

TRUCK WEIGHTS

BACKGROUND

In 1956, Congress passed legislation aimed at protecting the pavement and bridges on Interstates. Those protections came in the form of axle and gross weight limits. The federal law also authorized states to allow operation on Interstates beyond the specified limits, but only if operation was legal in the state prior to July 1, 1956. In response to energy use concerns, the Federal Aid Highway Amendments of 1974 increased the weight limits to allow larger and heavier trucks to utilize the federal interstate system. As a balance to this concession, Congress created the Federal Bridge Formula (FBF), which limits the size and weight of trucks by calculating the gross weight over the spacing and amount of axles; the heavier the weight, the greater the required spacing between axles.

Ready mixed concrete trucks have heavy empty (or tare) weights. This is attributed to structural design or specialized equipment installed on the vehicle for handling the load. Due to the heavy weight of the empty vehicle, the limits imposed by federal weight laws, especially the FBF, leave little extra weight for carrying payload. For example, under federal weight limits a three-axle ready mixed concrete truck could weigh a maximum of 48,000 lbs. Only 18,000 lbs. (out of a potential 40,000 lbs.) is productive payload; 30,000 lbs. is the tare weight of the truck.

STATUS

As a result, Federal weight laws effectively force fully-loaded ready mixed concrete trucks off the Interstate Highway System and onto local and state roads that are generally built to lower standards. This causes congestion, makes for potentially unsafe driving conditions, prematurely degrades secondary roadways and drastically cuts industry efficiency.

ACTION REQUESTED

Increasing federal truck weight limits will allow ready mixed concrete trucks to be more productive, will help reduce congestion and will decrease the amount of fuel needed to carry the same amount of concrete to jobsites.

The cement and concrete industry supports amending current law to allow ready mixed concrete delivery vehicles on the Interstate Highway System.

HOURS OF SERVICE

BACKGROUND

Hours of Service (HOS) are rules governing the working hours of drivers of commercial motor vehicles (CMV). HOS are established by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and intended to safeguard the public from accidents caused by driver fatigue.

Federal HOS apply to drivers of vehicles used as part of a business and involved in interstate commerce that exceed 10,000 pounds in weight or provide transportation to certain number of passengers. Cement and concrete companies utilize covered CMVs as part of their business.

STATUS

HOS rules provide that a driver may drive a maximum of 11 hours after 10 consecutive hours off duty, and a driver may not drive after his 14th consecutive hour on duty. Drivers of most CMVs must take a 30 minute break after eight hours of driving, and a driver may not drive after 60 hours on duty in 7 days or 70 hours on duty in 8 days without a 34 hour off duty restart period.

The FAST Act included a provision providing a permanent exemption for ready mix truck drivers to the 30 minutes break. Specially, the exemption has enabled drivers of ready mixed concrete trucks to use 30 minutes or more of on-duty “waiting time” to satisfy the requirement for a 30-minutes rest break, provided they do not perform any other work during that time. The FAST Act also included a ready mix concrete industry-specific logbook exemption to increase the 12-hour on duty logging threshold to 14 hours. The FAST Act increases the air-miles radius from 50 to 75 air miles for the transportation and delivery of construction materials.

ACTION REQUESTED

Ready Mixed Concrete Hours of Service Request – Due to the perishable nature of the ready mixed concrete and the unpredictable nature of weather, the industry is seeking modifications to the Hours of Service guidelines to allow drivers of ready mixed concrete delivery vehicles to drive a maximum of 11 hours within an 18 hour driving window. This provision would apply only to ready mixed concrete delivery vehicles.

HOURS Act - The HOURS Act is a bipartisan bill to amend the federal HOS regulations by extending the record of duty status logging threshold from 12 to 14 hours for all CMVs, not just ready mixed concrete delivery vehicles, and increasing the 100 air mile radius to 150 air miles for the short haul rule.