

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

Resolution 03 – 23

Uniform Emergency Load Management (ELM) Strategy for the WASHTO Jurisdictions

WHEREAS, WASHTO represents a coalition of jurisdictions including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming;

WHEREAS, WASHTO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association dedicated to advancing national transportation policies, fostering collaboration among its members, advocating for legislation supporting efficient transportation systems, economic competitiveness, and environmental integrity, and providing a platform for the exchange of ideas and best practices;

WHEREAS, recognizing the critical role of freight movement in the WASHTO region's economy and daily life, and acknowledging the vital importance of a resilient freight system during emergencies and disasters;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic, extreme flooding, and other disasters have underscored the need for a robust and resilient freight system to deliver life-saving relief supplies, and the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) empowers the president to declare Emergencies or Major Disasters, allowing states to issue special permits under Section 1511 of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) for freight movements on the interstate system;

WHEREAS, the varied weight limits implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency response revealed the need for a coordinated approach to emergency load management (ELM) across the WASHTO jurisdictions;

WHEREAS, a unified strategy for emergency load management is essential to expedite the delivery of critical relief supplies during declared emergencies or major disasters;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the WASHTO Board of Directors, as leaders of their respective state departments of transportation, agrees that the establishment of a minimum ELM permitted weight that WASHTO states can agree to and adopt is critical, and the development of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to this effect is beneficial. The WASHTO Board of Directors express their mutual understanding and cooperative relationship as follows:

1. **Appointment of Points of Contact:** WASHTO Board of Directors may choose to appoint and maintain one or more points of contact for the establishment of ELM permitted weights. Contacts will receive information and direction from the WASHTO Committee on Transport.
2. **Reference to the Effort:** This effort will be referenced as "WASHTO ELM Strategy."
3. **Financial Obligations:** This Resolution does not create any financial obligations.
4. **Development of an Emergency Load Management Policy:** After an emergency declaration under the Stafford Act and corresponding state declaration, this resolution supports a WASHTO region wide development of an ELM policy expanding emergency interstate truck weights for divisible loads.

5. **Coordination with State and Local Governments:** Consideration of agency coordination with state and local governments during declared emergencies or major disasters will be necessary to ensure the safe transportation of loads to areas in need once off the interstate system.
6. **Professional Involvement:** Permitting and bridge professionals from all WASHTO states will be offered opportunities to participate in this approach to ELM.
7. **Preservation of Laws and Specifications:** All existing laws, posted weight limits, and vehicle specifications will be considered in the ELM strategy.
8. **Regional Efficiencies:** The strategy will address the expanded permitted weight for ELM management across the nation and is expected to lead to additional efforts to harmonize and create regional efficiencies in logistics and freight movement.
9. **Voluntary Agreement:** Each WASHTO state enters into this resolution voluntarily as a Department of Transportation and not as a principal, agent, or joint venture. This resolution does not waive individual sovereign immunity or rights under the Eleventh Article of Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
10. **Amendment Procedure:** Any change in this resolution, whether by modification or amendment, is only valid with a written agreement signed by a duly authorized representative of each WASHTO Board of Director.
11. **Role Modification or Discontinuation:** Any party may, upon 30 days written notice to each of the other parties, amend or discontinue its role outlined in this resolution. Each WASHTO Board of Director commits to making a good faith effort to achieve the goals described herein and to collaborate on finding mutually beneficial solutions when problems arise.

Adopted by the WASHTO Board of Directors on November 16, 2023.



Joel M. Jundt
WASHTO President

11-21-23

Date