   
Ahsan A. Latif S.Ct. #24709  
Litigation Counsel  
Kansas Corporation Commission  
1500 S.W. Arrowhead Road  
Topeka, Kansas 66604-4027  
Phone: 785-271-3118  
Fax: 785-271-3124  
Email: a.latif@kcc.ks.gov

Attorney for Commission Staff

By:  8/27/15  
Charles Mulengo, Manager  
Savannah Traders LLC  
12904 W. 108<sup>th</sup> St.  
Overland Park, Kansas 66210

Respondent

## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

19-TRAM-429-PEN

I, the undersigned, certify that a true copy of the attached Order has been served to the following by means of  
first class mail/hand delivered on 09/18/2019.

AHSAN LATIF, LITIGATION COUNSEL  
KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION  
1500 SW ARROWHEAD RD  
TOPEKA, KS 66604  
Fax: 785-271-3354  
a.latif@kcc.ks.gov

CHARLES MULENGO, MANAGING MEMBER  
SAVANNAH TRADERS LLC  
12904 W 108TH ST  
OVERLAND PARK, KS 66210-1108  
Fax: 888-411-2820  
trader@savannahtraders.com

/S/ DeeAnn Shupe  
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DeeAnn Shupe