

WASHTO Committee on Highway Transport Meeting Minutes
March 2 – 3, 2010
Dallas, Texas

Topic	<i>Welcome and Self-Introductions</i>
Speaker(s)	Carol Davis, TxDOT Motor Carrier Division Director & WASHTO Committee on Highway Transport Chair
<p>Summary: Attendees were welcomed to the meeting. Carol Davis announced changes in the agenda as two scheduled speakers were unable to attend: John Esparza from the Texas Motor Transportation Association (TMTA) due to a family emergency; and John Nicholas from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) due to legislative issues that allowed the federal highway bill to lapse.</p> <p>Attendees made self-introductions. In all there were 65 attendees representing a broad range of interests including motor carriers, industry service providers such as permit services and pilot car companies, manufacturing industries/shippers, and academia.</p> <p>Only five of 18 WASHTO states were represented due to state budget cuts and travel restrictions. State members present were Idaho, North Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming. State representation was down significantly from the usual 12 – 15 members attending, which is of great concern and could impact the committee's ability to make progress on issues significant to states, motor carriers and shippers.</p>	

Topic	<i>Keynote Address</i>
Speaker(s)	Ed Serna, Executive Director, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
<p>Summary: Ed Serna spoke of the current date being Texas Independence Day. The significance being that during that time in history, the U.S. faced critical challenges in government, business regulations, funding, and taxes. During that period people of varying backgrounds pulled together to identify and implement innovative solutions. Ed stated that our country is in a similar situation but on a much broader scale now. Federal and state agencies, U.S. industry, businesses and customers are facing many challenges, and it will take the combined efforts of all of us to succeed.</p> <p>On the state level, governments are facing budget reductions, staff reductions and in some cases furloughs and closures of state offices. This is hampering industry's ability to obtain permits in a timely manner. And of course, any artificial barriers to transporting permitted loads create lower industry compliance levels. In the long term this situation has huge public safety and transportation infrastructure risks.</p> <p>When budgets are cut, leaders fall back on the initial purpose of government; for transportation this means focusing solely on the roads themselves and not on solving day-to-day issues, such as using technology advancements or other tools to develop solutions that work for both state governments and the people they serve.</p> <p>Ed stated that these committee meetings and the opportunities they provide for collaboration with motor carriers, shippers, and industry service providers are extremely important to our state and national economies. We must continue to work together to break down barriers to interstate uniformity, and how states route and regulate permitted loads. Ed thanked all of the committee members and other attendees for their efforts in addressing these issues and encouraged everyone to keep focused on the tasks at hand.</p>	

Topic	Post-Recession Outlook - Experts from the logistics and manufacturing fields discuss what's on the horizon; how shippers evaluate multiple modes of transport in the over-dimensional cargo supply chain; and the critical nature of shipper/carrier/state partnerships to that supply chain and the overall economic recovery.
Speaker(s)	Dick Knoll, Vice President, Dimensional Project Cargo, Panprojects Division of Panalpina, Inc. Steve Spoljaric, Transportation Manager, Alstom Power
<p>Summary: Steve Spoljaric and Dick Knoll described a two-fold approach to helping the U.S. economy by ensuring U.S.-based companies can compete with foreign companies for projects that require the transport of OS/OW loads.</p> <p>Steve's presentation brought to light the value analysis process that shippers use when determining where to purchase materials from, the cost of the materials, and the transportation issues involved in moving materials to the project site. On paper, material may seem cheaper from a particular country, but shippers have to look at other factors and transportation is one of the issues that can really impact the decision making process.</p> <p>Steve focused on the need for more dialogue between carriers and states, and the need for involvement by states in the early stages of logistics planning by shippers. Shippers consider multi-modal transport when analyzing projects, and prefer to use rail or water transport when possible due to the decreased risks those transport modes provide over roadway transport. Field assembly of project components is not always an option because of the potential impact on product warranties, so engineers are building products that are more modularized and therefore bigger. The state level is where major transportation issues can occur that can significantly impact a project's cost, whether or not the project takes place, and whether materials are sourced in the U.S. or overseas.</p> <p>Dick Knoll's presentation focused on the need for states to look beyond their own borders in order for the US to compete in the global economy. Shippers have formed the Exporters Competitive Maritime Council (ECMC) made up of manufacturing industry leaders and the National Manufacturers Association (NMA). Together the ECMC and NMA are asking for the designation of national "High-Heavy-Wide Interstate Corridors" for the movement of OS/OW loads. These corridors would provide designated routes for through transport of oversize loads between all of the states within a prescribed envelope. The proposed dimensions are large but the sizes of these loads are going to continue to grow across the world.</p> <p>To confirm a sale, U.S. suppliers are often required to guarantee transport of a load. If transport cannot be guaranteed, companies will look elsewhere globally to source their projects. The designation of national corridors would allow U.S. suppliers to guarantee transport and be more globally competitive. Currently, projects are lost to other countries because there are no reasonable routes to move loads from barge or rail to their final destination. When there is no transport, the U.S. loses revenue and jobs. In order to make these corridors a reality, there must be cohesion between the permitting states and the routes utilized between states. These corridors could give the U.S. an advantage in the global economy.</p>	

Topic	OS/OW Loads and Roundabouts
Speaker(s)	Peter Lynch, Freight Operations Program Manager, Wisconsin Department of Transportation/UW Madison – TOPS Lab
<p>Summary: Introduction of speaker by Kathleen Nichols, OSOW Permit Supervisor, Wisconsin DOT. Peter Lynch's presentation focused on the use of roundabouts at intersections to accommodate all travelers. Discussion focused on the design of roundabouts to accommodate oversize loads.</p> <p>The recommended design features included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of painted lane markers rather than splitters • wider aprons around mounded islands to make it possible for more of a straight through movements • making splitter islands and medians mountable/tapered • use of sleeved and removable signs on OS/OW routes 	

- slip lanes where state routes change directions at roundabouts
- depressed medians for crossover reverse lefts

Challenges presented included:

- Designers wanting one check vehicle but in reality there are multiple configurations that must be considered

Peter suggested DOTs need to work with industry to obtain axle spacings, torsion and points of articulation for use in creating templates for designs and plans (this movement is already underway).

Topic	State Transportation Agency Performance Tracking - “Accountability” and “Transparency” aren’t just buzzwords, they’re changing the way we do business. Learn how these concepts are being integrated at two different state agencies.
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Speaker(s)	Michelle Teel, Assistant Motor Carrier Services Director, Missouri Department of Transportation Ray Hutchinson, Motor Carrier Division Permit Section Manager, Texas Department of Transportation
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Summary: Michelle Teel’s presentation focused on “meaningful measures” and asking for what you want. MoDOT Motor Carrier Services (MCS) organized their performance measures around 18 tangible results, including roadway visibility, innovative transportation solutions, and customer involvement in transportation decision-making. To ensure accountability, MoDOT MCS holds quarterly review meetings where performance is discussed and they “discuss actions, not plans”.

They use several reports to track performance of employees and MCS as a whole. In addition to individual employee performance plans, MoDOT districts and divisions have performance measures. These performance measures help MoDOT MCS forecast future performance, make day-to-day decisions and motivate staff to perform at higher levels.

MoDOT MCS implemented a telecommuting program that has been very successful. Through this program, MoDOT MCS has seen increased productivity by participating employees.

Michelle offered the following “lessons learned” from the MoDOT MCS performance management program:

- Establish your focus before trying to improve your measures
- Don’t set targets that can limit performance
- Don’t wait for perfect measures to start measuring performance

Ray Hutchinson’s presentation focused on the “Total Performance Measurement” (TPM) program used by the TxDOT Motor Carrier Division (MCD). Ray explained that employees respond to meaningful, measurable goals and timely and meaningful individual feedback is essential to improving performance. The TPM program focuses on six components: quality, productivity, customer service, teamwork, personal accountability and job knowledge. Currently measurements are under development for the customer service, individual accountability and teamwork components. For each component there are five performance ratings: superior, exceeds expectations, achieves expectations, needs improvement and unacceptable.

Objective measurements have been put in place for quality, productivity and customer service. For example, quality is measured by pulling a sample of each employee’s work and checking it for errors according to program guidelines; productivity is measured not just by the number of permits produced but by the creation of equivalency factors that have been assigned to other duties such as taking help desk calls. Job knowledge is currently only measured for one branch of the Permits Section of MCD and it is measured through quarterly Job Knowledge Assessments. Advantages of the program include daily feedback to supervisors and Permit Specialists. The TPM program database provides monthly summary and detailed reports on individuals, teams and the Permit Section as a whole. As the program evolves, TxDOT MCD is seeing improvements.

Topic	The North/West Passage Corridor-Wide Commercial Vehicle Permitting Project
Speaker(s)	Ernie Wittwer, MVFC Facilitator, National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education
<p>Summary: The presentation on the North/West Passage Corridor-Wide Commercial Vehicle Permitting Project (a regional OS/OW permitting process for the I-90/94 corridor that reaches from Wisconsin to Washington) focused on the current project status, feedback received, options to consider for the permitting process and the concerns and issues identified as the project moves forward.</p> <p><i>Current status:</i> Interviews have been completed with representatives of WASHTO, SASHTO and northeastern states, as well as WASHTO and non-WASHTO states that could be included in the passageway. Trucking industry representatives were also interviewed.</p> <p><i>Feedback:</i> Some items of concern regarding the current regional permitting process came up during the interviews, such as not enough states are issuing that many are just pass-through only. In addition, some states feel out of the loop with regional permits because they are not receiving a copy of the permits issued to loads that will pass through their own state.</p> <p>Advice for the North/West Passage Corridor-Wide Commercial Vehicle Permitting Project and the current regional permitting processes was also offered by interviewees. The main focus being better communication among member states and uniform standards across the states.</p> <p><i>Options for Permitting:</i> The project is looking at the pros/cons of three possible permitting options for the Northwest Passage permit: Expanding WASHTO, the Bentley Model and virtual permitting. The main concerns across all the options were the technology and expense involved.</p> <p><i>Concerns:</i> Several concerns were brought forward by the states during the interviews. There are concerns about industry interest in using the Northwest Passage permit and how the permit would impact workload of the individual states. The differences in fees, enforcement and acceptable axles/tire width between the states were items of concern. The timeliness of permits issuance, costs and obtaining amendments were also concerns.</p> <p><i>Issues as Project Moves Forward:</i> The issues addressed in order for this project to move forward were also issues to be considered by all the states. The states must communicate with one another inside and outside of their own regions in order to bring some consistency to the OS/OW permit process. States need to work together to streamline the required information, required signing, curfews, dimensional/weight limitations and other movement restrictions.</p>	

Topic	<i>Discussion to identify current/emerging issues for Committee or workgroup consideration</i>
Speaker(s)	Open Session
<p>Summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulation of pilot cars/escorts – majority support regulation of pilot cars/escorts in the State of Texas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TxDOT agreed to present this issue to the Texas Transportation Commission as a potential legislative agenda item for the 2011 session. 2. Traffic control by escorts – Texas requires law enforcement assistance for traffic control. 3. Tillerman – Qualifications, requirements, who is liable, are escorts allowed to handle this responsibility? 	

- This is addressed in the WASHTO Guide under Section 8.03.2(c). A pilot/escort operator can not perform tillerman duties while performing escort duties.
4. Permitting by non-state entities (cities, counties, etc). States still do not have a good handle on which other entities/municipalities require permits. This has been a long-standing issue. One carrier raised concerns about permitting by the City of Corpus Christi and inability to obtain permits in a timely manner. States will investigate solutions to determining which municipalities require permits. TxDOT MCD will try and help facilitate resolution on the Corpus Christi issues, which impact loads coming out of the Port of Corpus.
 5. Use of New Generation Super Single (NGSS) tires – Stan Lew with Michelin re-iterated previously reported information regarding the safety studies and the use of NGSS in other countries. He asked for support in regulation reform with regards to such. He stated that the Rubber Manufacturers Association is stepping in to help the top 8 tire companies change legislation that will allow use of tires. He asked that states work together to develop rules and regulations that work across borders (for example: to prevent a driver with NGSS tires to go from being legal in one state to being illegal as he crosses a state line.). The Committee will continue to work on this issue.
 6. Texas Policy on transporting overheight shipping containers – Question posed regarding refusal of permit for 14'2" high shipping containers that contain multiple items. Carol Davis explained that it is not a policy, but based on Texas' definition of a "divisible" load. Texas does not issue permits for shipping containers containing multiple items, and that is a legislative issue.

Topic	<i>States Only Session</i>
Speaker(s)	State members
<p>Summary: As there was not a quorum present, votes were not taken on pending items (list at end of summary). The group tabled items concerning voided permits and restriction management for further research/discussion by members. WASHTO permit marketing discussion was deferred for further discussion once restriction management proposals are fully vetted.</p> <p>The following ballot items were deferred for lack of a quorum, and electronic ballots were subsequently sent to all member states. Results of electronic ballots are included in (parentheses) after each item.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of October 2009 meeting minutes. (Approved); • Proposal to WASHTO Policy Committee to allow for NGSS tires use by vehicles operating under a Western Regional Permit. (Needs further definition); • Revise Guide to state that Western Regional Permits must include travel in at least two member states to keep carriers from "state shopping". (Approved); • Revise Guide to clarify that refund requests for Western Regional Permits must be made to each individual state listed on the permit, as each state has different refund policies. For example, TxDOT can not refund a permit fee unless there was a mistake made on TxDOT's part. (Approved); and • Authorize use of committee funds to pay for chair or vice-chair travel to Fall 2010 meeting if adequate funds are available and if the chair/vice-chair's sponsoring state is unable to pay for such. This will help address committee continuity issues. (Approved). <p>The next meeting will be held in the fall of 2010 in Nevada. Jeff Richter, Nevada DOT will assist with coordinating the fall meeting.</p> <p>Committee adjourned until fall 2010.</p>	