



Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

WASHTO COHT – Houston, TX

March 18-19, 2014

The 2014 Spring WASHTO Committee on Highway Transport meeting was called to order by committee chair Jim Wright. This meeting was held in conjunction with the other AASHTO region Committees on Highway Transport and the SC&RA Symposium.

Tuesday March 18th

Following introductory remarks from Chair Wright, John Berg, FHWA Truck Size & Weight program director, gave a federal update focusing on MAP-21 Provision including:

- **Freight initiatives designed to strengthen highway systems through a national freight policy and plan.** State freight advisory councils are becoming more active; primary freight network (with a 27,000 mile cap limit) information is being organized and planned; critical rural corridors (with no cap limit) are included (even though no funding source is directly tied to the freight network); and for those states with a freight plan, the federal share for freight projects is being increased potentially up to 95%.
- **Truck size and weight provisions.** Jason's Law (truck parking) with no formal funding source. Goal is to make existing funding sources more available for truck parking. Parking projects aim to utilize public private partnerships using facilities adjacent to existing facilities such as truck stops while opening existing facilities to enforcement and park and ride use. It is hoped that capital improvements may be made to seasonally closed parking facilities while building a summary of facilities for truck travel by state; The Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study is scheduled to be submitted by November 15, 2014. This study has included a desk scan on the impact of increased truck size and weight limits to enforcement, however, the impact of a change in compliance is not well researched. It is well documented and understood that regulatory complexity and the lack of standardization hinders effective size and weight enforcement, but it is accepted that violation rates are not the best measurement of the effectiveness of enforcement activities that are generally linked to pavement preservation. Increased emphasis is being placed upon the use of technology. The compilation of state truck size and weight laws is due October 1, 2014.
- **Special permits during national emergencies.** There was nothing new to report concerning these types of permits authorized by MAP-21.
- **Reduction in federal highway funding sanction for non-compliance.** The funding penalty for a state failing to comply with 23USC127(a) was reduced from 100% to 50% while the penalty for failing to certify the state size and weight plan was reduced from 10% to 7%.
- **Idling technology weight allowance increased for 400 lbs to 550 lbs (section 1510).**



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- **Exemption from axle weight for public transit vehicles, and extended to motor homes, made permanent.**
- **FHWA emphasis areas.** PAVEDAT; NHI training course in Orlando; 10 bill \$320 million freight program over 4 years.

The next agenda item was a discussion on pilot escort certification led by Jim Wright and Randy Sorenson, RSA Networks.

- **Certification is generally supported** by the pilot car industry. For those states that require certification, the cert card must be in the possession of the driver.
- **Reciprocity between states is important** to the industry and must be based up training curriculum not state law requirements; Even though having gone without revision for several years, the most current best practices guide is the CVSA guide which is very similar to the current WASHTO guide.
- **Next steps.** Formally establish criteria to consider reciprocity; Organize input from states that require certification; organize input from the pilot car industry; organize input from motor carriers; Work toward resolving the difficulty enforcement has in authentication pilot car certification. This may require looking at the methods used for tugs piloting sea going vessels; **Could a WASHTO "Seal of Approval" be a possibility?**

Prior to adjourning for lunch, Jim and Randy Braden, SASHTO and the AASHTO Harmonization Committee Chair, led a brief discussion designed at answering questions brought about with the distribution of the AASHTO ballot concerning Phase I items. While this is a difficult discussion it was made clear that the harmonization project is intended to make regulations more permissive where possible by establishing what have been termed "minimums". If the state is already more permissive than the "minimums" established in Phase I, and subsequent phases, no action is necessary. Mr. Braden emphasized that AASHTO's harmonization initiative wishes to, "leave your ability to meet your need alone." It appeared that most attendees that previously had misunderstandings were satisfied with the explanations.

Following lunch, industry representatives including Doug Ball, Stephen Todd and Paul from King Transportation presented industry issues to the committee. During the presentation these gentlemen asked the committee, in relation to harmonization efforts, to look at the task at hand then look beyond in order to continue the process moving. Also necessary to the successful completion of harmonization effort is the continued involvement of AASHTO which should assist in guiding consistency from region to region. Reasonable access issues continue to plague the transporters with continued requests for consistency on weight (tridem, trunnions and tandem minimums), and, superload designations. Also emphasized with superloads is turnaround time for permit issuance. Industry appreciates the work from



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the states and wishes to maintain, and improve, the two way communication with state agencies. Thought to ponder: “What if the economy depends upon the delivery of the load?”

The remainder of day one was devoted to state agency reports on WRP issues and upcoming harmonization findings. Christy Jordan provided information on WRP issues in OR, who issued WRP until 2009 when the practice was stopped due to staffing issues. OR does have concerns with a few of the WRP changes in relation to OR law and regulatory requirements such as specific document possession. OR also needs the entire permit email to them when a WRP is issued that will involve OR. Jim reviewed the WRP changes most recently approved and did remind attendees that states are to review WRP routes on an annual basis now.

The additional harmonization study findings reported by state members included vehicles used as pilot cars (It was noted that pickups are approved by WASHTO while motorcycles are excluded); holiday OSOW movement (4 states allow no OSOW movement on holidays. The recommendation will be to allow holiday travel up to 10' wide 14'6" high 100' long); 6 states have weekend travel restrictions which sparked a long discussion of this topic; pilot car requirements for OH loads varied mainly from height pole cars required for loads ranging from 16' to 18'; permit duration ranged from 3 to 10 days. The committee will recommend 5 days; it was decided that standard curfew hours will be left up to each individual state. The day ended with state one on one 10 minute sessions.

Wednesday March 19th

This morning joint session, led by Randy Braden and Chris Smith, discussed the phases of harmonization.

PHASE I

- Escort requirements
- Warning flags
- Warning lights
- Warning signs
- Days and hours of operation

PHASE II

- Number days permit valid--range of 3-10 days aiming for 5
- Permit Revisions—Weather? Break down?
- Holiday Restrictions—Industry would like big 5 holidays only
- Type and Size of Escort Vehicle—



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- Escort requirements for over height loads and overlength loads with other dimensions.—

PHASE III – Possible items

- Electronic permits?
- Emergency moves?
- Route Surveys?
- Uniform permit application?
- Night operation?
- Uniform permit?
- Permit provisions?
- Reasonable access?
- Self-propelled vehicles?
- Others? NOTE: weight not up for discussion.

This was followed by an abbreviated states only meeting which concluded with adjournment.