



**Council of Deputy Ministers Responsible for
Transportation and Highway Safety**

Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy

Minutes

(Draft December 15, 2017)

Date: November 29, 2017
Location: Hotel Omni Mont-Royal, Montreal
Chair: John Pearson
In Attendance: 67 participants, see Attachment 1

1. Welcome and Opening

Mr. Pearson opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

2. Roundtable Introductions and Adoption of Agenda

Following roundtable introductions, Mr. Pearson drew attention to the agenda and invited revisions; none were proposed and the agenda was adopted as circulated.

3. Vehicle Weight and Dimension Regulations in Canada – Update on Issues and Developments

a. National Developments and MOU Amendments

Mr. Pearson provided a presentation (Attachment 2), noting that the Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy provides a national focus for coordination and harmonization of provincial and territorial regulations, policies and practices. He observed that the annual meetings provide a forum to identify issues and opportunities for harmonization that would remove impediments to trade and improve productivity. He remarked that regular reports are provided by the Task Force to the Council of Deputy Ministers in order to advance recommendations on regulatory harmonization priorities and amendments to the standards contained in the National Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions.

b. Provincial/Territorial Developments - Round table reports by jurisdiction

In roundtable review, government representatives provided reports as follow.

On behalf of Ontario, Mr. Lynch reported on:

- Developments in the Province's LCV Program, including the removal of limits on the number of carriers or permits allowed, changes in the weights and dimensions regime with respect to A trains (to allow 40' semis), and the introduction of a Twin Stinger-Steer Auto Carrier LCV configuration. The Primary LCV Network was expanded and the distance of off Network travel was also extended;
- Considerations regarding smart lift axles on semitrailers, long wheelbase tractors on tractor semitrailers, extended length 3-vehicle saddlemount configurations and the potential introduction of 4-vehicle saddlemount configurations under permit to harmonize with Quebec;
- Permitting extended length stinger steer auto carriers to harmonize with US regulations under the FAST Act via the Extended Stinger-Steer Auto Carrier (ESSAC) Program. Three configuration types including one (ON-ESSAC) that is not restricted to an authorized network;
- The SPIF Review is underway, taking stock of the regulatory reforms toward Safe, Productive, and Infrastructure-Friendly (SPIF) vehicles regulation and implementation; and

- The ongoing examination of 60'6" semitrailers via the Extended Semitrailer Trail, which was recently expanded beyond only the retail sector.

On behalf of New Brunswick, Mr. White reported on:

- Reorganization of units within the department;
- Development of a strategic corridor network that will accommodate higher weights with increased monitoring of weight as well as a pilot program for tri-drive quad axle configurations;
- Work to develop a self-serve permit for the movement of manufactured homes;
- Ongoing efforts to harmonize permit conditions with Nova Scotia;
- Preparation to undertake a pilot program regarding wide-base single tires (WBST); and
- A covered bridge strategy.

On behalf of Alberta, Ms. Durdle reported on:

- Completion of the WBST pilot, following which the Province has approved by permit use of 455 mm tires on provincial highways at weights equivalent to dual tires;
- Continuing work to rewrite the Commercial Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Regulation;
- Efforts to replace the Province's permitting and routing system;
- Completion of a research project about winter weights, out of which a recommendation has been made to reduce the frost depth required for winter weight premiums while confirming the Province's approach to spring weight restrictions;
- Plans to move forward with development of an Escort Vehicle Operator Training Program although no decision has yet been made whether the training program will be mandatory;
- Release on the Province's website of a notice pertaining to the movement of heavy modules and non-divisible loads;
- Approval for the Province to sign the MOU regarding saddlemount configurations;
- The anticipated completion in March 2018 of a study about the future of the Province's high load corridor.

On behalf of Manitoba, Ms. McKee reported on:

- Work to revise allowable tandem steer axle spreads;
- Advancement of the MOU on saddlemount configurations;
- Progress with respect to the western MOUs on Rocky Mountain Double and Turnpike Double LCVs;
- Installation of cameras that allow road conditions on key routes to be viewed;
- Review underway of the Province's policies with respect to tow trucks and pilot cars; and
- Updates being made to the Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Regulation.

On behalf of Nova Scotia, Mr. Balsom reported on:

- Completion of the Province's pilot of WBST and plans to bring them into regulation in approximately the next year;
- Quality of life amendments being made as part of work to modernize the Province's regulations and road classification policy;
- Establishment of a mailing list for route information;
- Installation of variable message signs in a few locations;
- Continuing efforts to harmonize permit conditions; and
- Work underway with the forestry industry to evaluate the road network, pavements, structures and vehicle configurations.

On behalf of the Northwest Territories, Mr. Beaulieu reported on:

- The recent opening of the all-weather Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway, which gives Canada access to its northern coast and the Arctic ocean;
- Plans to install a fifth self-weight scale in Yellowknife in the summer 2018;

- Upcoming enactment into regulation of the three latest amendments to the national MOU as well as amendments to increase the tractor wheel base maximum and include the B-train trailer length chart; and
- Consideration of a WBST pilot project to begin this winter with a goal of determining if the Territory could increase the allowable weights on these tires equivalent to dual tires.

On behalf of Newfoundland and Labrador, Ms. Cull reported on:

- Amendments that had been made to the Province's regulation which is now up-to-date with the national MOU;
- Review that is underway of the Province's permitting system with the intention of reducing wait times and eventually making it available on-line;
- Considerations to increase the width of loads that can be moved without requiring an escort; and
- Quad axle limits.

On behalf of Transport Canada, Mr. Rastogi reported on:

- Development of technical standards regarding electronic logging devices, which will be mandated for trucks operating in federal jurisdiction;
- Publication of proposed standards for electronic stability control systems, which will align with US standards;
- Work of a task force on vulnerable road users with a final report anticipated in April 2018;
- Release of a report developed in conjunction with the US and Mexico regarding 30-year projections for freight data.

Mr. Rastogi noted that other work underway by the federal government would be addressed later on the agenda, including research on 6 x 2 tractor technology, cooperative truck platooning and a pan-Canadian framework for clean growth and climate change.

In response to a question, Ms. Davidson (Environment and Climate Change Canada) reported that Phase 2 of the heavy-duty vehicle and engine greenhouse gas emission regulations had been published in the Canada Gazette and that comments received were being considered as part of the preparation of the final regulation. She noted that developments and delays in the US were being monitored and would be taken into consideration as well.

On behalf of British Columbia, Ms. Lansing reported on:

- Expansion in the staffing complement in the Commercial Transport Branch;
- A review that is in progress of the vehicle dynamic performance of common logging vehicles at current weights;
- Work underway to develop means to monitor a pilot project on smart lift axles on trailers;
- Efforts being made to pre-approve some corridors from major ports in the lower mainland to the Alberta border with increased width, height and length limits and weights up to 125,000 kg;
- A study being conducted to investigate increasing allowable weights on 455 mm WBST;
- Launch of the Pilot Car Load Movement Guidelines as of January 2017, with compliance now required as a condition of carriers' permits;
- Continuing work with the other western provinces on their plans for suitable pilot car guidelines and on updates to modernize the regulations for pilot car lights and signs;
- Work with Canadian Tire on piloting the operation of 60' container trailers;
- Plans to develop, early in 2018, terms of reference for the review of width and length policies;
- Work on updates to crane policy dimensions, and a possible new policy on all terrain cranes travelling with boom removed;
- Allowances for additional weight on commercial vehicles with alternative fuels; and
- BC's reducible load overweight policy.

On behalf of Saskatchewan, Mr. Cipywnyk reported on:

- Considerations being given to an escort vehicle operators' training program and to revising the escort vehicle sign box regulation;
- A pilot program for WBST on select National Highway System routes;
- Work to update the Province's vehicle weights and dimensions regulation;
- A shift in the mandate of commercial vehicle enforcement officers so that they carry side arms with the intention of improving service and reducing response times in rural communities;
- Introduction of drug-impaired driving legislation with a zero-tolerance policy now in effect;
- The Trucking Partnership Program which seeks better coordination and to improve efficiency for industry; and
- Monthly meetings held by the western regulators to review issues as they arise.

On behalf of Quebec, Mr. Janelle provided a presentation (Attachment 3) and reported on:

- Work to modify the vehicle weights and dimensions regulation, including a list of 30 proposed amendments that had been presented to the Province's consultation table;
- Modifications to special permit regulations;
- Creation of a new computer system for issuing special permits;
- Changes requested regarding log hauling trucks, calculation of the gross vehicle weight limit, truck configuration with three axles at the back, tow trucks, and loaders with snow blowers;
- The 2017/18 winter LCV program; and
- Extension to 2020 of the ecocamionnage program to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the road transport of goods.

Mr. Pearson conveyed the regrets of Doug MacEwen (Prince Edward Island) and Julius Debuschewitz (Yukon Territory) who were unable to attend to provide reports.

Following the roundtable reports, Mr. Madill (Canadian Trucking Alliance) observed that a few provinces had mentioned pilot programs that are underway with respect to 60' trailers. He said the CTA supports these local initiatives and urges that they be carefully controlled permit programs. He said the CTA does not see a need for a national program on 60' trailers.

4. Weight Limits for Wide Base Single Tires

a. Presentation by Canadian Trucking Alliance

Mr. Madill provided a presentation (Attachment 4) detailing CTA's proposal for amendments to the national MOU, including capping weight on WBST at 8,500 kg per axle, capping weight on 445 mm tires at 7,700 kg, and allowing concerned provinces to declare a second-tier network of highways for WBST axle weights greater than 7,700 kg. Mr. Madill conveyed CTA's request that the Task Force adopt the proposed amendment. He added that the CTA understands that some provinces may not be able to commit to the amendment until the results of ongoing pilots are known and that the CTA requests the MOU be amended anyway with excluded provinces listed.

Following the presentation, Mr. Albrechtsen (Paul's Hauling Ltd.) inquired if all RTAC truck routes can carry the weights proposed by the CTA. Mr. Madill said that would not necessarily be the case and that each province and trucking association would need to work through that in their respective jurisdictions.

Mr. Harrower (Canadian Transportation Equipment Association) inquired about the background on the limit of 10 kg/mm of tire width. Mr. Madill replied that it is a proxy measurement since it is impossible to legislate the contact area of a tire.

Mr. Picard (Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association) said that consultation with the CTA's association partners would have been helpful before the position was presented. Mr. Madill confirmed that the position was approved by the CTA Board of Directors so it is considered official.

b. Presentation by Michelin North America (Canada)

Mr. Maclean (Michelin Canada) provided a presentation (Attachment 5) about the benefits of new generation wide base single tires. He commended the Task Force for the significant regulatory changes made to allow load parity for WBST and confirmed that Michelin would like to continue to work in partnership with the provinces to resolve any outstanding issues. He said the goal is a national corridor for new generation WBST and having a weight limit of 8,500 kg per axle in the national MOU.

Mr. Cipywnyk asked if standards will be developed for WBST to ensure they all perform adequately. Mr. Maclean acknowledged the importance of the question, suggesting that tires may cup if not built properly. He noted that Michelin's products perform well and said he was not aware of issues with products of other major manufacturers.

Mr. Albrechtsen said that, from a driver's point of view, the WBST are more stable and offer benefits in terms of tare weight. He remarked that the units are expensive, so industry cannot quickly convert fleets to WBST, which will spread the potential impact of these tires on the infrastructure over time.

Mr. Michaelsen (FPInnovations) said that operators using WBST in northern Quebec found that blowouts on resource roads had been drastically reduced because the problems of rocks getting lodged between dual tires had been eliminated.

Mr. White remarked that bridge design standards are essentially the same across Canada but that a consistent national pavement design standard does not exist, which makes a national approach on WBST more challenging to implement.

Mr. Albrechtsen suggested that reduced emissions associated with operation of WBST would mean savings in carbon taxes and that money could be reinvested in the highway infrastructure.

Mr. Pearson inquired about the expected market for WBST in the industry. Mr. Beauchamp (Michelin Canada) said that uptake in the industry is expected to be about 5 to 6% based on experience in Ontario and Quebec to date. He added that only about 15% of vehicles equipped with dual tires are carrying loads in excess of 7,700 kg per axle.

5. Oversize and Overweight Loads

a. All Terrain Cranes

Messrs. Sittler, Bennett and Schmied (Crane Rental Association of Canada) provided a presentation (Attachment 6) about all terrain cranes and the associated use of dollies. They said the CRAC seeks to mitigate risks for the industry and the public and to improve productivity. They said that, to do so, a 10 to 12% increase in axle weights would eliminate or reduce the number of dollies used.

It was noted that bridges become a limiting factor with respect to the opportunity to increase axle weight limits. It was further noted that the relationship between weight and stress is exponential, with a 10% increase in weight having a much larger impact in terms of potential stress on structures and pavements.

Mr. Delaney (Petroleum Services Association of Canada) sought clarity on the nature of the incidents being experienced by the industry and how the CRAC proposal would improve the situation. The CRAC representatives explained that, to meet current axle weight limits, operators must make frequent adjustments to the dolly configurations and deal with the equipment in ways it was never intended to be manipulated. They remarked that the proposal would bring control of the dolly back into the crane, thereby reducing the number of incidents, as well as driver stress and fatigue. They added that the vehicle would also be more easily and safely passed by the public on the road.

b. Oversize/Overweight Permit Challenges

Messrs Todd, Bernard and Juneau provided a presentation (Attachment 7) on behalf of the Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association. They highlighted issues in specialized transportation and invited members to attend upcoming conferences that provide fora for further discussion of related issues. They also offered to coordinate a teleconference for provincial and US government representatives to exchange information.

c. Update on Pilot Car Sector

Ms. Murray provided a presentation (Attachment 8) about the need for standards in the pilot car sector, and the potential impacts when standards or enforcement are lax.

d. Training Program for Escort Vehicle Operators

Mr. Barnes (Alberta Motor Transport Association) reported on work in progress with Enform to develop a training program for escort vehicle operators, with courses expected to be ready in the spring 2018. He remarked that uptake of the training would be improved if it were a permit condition imposed by governments. Ms. Durdle said that the issue is being considered but that work remains to be done.

6. Technical Issues and Presentations

a. Update on Transport Canada's ecoTECHNOLOGY for Vehicles Program

Ms. Christenson (Transport Canada) provided a presentation (Attachment 9) summarizing progress within the program with respect to cooperative truck platooning systems and 6 x 2 tractor technology.

Following the presentation, Ms. Murray inquired if the cooperative truck platooning systems create interference with other communications systems, such as those used by escort vehicles. Mr. Fleming (Volvo Trucks) reported that Volvo had conducted extensive testing and found interference is not a problem.

Mr. Albrechtsen remarked on the need to share the results with other researchers in the field. He also noted that the fuel savings offered by LCVs and platooning systems should be comparatively understood.

Mr. Lynch observed that the testing undertaken in the eTV program is focussed on aerodynamic results and fuel savings but does not address safety. He emphasized the need to begin to consider safety issues, including optimum following distances.

Mr. Cipywynk asked about next steps and it was noted that policy and regulatory studies would be needed to address other considerations and determine what work remains to be done.

b. FMCSA Research on Heavy Vehicle Automation and Platooning

Mr. Loy (US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration) provided a presentation (Attachment 10) on FMCSA research activities.

c. Steered Axles

Mr. Noel (GN Solutions) presented information about new generation steered axles and the benefits they offer to governments, fleet operators, trailer and axle manufacturers. He noted that, to use steered axles to their greatest advantage, clarifications are required in regulations with respect to straight axles, self-steering axles and overhang dimensions.

d. Requirements for Fire Extinguishers and First Aid Kits

Mr. Gilchrist (Prevost) shared information about challenges in the motor coach industry that arise because requirements for first aid and fire extinguishers can vary greatly between provinces. He suggested the requirements be harmonized.

Mr. Pearson noted that the matter had been raised in the past at the Canadian Council for Motor Transport Administrators as it related to the National Safety Code. It was further noted that it is not a vehicle weights and dimensions issue.

e. Rail Mounted Lift Gates

Mr. Shaw (Manitoba Trucking Association) conveyed a request for the Task Force to consider a 12” exemption to length limits on 53’ trailers to accommodate rail-mounted lift gates. Supporting information was presented (Attachment 11) and Mr. Shaw remarked that the exemption would be consistent with that given for rear-mounted aerodynamic devices and would improve operator safety and allow remote communities and other challenging areas to be better served.

7. Task Force on Trucking Harmonization

Mr. Cipywnyk provided a presentation (Attachment 12) about the work of a Task Force on Trucking Harmonization, which he co-chairs with Mr. Rastogi. He outlined a three-phase work plan and said that work is currently underway to compile a list of trucking harmonization issues. He provided links to on-line surveys in English and French and encouraged industry representatives to complete the survey, identify barriers and irritants to their businesses and processes and to work with the Task Force to identify solutions.

Mr. Pearson invited participants to identify issues or concerns for the Task Force on Trucking Harmonization or the Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy; none were raised.

8. Pan-Canadian Agreement on Clean Growth and Climate Change

Mr. Gagné (Transport Canada) spoke about the commitment of the federal government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the economy and the particular focus on initiatives within the transportation sector. He welcomed dialogue with provincial and territorial governments and the private sector about measures that would be feasible and the role the federal government can play.

Mr. Millian (Private Motor Truck Council) expressed concern about expectations that fleets will install devices on vehicles in use and cautioned there could be resistance if such requirements were mandatory.

Mr. Barnes observed that industry is supportive of greening initiatives but that dealing with harmonization across the country is a challenge. He said that in the absence of harmonized conditions, successful implementation of new measures may be difficult to achieve.

Mr. Shaw emphasized the need to take a collaborative approach and that industry would want some kind of incentive program, tax reform or other policy considerations to encourage implementation of certain technologies.

Ms. Sinclair (Saskatchewan Trucking Association) said that some of the measures the trucking industry has requested in the past would improve fuel efficiency and environmental impacts. She encouraged that those measures be revisited.

Mr. Gagné thanked participants for their comments and said the information would be very helpful to inform the process.

9. Other Business

No other business was raised.

10. Adjournment

In closing, Mr. Pearson acknowledged the time and efforts contributed by presenters and thanked all participants for their contributions to a productive meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by: Sarah Wells
Date: December 15, 2017

List of Attachments

- Attachment 1: List of Participants
- Attachment 2: Presentation – National Update
- Attachment 3: Presentation – Quebec Update
- Attachment 4: Presentation – Canadian Trucking Alliance, Wide Single Tires in Canada
- Attachment 5: Presentation – Michelin North America (Canada), New Generation Wide Base Single Tires in Canada
- Attachment 6: Presentation – Crane Rental Association of Canada, All Terrain Cranes
- Attachment 7: Presentation – Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association
- Attachment 8: Presentation – Sparrow Piloting Service, Between a Rock and Hard Place
- Attachment 9: Presentation – Transport Canada, ecoTECHNOLOGY for Vehicles Program Update
- Attachment 10: Presentation – FMCSA Research Activities
- Attachment 11: Presentation – Manitoba Trucking Association, Rail Mounted Lift Gates
- Attachment 12: Presentation – Task Force on Trucking Harmonization



**Council of Deputy Ministers Responsible for
Transportation and Highway Safety**

Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy

Attachment 1:

**Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy
Meeting – November 29, 2017 Montreal**

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