



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

Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy

Minutes

(Draft December 13, 2018)

Date: November 28, 2018
Location: Hotel Omni Mont-Royal, Montreal
Chair: John Pearson
In Attendance: 64 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 noted that the Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy was established under the original national MOU, and he explained that the Task Force's primary role is to provide a national focus for coordination and harmonization of provincial and territorial regulations, policies and practices. He said the Task Force is accountable to the Council of Deputy Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety and is responsible for recommending changes to the MOU. He reminded participants that the annual meetings provide a forum to exchange information, identify concerns and issues. Mr. Pearson observed that the original MOU was established in 1988 and has been expanded and amended in the years since, largely as a result of the work done through this forum. He commended those involved for the considerable progress made in harmonization over the last 25 years, which resulted in commensurate improvement in productivity.

Mr. Pearson provided a presentation (Attachment 2) with tables summarizing the status of weight and dimension limits in Canadian jurisdictions and implementation of the MOU amendments made in 2014 (addition of tridem drive tractor-semitrailer configurations, increase in the allowable size of aerodynamic devices on the rear of trucks and trailers, increase in the overall length limit for B train double trailer combinations) and 2016 (allowance for longer wheelbase tractors on Category 1 tractor-semitrailer configurations, allowance for longer wheelbase tractors on Category 3 B train double configurations).

Following the presentation, Mr. Albrechtsen (Paul's Hauling Ltd.) observed that the 2011 amendment regarding weight exemptions for auxiliary power units only applied to Category 1 tractor-semitrailer configurations; he suggested the exemption should apply to all categories. Ms. Lansing said the allowance is applied across other categories in BC. It was agreed that the Task Force would consider the suggestion.

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

In roundtable review, government representatives provided reports as follow.

On behalf of the Yukon, Mr. Debuschewitz provided a presentation (Attachment 3) and reported on:

- Updates in progress to the Territory's weigh stations;
- The Yukon intelligent transportation systems modernization project; and
- Work done on management systems and bridge structures in the jurisdiction to improve load carrying capacity.

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

- Amendments made to the Motor Vehicles Act regarding impairment;
- The carry-over of the fifth self-weigh scale project for another year;
- The pilot project to allow weight parity on 455 mm wide base single tires (WBST), in which one carrier is participating;
- Consideration being given to implementing mandatory entry-level training in 2019/20; and
- Approval received for a project to build a road to the Prairie Creek Mine.

On behalf of British Columbia, Ms. Lansing provided a presentation (Attachment 4) and reported on:

- Project cargo corridors and the selection of 8 to 13 axle configurations pre-approved for travel between two lower mainland ports and the Alberta border;
- Pilot car initiatives;
- The commissioning of research on dynamic performance measures for pickups hauling large loads with related policy decisions anticipated in 2019;
- Width and length reviews;
- Developments with respect to BC's reducible load overweight policy;
- Current limits on 445 mm and 455 mm WBST; and
- Approvals issued to one client to use 60' semitrailers on specific routes.

On behalf of Alberta, Ms. Durdle provided a presentation (Attachment 5) and reported on:

- Activities of the New West Partnership, including permits available for digital/LED signs for escort vehicles, future permits for extended length saddlemount configurations and the expected release of a new version of Alberta's Escort Vehicle Operator's Handbook;
- Completion of the High Load Corridor Study, with the department now working on an investment strategy;
- Winter weight premiums that will come into effect when frost penetrates to a depth of 0.75 m (as opposed to 1.0 m);
- Administrative amendments incorporated in the Commercial Vehicle Dimension and Weight Regulation in June 2018 but permits are still required to operate MOU amendments;
- A new TRAVIS permitting/routing system is expected to be in place in 2020; and
- Information is available online about other changes pertaining to carrier safety/entry and commercial vehicle driver training.

Mr. Perret (The Road Scholar) asked if drivers operating extended length saddlemount configurations under permit will need to have been trained in accordance with the LCV program. Ms. Durdle confirmed that is the case, noting that the LCV training program, a product of close work with the Alberta Motor Transport Association, is well established in the province. She

acknowledged that some minor revisions to the training for saddlemount configurations could be considered and suggested discussions could be pursued separately.

On behalf of Saskatchewan, Mr. Cipywnyk provided a presentation (Attachment 6) and reported on:

- Updates to regulations including the expansion of the high clearance, primary weight and B-train corridors;
- Updates to the escort vehicle sign box requirements;
- Updates to regulations to allow longer wheelbase tractors for tractor semitrailer and B train double configurations;
- Housekeeping amendments to clarify the dimension rules for pony trailers;
- A policy update to require a transportation management plan for the transportation of massive/extraordinary loads;
- Harmonization of LCV policy with the western provinces; and
- Allowance of WBST through no-fee permits, with weights to be on par with Ontario and eligible routes to include all primary highways.

Mr. Shaw (MTA) asked if WBST weights limits will be the same as on duals on secondary highways. Mr. Cipywnyk said a lower limit will apply on secondary highways.

On behalf of Manitoba, Ms. McKee provided a presentation (Attachment 7) and reported on:

- Review of Manitoba Infrastructure's service delivery policies and processes, which will include analysis of existing programs with a focus on improvement and innovation;
- Regulatory amendments including stricter penalties for distracted driving, removal of non-RTAC vehicles, increased tandem steer axle spread to 2.2 m and increased more highways to 63,500 kg;
- Development of a replacement for the automated permitting and routing system is underway and is expected to be ready for implementation in 2020;
- The signing of the Saddlemount MOU; and
- The policy update was finalized for tridem steer/tridem drive and carrier-style concrete pumper trucks.
- Tandem steer axle spread greater than 2.2 m may be considered.

On behalf of Ontario, Mr. Lynch provided a presentation (Attachment 8) and reported on:

- The reduced load (spring thaw) period and the Ministry's plans to continue consulting with the trucking industry to streamline the process and clarify responsibilities and to review the Highway Traffic Act to identify opportunities to refine spring load restrictions based on modern truck configurations;
- Review of the Safe, Productive and Infrastructure-Friendly (SPIF) Vehicles program to determine the impacts on road safety, infrastructure, economic and productivity performance of the industry ; and
- Special vehicle configurations permit programs for three- and four-vehicle saddlemount configurations, smart lift axles on tractor semi-and double-trailers, and long wheelbase tractors on tractor self-steer semitrailers.

Mr. Lynch also reported that Ontario has implemented mandatory entry-level training for Class A licences, is looking at rest stop improvements, and is considering cooperative truck platooning.

With respect to the smart lift axle program, Mr. Albrechtsen asked if there is standardization about which axles may be lifted while in operation. Mr. Lynch said that the vehicle must meet weights

and dimensions regulations even when an axle is raised so that functionally it is as though the axle does not exist. He said as long as the regulations are met then safety requirements should also be met.

On behalf of Quebec, Mr. Janelle provided a presentation (Attachment 9) and reported on:

- Recent updates to the Highway Safety Code regarding the warning light for raised tippers on dump trucks, aerodynamic devices and auto carriers, and a pilot project for autonomous vehicles;
- The 2018/19 winter LCV program;
- Work begun to optimize analysis of routing requests for super load/supersize vehicles and to review the standards of farm vehicles;
- Planning for 2019 to modify the vehicle load and size limits regulation, the regulation respecting special permits, the special road train operating permits regulation and to implement a new computer system for issuing special permits.

In response to a question, Mr. Janelle confirmed that a pilot project is required to operate autonomous vehicles on forest roads where the highway safety code is in force.

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

- Infrastructure updates, including the first dog bone intersection in Moncton, construction of more roundabouts, twinning of Route 11, and rehabilitation of the Centennial Bridge in Miramichi;
- Establishment of a WBST pilot program;
- Development of a common permit portal as a harmonization project with Nova Scotia;
- The LCV program in the province and a major load-rating review that is underway; and
- Updates to regulations that are being readied for submission to Cabinet.

On behalf of Prince Edward Island, Mr. MacEwen provided a presentation (Attachment 10) and reported on:

- Implementation of a new vehicle category to allow tridem-drive straight trucks with a maximum weight of 29,250 kgs by permit;
- An amendment before the legislature to include tow trucks in the existing move-over law under the Highway Traffic Act;
- Review underway of truck driver training and qualifications;
- Review of WBST weight limits; and
- Approval to prepare amendments to the Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Regulations to align with recent updates to the National MOU.

On behalf of Nova Scotia, Mr. Hurley provided a presentation (Attachment 11) and reported on:

- The introduction of commercial vehicle trip permits;
- Harmonization of special move permit conditions with Nova Scotia;
- Twinning of Highways 101, 103 and 104; and
- Conclusion of the WBST pilot with no issues experienced so the Province is willing to move to regulation.

In response to a question, Mr. Hurley noted that no restrictions with respect to primary or secondary highways had been imposed on the WBST pilot.

On behalf of Newfoundland and Labrador, Ms. Cull provided a presentation (Attachment 12) and reported on:

- Amendments made to the Province's vehicle regulations under the Highway Traffic Act to align with the national MOU;
- Introduction of a new 90-day permit for several non-conforming configurations; and
- Review underway of the Province's permitting requirements for quad axle semitrailers.

On behalf of Transport Canada, Ms. Johnson noted that the federal government has been collaborating with other departments and the provinces and territories and updates will be provided as part of other agenda items on cooperative truck platooning, 6x2 axle technology and the Task Force on Trucking Harmonization.

4. Task Force on Trucking Harmonization

Mr. Cipywnyk provided a presentation (Attachment 13) on behalf of the Task Force on Trucking Harmonization. He said the Task Force had been formed in 2016 to study interprovincial truck-related regulations. He also said that, through a review of previous records and a survey of industry, 15 major themes had been identified as irritants or barriers to trade. Mr. Cipywnyk explained that the mandate of the Task Force is not to solve those issues but to identify priorities, develop an action plan and then refer the items back to appropriate organizations, such as the Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy or the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators. Mr. Cipywnyk concluded by saying that the Task Force is finalizing a report that will be submitted to the Council of Ministers for its meeting in January 2019.

5. Weight Limits for Wide Base Single Tires

Mr. Pearson observed that the status of weight limits for WBST had been reported as part of the jurisdictional updates.

Mr. Pearson remarked that the Regulatory Reconciliation and Cooperation Table (RCT) has identified trucking-related priorities to address, which include WBST, spring weight restrictions and other vehicle weights and dimensions issues. He added that the Premiers have placed priority on achieving weight parity for WBST and that it is expected to be resolved before next fall with an implementation schedule to follow.

Dr. Ritchie (OBAC) sought clarification about the Task Force on Trucking Harmonization and its role with respect to the Agreement on Internal Trade. Mr. Pearson explained that all of the transportation issues in the 1995 Agreement on Internal Trade had been addressed and none of them related to vehicle weights and dimensions. Mr. Lynch added that the new Canadian Free Trade Agreement does not really deal with transportation and the RCT is doing that work. He said the Task Force on Trucking Harmonization reports to the Council of Deputy Ministers and is providing information to the RCT.

Mr. Robert (Groupe Robert) questioned the objectives of the meeting and whether it is intended for the benefit of government or for industry and the public. He remarked that there are a lot of issues that should be addressed in the trucking sector and he expressed frustration that more carriers do not attend to speak to the issues and challenges they face. He noted that industry does its best to put an efficient vehicle on the road and that there is not enough discussion about future directions. As an example, he said that 6x2 axle technology is future-facing but that it is only being implemented in one province.

In response to Mr. Robert, Mr. Pearson confirmed that the meeting is open to all who are interested in vehicle weights and dimension issues and that anyone can ask for an item to be included on the agenda; he emphasized that the government representatives do not intend to dominate the meeting.

6. Deployment of Cooperative Truck Platooning in Canada: Opportunities and Challenges

Mr. Gaudet (National Research Council) provided a presentation (Attachment 14) about research being done on cooperative truck platooning and potential benefits in terms of fuel savings and safety. He also identified a number of deployment considerations that will be highlighted in the NRC study.

Mr. Patten (Transport Canada) provided a presentation (Attachment 15) and described a pilot project of on-road platooning on multi-lane divided highways and off-road platooning on forestry roads. He said the trialing had been completed in early November and he summarized results and possible next steps being considered.

In discussion following the presentation, Mr. Perret asked about the feasibility of using the left-most lane for platooning. Mr. Gaudet said that trucks should not be in the left lane and that platooning should not be considered in busy areas where there are a lot of lane-changing manoeuvres. He added that the greatest benefits from platooning are realized in long-distance situations where traffic is free-flowing.

Mr. Robert said that platooning is an interesting system for carriers not using LCV systems but he expressed surprise that there are not more LCVs on the road, which have been proven to work well. He questioned the merits of pursuing platooning research and suggested it would be better to invest in LCV systems, increasing the gross vehicle weights they can carry and improving access to LCV programs.

Mr. Albrechtsen asked whether drivers had been consulted about platooning; he noted that driver fatigue will be a concern when following another vehicle so closely. He agreed with Mr. Robert's observations about the merits of LCVs and questioned the feasibility of platooning. He suggested that it would be better to advance B trains and LCVs and focus on harmonization on other trucking-related issues, including WBST, to improve efficiency without platooning.

Mr. Gaudet concurred that more significant fuel savings can be achieved with LCVs than with platooning. He noted that an LCV is nonetheless one vehicle that can be cumbersome to operate and that carriers who cannot use LCVs may wish to consider platooning as an option.

7. Dimension Limits for Recreational Vehicles

Ms. Hamm (Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association of Canada) provided a presentation (Attachment 16) describing length limit issues with respect to the operation of recreational vehicles in Canada. She conveyed the request of the RV industry that the MOU be amended to increase the vehicle maximum length for RV towables to 14.65 m, with a preference that it would apply to all towables, not just fifth wheels. She noted an alternative would be to have the existing vehicle combination maximum length override the individual towable length.

Mr. Albrechtsen expressed concern about the length dynamics and driver safety, noting that RV drivers may not have the necessary training to capably handle the vehicles on the road. Mr. MacEwen also expressed concern about driver qualifications, noting the weight of an RV could require a Class 3 licence.

Mr. McLean (RVDA Canada) noted that RV drivers are generally not as rushed or stressed as commercial drivers and can defer driving if road conditions are unfavourable. He also noted that RV weights are typically lower than commercial vehicles so braking performance is not an issue. Ms. Hamm said that the RVDA is working with dealers to ensure buyers are aware of the legal requirements when purchasing an RV.

Ms. Lansing inquired if a comparison had been made of the dynamic performance of the different RV lengths. Ms. Hamm confirmed that had been done and that efforts are being made to release the results.

It was noted that the Canadian Standards Association specifies dimensional and safety requirements for RVs. Ms. Hamm said the Canadian and US standards are synchronized and that they are working towards one North American standard.

8. Inclusion of Boat Carrier to the Regulation of Stinger Steer Auto Carrier

Mr. Duhamel (Legend Boats and National Marine Manufacturers Association of Canada) provided a presentation (Attachment 17) and requested that the Category S1 Stinger Steer Automobile Carrier in the MOU be renamed as the Category S1 Stinger Steer Automobile and Boat Carrier, and that all reference to “vehicles” in the specification be amended to read “vehicles and boats”.

In response to a question, Mr. Duhamel confirmed that there is no intention to ask for changes to dimensions to accommodate boats, and that large boats would continue to be carried as oversize loads.

9. Oversize and Overweight Loads

a. Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association

Mr. Juneau (Nova Permits and Pilot Cars) provided a presentation (Attachment 18) on behalf of the Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association. He provided updates about initiatives of the Association in North America and encouraged participants to attend upcoming conferences that provide fora for further discussion of related issues.

b. Pilot Car Operations

Ms. Murray (Sparrow Piloting Service) provided a presentation (Attachment 19) about a week in the life of a pilot car service.

10. Truck Size and Weight Issues in United States: Update

Mr. Loy (US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration) provided an update on US activities. He noted that the FMCSA is working with the Federal Highway Administration on a study of twin 33 ft trailers with results expected soon. He also noted that the US is looking at data needed in a new size and weight study, truck platooning, and braking research.

11. Other Business

Mr. Richard (Transport Canada) provided a presentation (Attachment 20) about 6x2 axle technology and track testing, dynamic modelling and simulation that is being conducted or planned. Following the presentation, Mr. Robert commended the federal government for the work and said industry is very interested in the technology.

Mr. Billing (Consultant) informed participants of his impending retirement and said this would be his final meeting. He remarked on the value of the forum and the tremendous work that has been done since 1984 to develop regulations based on science and verifiable performance criteria, the commitment to work towards harmonization and the contributions made to improve safety, efficiency and productivity in Canada. He commended Mr. Pearson for his brilliant contributions to the work done, collaborative approaches and effective leadership. Mr. Patten remarked that Mr. Billing has had a significant impact on everyone in the room and congratulated him on his retirement. Mr. Pearson also congratulated Mr. Billing

and thanked him for his significant contributions to the field and to improving the trucking sector in Canada.

No other business was raised.

12. 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 13, 2018

List of Attachments

- Attachment 1: List of Participants
- Attachment 2: Presentation – National Update
- Attachment 3: Presentation – Yukon Update
- Attachment 4: Presentation – British Columbia Update
- Attachment 5: Presentation – Alberta Update
- Attachment 6: Presentation – Saskatchewan Update
- Attachment 7: Presentation – Manitoba Update
- Attachment 8: Presentation – Ontario Update
- Attachment 9: Presentation – Quebec Update
- Attachment 10: Presentation – Prince Edward Island Update
- Attachment 11: Presentation – Nova Scotia Update
- Attachment 12: Presentation – Newfoundland and Labrador Update
- Attachment 13: Presentation – Task Force on Trucking Harmonization
- Attachment 14: Presentation – National Research Council: Cooperative Truck Platooning in Canada
- Attachment 15: Presentation – Transport Canada: Platooning Trial Update
- Attachment 16: Presentation – Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association of Canada
- Attachment 17: Presentation – Legend Boats: Inclusion of Boat Carrier to the Regulation of Stinger Steer Auto Carrier
- Attachment 18: Presentation – Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association
- Attachment 19: Presentation – Sparrow Piloting Service: A Week in My Life
- Attachment 20: Presentation – Transport Canada: 6x2 Drivetrains Testing and Evaluation



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 28, 2018 Montreal

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