

## WASHTO MEETING MARCH 10-11, 2009, ALBUQUERQUE, NM MEETING MINUTES

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### Introductions

**11 States represented: CO, CA, MO, ND, NE, NM, NV, OK, TX, UT, and WY**

Also present: Permit services, Industry members, Pilot Car Associations

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### **Rick Clasby, UT DOT - Welcome** **Introduction of Beth O'Quinn – VP of SC&RA**

Rick said Washington State [Jim Wright] called to express thanks for on going emails and communication between meetings. Jim is unable to attend due to budget cuts.

Rick noted we need to give thanks to our sponsors for the breaks and lunches provided, and to SCRA for meeting and hotel planning. He also recognized it is good to have industry represented at this meeting.

Opening & Minutes Approval – Minutes of Spring 2008 meeting in San Antonio, TX approved.

#### 1. LVC Study – Leanna Emmer, ND DOT

Goal is to have Longer Combination Vehicles (LCV) travel from one jurisdiction to another, but the discussion for the past 2-3 years has been that we need to obtain funds to study this. Leanna contacted Mark Berant of Wilbur Smith & Associates, and also John Nichols from FHWA [formerly WA State Patrol], and others. Talk of funding has included if states can share the cost of the study. The cost would be around \$500k – so half for states would be \$250k. Now we are looking at tabling the issue – at least until states are more fiscally sound. Norm Lindgren (ITS/CVO Advisor) suggests when we raise the issue again get a big LCV carrier involved. Rick noted that ATA is not currently pushing this issue either. Norm Hill (OK) said we should wait based on state budgets. Teresa Lawser (CO DOT) noted that in CO we have been asking FHWA for direction on relaxing the weight limits, adding to the routes, and adding distance to the ingress/egress, and the firm answer is ‘No.’ She has an email from FHWA’s counsel in Washington stating “the freeze is the freeze.”

*A motion passed to table the issue.*

#### 2. Reduced Visibility and Hazardous Roadway Survey – Handout is posted on the WASHTO COHT web page at

<http://www.washto.org/pdf/Hazardous%20Weather%20Restrictions%20Guide.pdf> .

Larry Perkins (Perkins Trucking) stated that enforcement is not consistent in CO and when the weather is bad in one location, it may not be bad 2 miles down the road. Long discussion ensued. Rick suggested trying to craft some uniformity language from this committee for the states to use. There were also questions on how far a load can move off the route.  ACTION ITEM: Rick assigned the task to Leanna’s group to look at how far

a load can move off a route in bad weather or for other reasons, and also Teresa's group to look at the language in their break out session.

3. New Generation Wide Based-Tire – Handout.

Handout on 600 # per inch of tire on axles equipped with 2 New Generation wide base tires. Last meeting Leanna's group decided to follow up the survey by contacting states who didn't respond.

4. Stan Lew – Michelin Tire Presentation. [{Click link to view presentation}](#)



Rick noted that UT has adopted the language for the tires wider than 14". CO has changed the chain up law to take this into account [old language mandated chaining up 4 tires]. Leanna said her group could work on some uniform language. Last meeting Rick asked if this group would like to get this on the AASHTO agenda to elevate this issue. We can't have 3 standards out for tire gauge. The AASHTO meeting was canceled so he did not elevate this issue. Stan Lew plans to attend the AASHTO meeting in Savannah GA this summer. It could be discussed there.

5. Western Regional (WR) Permit Volume - Rick Clasby

Rick presented the following for WRP issuance in calendar year 2008.

CY 2008 WR Permits issued

MT 0526
UT 1006
ID 2064
<u>TX 3254</u>
Total: 6850

These numbers are down from the past when over 10,000 Western Regional Permits were issued.

Discussed off-route approvals for WR permits. Some states have trouble obtaining approvals. Question on whether there is a back door number or direct line for states seeking off route approvals? Teresa's group will put together a list of confidential numbers for states' use only and we will include email address FOR OFFICIAL STATE USE ONLY.  ACTION ITEM for Teresa's Working Group.

6. Western Regional Permit update – Rick Clasby and Teresa Lawser

Wyoming had called UT to talk about WR permitting. ND has discussed it internally and is willing to come on board and start issuing them. Teresa will talk to Leanna about signing the required paperwork to join as a WR permitting state. Teresa had an action item from the last meeting and will follow up.

Discussion on how to move forward.  ACTION ITEM: Regional Permit group will poll states and see how many states are able to issue permits for others.

7. Western Regional Permit Restrictions - Rick has talked to software vendors who are looking at centralizing and automating the WR restrictions and trying to figure out if there is a better way to do so. Rick will continue to look at this and move in that direction. Question on how much off-route approval one can get for a WR permit. It depends on the state and the request.  ACTION ITEM for Rick to follow up.

## 8. STATE REPORTS

CA –

Wide based tire issue is being talked about. Furlough issues are impacting the state hard and therefore will impact industry.

CO –

CVISN (Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks)– Expanded money has been received. Will be used for expanded Weigh in Motion (WIM) and Port of Entry (POE) technology. FASTER bill – increases for vehicle registrations phased in over 3 years, tolling enterprise piece, new permit type for tandem axle vehicles, and raised legal on secondary to 92k from 85k. A clean up bill is being sought to restore 85k on secondary.

MO-

Kelly Ray has been promoted and won't be attending this meeting. MO has expanded their web page by putting clearance data and regulations on the web. Auto issuing has been working well. Insurance requirements have impacted some permitting. Looking at truck routes on I-70.

ND-

Legislature is in session. They passed a bill to fix language from last year when they jeopardized Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program funds. CVISN efforts are on-going. Permit office got one new person, and then one FT temp. Discussing automated permitting system and might try to get Expanded CVISN money to use for permitting. Applications are on the Internet for 12' wide and less.

NE-

Has cut staff by 1/3 [which is 1 person]. Has a new web page with FAQs and fuel permit information. The web site will include bridge ratings. Permit volume has gone up. Sixty-one percent of permits transactions are now being accomplished by the customer online. Continuing to educate customers on the use of the on-line system.

NM-

Down 7-10% in over-size but an increase in over-weight permits. Albuquerque satellite office has been open for over a year.

NV-

Has a new permitting system. CVISN grant has been received and will be used for intelligent transportation system. Permits are down 7% this year.

OK –

They are looking to issue an RFP for a new permit system. They are getting 6 new people, including an IT professional. Their permit numbers are still going up. They are getting new basic designs for the new POEs. There have been questions from the industry about the inability to get in through the phone system. This is why they hired new people.

TX-

Legislature is looking at permit fees. Session ends June 1. They have seven (7) studies looking at impacts of increased weights on Texas roads, looking at corridor routes, superloads over 254,301 pounds and the stress impact of repetitive loads on bridges; also a study looking at impact of OW loads on underground utilities; impact of energy development loads on the roads; strategic freight corridor study, others. Have hired 25 new permit specialists over past year and a half.

UT-

Budget is now in deficit. Has asked in legislation for permit fee increase and it is supported by industry. The fees were calculated on an inflation rate of 36% from time of last increase 15 yrs ago, but negotiated to 20% increase and capped. All of the revenue comes back into the transportation system – wants some of it for enforcement and scales. Utah DOT has not had to reduce the budget by 15% like other state agencies have. Iteris has been contracted to help with expanded CVISN. The Monticello port will be moved to SH 191 so trucks no longer have to back track. Their previous accounts receivable system has been eliminated so that all payments are now credit card or a permit fee. Governor directed all agencies to implement 4 ten-hour days. Offices are closed on Fridays. Question from industry on the envelope permit they use – and why can't other states use that? It allows up to 14' high, 14' 6" wide, 105' long, and 125k GVW, and can be self-issued. Utah DOT has had no problems with them. About 75% of permits are verified at the scales.

WY-

Has a new employee. Looking at a new permitting system and trying to increase hours of operation. Looking at new web page. They'd like to add a permit-estimating program so carriers can enter the data and get the cost of the permit themselves. They'd like to hook up the weather with web cams. Have installed new underpasses for wildlife crossings. New section of I-80 that seasonally reduces speed from 75 to 65 mph between Laramie and Rawlins has electronic signing so they can decrease speed limits down to 35 mph in bad weather.

9. [TX Presentation on new OS/OW Routing System](#) – Ray Hutchinson  
[\[Click on Icon to see Presentation\]](#)



"WASHTO SCHT  
TxPROS Presentation

10. Industry Issues-

- a. Movement of empty heavy haul equipment – does it require a permit? Yes.  
Most states are letting industry add additional load if it does not create an OW situation. Jeeps, boosters, dunnage discussion will be assigned to the Uniformity workgroup.
- b. Legal weight but OS length (wind turbine blades) - what are states doing? Industry indicates the issue may be becoming moot because the blades are being made bigger. Item was not assigned to a workgroup.
- c. Tillerman Discussion – A “tillerman” steers the trailer from the rear. A tillerman cannot be the rear pilot or riding with the pilot escort. Federal regulations require a Commercial Driver’s License. Enforcement is all over the board. CO and UT restrict the tillerman from being rear pilot escorts. Survey on what each state allows might be helpful.   
ACTION ITEM: [Rick Clasby will call Jim Wright on this .](#)
- d. Maximum Weight on Equipment Issue - Rotator Tow Truck OW by design from manufacturers and Special Mobile Equipment LTM 1300 and 1400. What is the maximum allowable permitted weight? Greg Dineen (Greg Dineen and Associates) is asking for states to go back and calculate the amounts. States need to look at the folder Greg handed out and then send information to him and he will create a matrix.   
ACTION ITEM: Each state take the folder back and determine the weight allowances and send information to Greg Dineen.
- e. Reasonable access issue – The issue was raised about what states allow for loads to leave the route for food, fuel, rest, bad weather, etc. After discussion this was assigned to Leanna’s group.

On March 10, 2009, there was discussion on a location for Fall 2009 meeting. Alaska has offered to host but there is concern over how many states can travel to Alaska. Even if states can travel, there is a perception of how it looks in the times of bad economy. Rick said he would think this over but he can offer up Salt Lake City as a fall meeting site. The Committee will re-visit this before we adjourn.

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**DAY TWO WORKING GROUPS REPORTS–**

**Uniformity Committee – Ron Kontos led the group since Jim Wright was absent.**

- 1. Discussed uniform route wording on permits. Some states provide a direction of travel on the route. Can states separate routes on the permit? Direction of travel is helpful. Milepost with a route is helpful. Do all permits have state contact numbers? All states do it differently. Rick suggested uniform language that could be included in the Uniform Guide.
- 2. The tillerman issues were discussed. They will follow up by polling the states. Ron Kontos will work with Rick who will call Jim Wright on this issue.  ACTION ITEM:

Ron will talk to Rick who will call Jim Wright on this and they will poll states and see what they do for tillerman requirements and restrictions.

### **Strategic Directions – Leanna Emmer**

1. The group discussed whether language was needed to describe “nearest safe haven.”
2. New Generation Wide Based Tire – language was developed. [get this language from Leanna].
3. Compile questions for survey on how states handle allowing permitted loads leaving the designated routes. A survey will be going out to the states for response. What is reasonable access off the route for food, fuel, rest, etc.  ACTION ITEM: poll states.

### **Western Regional Permitting Group – Teresa Lawser & Ray Hutchinson**

1. Compile a list of official use only phone numbers and/or emails for States to use for getting faster WR approval.  ACTION ITEM: Teresa will send a survey to the states to create an Official Use Only contact sheet.
2. Compared the inclement weather language in the Uniform Guide and found that it is only in the LCV operations section. Jim from California suggested we look at the WIPP language.  ACTION ITEM: Workgroup will look at the WIPP language and present a proposed draft at the next meeting in the fall.
3. Teresa reported that her group had another action item from the last meeting and she did not bring the results. It was regarding how many states are able to issue Western Regional Permits [had statutory authority or at least no prohibition]. She will do this work for the next meeting.

*End of General Business Meeting.* Rick has announced his intention to resign the Chairmanship after six years. He has asked Norm Hill to chair a Nominating Committee. Rick and Norm will poll the states to develop a slate of candidates, as well as recruiting other members who would be good to put on the Nomination Committee. Nominees will be presented at the next meeting.

Next meeting - Motion to hold the Fall meeting in Salt Lake City was approved.  ACTION ITEM: Rick will organize and send out the dates, etc.

Ron Kontos suggested that there could be an area point person or a liaison for every 3-4 states. The point person would see who is coming and if there is anything to report from the states not present.

WA, OR, ID, AK – Jim Wright  
MT, WY, ND, SD – Leanna Emmer  
UT, OK, CO, NE – Ron Knox  
LA, TX, NM, MO – Ray Hutchinson

NV, AZ, CA, HI – Jeff Richter

Another idea that was discussed was to use video conferencing technology better.

Before Adjournment, Vice Chair Teresa Lawser took the opportunity to thank Rick Clasby for all that he has done in 6 years as Chair of the COHT. His accomplishments are many and enormous. She indicated that the “Thank you” to Rick is just beginning and would be formalized in the fall at his last meeting as Chair but he deserves a lot of recognition. There was hearty applause.

Rick asked for a motion to adjourn until the Fall 2009 meeting. Motion carried.

It was later decided that the Fall 2009 meeting will be held in Salt Lake City on October 6-7. More information on registration and agenda items will be forthcoming. Please contact Rick with any items that need to be added to the fall agenda.

(Leanna's notes)

WASHTO Conference  
Albuquerque, NM  
March 10-11, 2009

Strategic Directions Group: Leanna Emmer-ND, Jeff Epperson-CA, Jeff Richter-NV, Stan Lew-Michelin, Louisa Paiz-NM, Lori Sopko-WY, Glenda Perkins-Perkins Trucking, Norm Hill-OK

Action Items discussed at breakout session:

1. Discussed if there was a need for language defining “Nearest Safe Haven”
2. New Generation Wide Base (NGWB) Tire Definition
3. Compile questions to survey how jurisdictions handle providing access for oversize loads traveling off a permitted route for services such as food, fuel, lodging, repair, etc.

The first action item was a concern expressed by industry to the subcommittee relative to over-dimensional vehicle or load movement traveling in or into hazardous weather conditions and driving to the “nearest safe haven.” The group was to discuss and determine if language was needed to define “nearest safe haven.” The group conversed on defining this language “nearest safe haven” and felt it was too broad to pinpoint to a single definition. The group agreed that language “Nearest safe haven” relative to movement of an over-dimensional load and vehicle in inclement weather would be a discretionary decision made on the part of the driver and a law enforcement officer.

The group was also tasked to provide a definition of the New Generation Wide Base (NGWB) tire for the WASHTO guide. The group also felt it was necessary to change Phrase #1.41 under the Definitions in the WASHTO guide from Wide Base Tires to Super Single Tire. This change would provide a better distinction between the super single tire and the new generation wide base tire. The definition formulated for the NGWB tire is as follows: NGWB tire shall

have a nominal section width over 14 inches in width and ratio of width to height less than or equal to 55.

The definition for super single tire shall read: Super single tire shall have a nominal section width over 14 inches in width and ratio of height to width greater or equal to 65.

Action item #3 was for the group to compile questions for a survey inquiring how each state handles providing access for oversize loads traveling off a permitted route for fuel, food, lodging, and other services. Leanna will conduct the survey and provide those results to the subcommittee.