



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

Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy

Minutes (Draft)

Date: December 10, 2024
Location: Delta by Marriott Hotel, Montreal
Chair: John Pearson
In Attendance: 51 participants, see Attachment 1

1. Welcome And Opening

Mr. Pearson opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Pearson drew attention to the agenda and invited comments or additions. None were proposed and the agenda was adopted by consensus.

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

Mr. Pearson provided a [presentation](#) about the background and role of the Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy. He explained the Task Force was established under the original national MOU to maintain a government/industry forum for ongoing coordination and harmonization of provincial and territorial regulations, policies and practices. He reminded participants that the annual meetings are intended to provide an opportunity for exchange of information, review of emerging issues, and identification of regulatory harmonization concerns and priorities.

a. National Developments & MOU Amendments

In his presentation, Mr. Pearson highlighted developments in 2024, with work underway to:

- update the regionally based agreements on operation of Long Combination Vehicles,
- review potential amendments to the dimension limits for Stinger Steer Automobile and Boat Configuration.
- Consider a national guideline for operation of semitrailers longer than 16.2 m (ie. up to 18.45 m /60.5 ft)

Mr. Pearson noted that differing vehicle weight and dimension regulations continue to be raised in discussions of removal of internal trade barriers. He suggested that while much has been accomplished to remove or reduce regulatory impediments in Canada, there will always be opportunities to improve the efficiency and productivity of the highway transport system.

He concluded by noting that a report on the issues raised and discussions during the meeting would be provided to the Council of Deputy Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety.

b. Provincial/Territorial/Federal Developments – Reports by jurisdiction

British Columbia

Mr. Nguyen provided a [presentation](#) and highlighted:

- Updates in 2024 with respect to 100T and 125T routes, truck parking, and all-terrain cranes,
- Outlook for 2025, including work relating to zero emission vehicles, OnRouteBC, the Province’s heavy haul policy, boom truck policies, and project coordination,
- Ministry projects including Fraser Valley Highway 1 Corridor improvements, renewable power-generation, and highway recovery work.

Following the presentation, Mr. Patten (JDP Transportation Solutions) noted there are some industry concerns about restrictions on steer axle weights and asked whether they would be temporary or permanent. Mr. Nguyen said the ZEV allowance is for five years, and he said the expectation is that prototype vehicles will become compliant.

Alberta

Ms. Sooley provided a [presentation](#) and highlighted:

- The organizational structure of the Traffic Safety Services Division,
- Modernization of the TRAVIS Permitting and Routing system,
- Pilot programs for 60’ trailers in A-train configurations, steer axle trailers, and the Alberta Zero Emissions Truck Electrification Collaboration (AZETEC),
- An all-terrain crane project,
- Continued expansion of the high load corridor.

Following the presentation, Mr. Harrower (CTEA) asked if Alberta’s steerable lift axle configuration shares similarities with those in other jurisdictions. Ms. Sooley said it does and remarked that there is an intention to enhance it with respect to Alberta’s operations.

Saskatchewan

Mr. Imran provided a [presentation](#) and highlighted:

- The Province’s goal to improve 10,000 km of highways,
- Regulatory updates relating to the security of loads and trip inspection regulations,
- An upcoming review of vehicle weights and dimensions regulations,
- Improvements to the Highway Hotline,
- Upcoming policy updates to the Western Long Combination Vehicle MOU,
- Work to improve truck parking and rest areas along highways,
- The Saskatchewan Government Insurance initiative to update its permitting system,
- Opportunities to partner to pilot new technologies for efficiencies, GHG reduction, and increased safety.

Following the presentation, Mr. Harrower asked if there is an intention to introduce steerable lift axles in the province. Mr. Imran said the issue will be discussed among the western jurisdictions.

Manitoba

Mr. Borgford provided a [presentation](#) and highlighted:

- Work progressing on a strategic highway initiative to improve trade and commerce transport across the province,
- A National Economic Trade Corridor Strategy with an initial focus on twinning the Trans-Canada Highway from Falcon Lake to the Ontario border,
- Work with the Western Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Working Group on the LCV MOU,
- The Perimeter Freeway Initiative and upgrades needed to improve safety and efficiency.

Ontario

Mr. Lynch provided a [presentation](#) and highlighted:

- Ontario's Safe, Productive, and Infrastructure Friendly (SPIF) program and regulatory amendments made in November 2023 regarding vehicle weights and dimensions,
- The Extended Semitrailer Program that was launched on June 14, 2024, following completion of a successful Trial operation,
- The Extended Stinger-Steer Auto Carrier (ESSAC) Program,
- The Heavy Tow Truck Program.

Following the presentation, Mr. Patten asked if access is restricted for the ESSAC Program. Mr. Lynch said the ministry is not intending to authorize a network for the Ontario ESSAC configuration but works with carriers to determine feasible routes. The Full ESSAC configuration matching US overhang limits is and will be restricted to a network. He suggested the program will be by permit for the foreseeable future.

Ms. Belanger-Parker (Canadian Crane Rental Association) asked about the application to cranes, and Mr. Lynch said that would be a separate regime, already in-place for mobile cranes.

Quebec

Mr. Janelle provided a [presentation](#) and highlighted:

- Regulatory updates planned in 2025 with respect to vehicle weight and dimension limits, special road train operating permits, and transportation of dangerous goods,
- Future updates planned for special permits,
- Construction work to upgrade Highway 185 will be completed in the fall of 2026, which will provide a continuous divided highway for LCV operations from Halifax to Windsor
- A pilot project on a wide wing snow clearing vehicle,
- Ongoing modernization of the rest area network,
- Planned work to improve safety of vulnerable road users around heavy vehicles through evaluation of technology/devices to reduce blind spots or provide warnings to truck drivers.

Prince Edward Island

Mr. Dowling provided a [report](#) on developments:

- Completion in 2023 of vehicle weights and dimensions regulatory amendments,
- Mandatory entry level training in place as of August 5, 2024,

- Road improvements made in the province,
- Allowance for emergency vehicles, and snow plows when plowing, to use blue lights,
- Extension of the impaired driving lookback period,
- Staffing to increase capacity for commercial vehicle enforcement.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Mr. Fizzard provided a [presentation](#) and highlighted:

- All MOU amendments have been updated in the Province's vehicle regulations with the exception of wide based single tires which are permitted to operate at parity to traditional dual tires for the Island portion of NL only,
- The weigh scale bypass program,
- The addition of low-speed weigh in motion to the fleet of portable scales,
- 60 ft semi-trailers are not currently permitted to operate by regulation or permit; will review upon request,
- Implementation of electronic logging devices, and
- A pilot project to allow additional weight on B-trains and self-steer quad axles.

Transport Canada

Ms. Tsatsa Kotwas provided a [presentation](#) with updates on:

- The federal strategy to reduce emissions from medium- and heavy-duty vehicles,
- Medium- and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicle incentive program,
- The National Supply Chain Office and Strategy,
- Zero Emission Trucking Program and testbeds,
- ecoTechnology for Vehicles Program,
- A mutual recognition pilot project in the trucking sector.

c. Long Combination Vehicles – Regional Collaboration

i) Eastern Provinces

Mr. Lynch said discussions among the eastern provinces await new representatives from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Mr. Lynch noted that LCV transportation of dangerous goods that do not require emergency response assistance plans (ERAP) are allowed through Ontario but not beyond. He suggested this will be a topic of discussion among the eastern provinces.

Mr. Millian (Private Motor Truck Council) asked that consideration be given to allowing operating speeds to increase from 90 to 100 km/h. He suggested the speed differential between LCVs and other traffic poses a safety hazard. Mr. Lynch remarked that there are also safety concerns about crashes at higher speeds and said it is important to balance the safety issues with respect to LCV operations. Mr. Lynch also remarked that dynamic performance for LCVs depreciates at higher speeds. Further, that US-DOT and FMCSA data indicates that the speed disparity does not lead to major safety concerns.

ii) Western Provinces

Mr. Nguyen reported on harmonization initiatives among the western provinces with respect to long combination vehicles. He noted:

- Repositioning of dollies will be adopted across the west
- Language about service brakes remaining connected will be retained in the MOU
- Harmonizing language regarding adverse weather conditions will be considered
- Intention is to change length of Rocky Mountain doubles to 32 m
 - o Will allow for sleepers
 - o Intention is to allow operation without pilot cars in the west
- LCVs must be broken down on private infrastructure; considering application to public infrastructure
- Focus to collaborate with industry on:
 - o Driver training, including the validation of certificates across the western jurisdictions
 - o Carrier eligibility and safety ratings
 - o New carrier entrance requirements
- Cargo restrictions are under review

Mr. Dolyniuk (Manitoba Trucking Association) asked for an update about allowance for triple axle trailers. Mr. Barnes (Alberta Motor Transport Association) added that tridem are prevalent and suggested it is very important to address this in the MOU. Mr. Nguyen said the matter is under review but there is no specific update that can be provided at this time.

Mr. Millian expressed support for an exemption to allow service brakes not to be connected. He also commented that LCV parking is a significant challenge and suggested every jurisdiction should have facilities that are designated for LCV parking.

In response to a question about plans to meet with the stakeholder committee again, Mr. Nguyen confirmed there is an intention to do so but no specific plan at this time.

Mr. Millian remarked that four lane highways are proliferating across Canada and consideration should be given in the future to including LCVs in the national MOU.

4. Issues and Presentations

a. Low Emission Vehicle Weight Allowances

Mr. Barnes and Mr. Schmidt (Alberta Motor Transport Association/Lafarge) provided a [presentation](#) with a recommendation for a transitional weight allowance that would help zero-emission vehicles achieve payload capacities comparable to diesel trucks.

In discussion following the presentation, Mr. Maurais (Association du Camionnage Québec) remarked that weight limitations are a significant issue with ZEV operations. Mr. Noël (GN Solutions) asked who would pay for the increased damage to the infrastructure caused by increasing vehicle weight allowances.

Mr. Lynch remarked that studies have shown that the infrastructure damage caused by overweight vehicles is greater than the damage caused by higher numbers of vehicles operating within weight limits. He acknowledged the growing demand for freight and weight allowances but observed there are real asset management constraints as well, in addition to exponential depreciation in assets that already impact provinces, including but not limited to infrastructure deficits. He suggested there will need to be more analysis and a broader discussion before the issues can be resolved. Mr. Schmidt concurred and suggested this is important work that needs to be tackled.

b. CSA's Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code

On behalf of the Canadian Standards Association, Mr. Evans presented about work to update the design vehicle used in the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code.

It was noted that data about axle weights and configurations will be essential for the statistical analysis that will be conducted. It was agreed that Mr. Evans would follow up with Mr. Pearson to identify the data and format needed to advance the work.

c. Bridge Formula Research Project

Dr. Abtahi (University of Alberta) provided a [presentation](#) about research into the development of a new/modified bridge formula to address issues with respect to the movement of all-terrain cranes in Canada.

In discussion following the presentation, Mr. Evans and Mr. Erfani (Ministère des transports et de la mobilité durable) questioned the analysis regarding the dynamic effects of loading and suggested further work would be needed.

d. Dynamic Performance of Articulated Heavy Vehicles with Active Control Systems

Dr. Huang (National Research Council) provided a [presentation](#) about an ongoing study of the dynamic performance of articulated heavy vehicles with active control systems.

5. Oversize and Overweight Loads

a. Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association

Ms. Perron provided a [presentation](#) on behalf of the Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association.

b. Pilot Car Industry

Ms. Murray provided a [presentation](#) with updates from the pilot car industry.

6. Other Business

Mr. Pearson invited participants to raise other business; none was noted.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Pearson thanked participants for attending and acknowledged the speakers who had contributed to the agenda.

The meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by: Dr. Sarah Wells

Date Distributed: January 10