



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



GEORGE N. CAMPBELL, JR.
COMMISSIONER

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ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

Bureau of Highway Maintenance
March 9, 2010

To: All Applicants for Overweight Permits

Re: New Load / Axle Weight Criteria for Overweight Permits
Effective Monday, April 5, 2010
Meetings, Demonstrations, and Discussions Scheduled

Dear Permit Applicants:

This letter and invitation are a follow-up to previous meetings and discussions held at the NHDOT Offices in Concord in September and November of 2009 on this subject. This letter also confirms that the Department plans to implement the new weight criteria on Monday, April 5, 2010, as previously noted on the Department's OVERHAUL web page.

Since our meetings last fall the Department has been working to develop automated procedures whereby each Applicant can, if preferred, download and run a computer program, the results of which will assist the Applicant in route planning for overweight permits. The Applicant is able to input the axle weights and spacings of each proposed overweight vehicle and load, similar to the data entry for OVERHAUL. The computer program will then review the effect of this proposed load configuration and compare it to the current load rating and capacity of all state bridges. The output provides the Applicant with a file listing each state bridge and indicating whether the bridge is "OK" to cross with the proposed load (file can be viewed or printed). A Google Earth map is also provided that depicts all state bridges and displays pertinent bridge data and review results ("OK to cross" or "Bridge review needed"). The output file and map also lists and displays all municipal bridges and includes the note "Municipal Permission Required", since each municipality is responsible for their specific bridges.

The goal of this program is to provide the Applicant with additional tools to plan a route of travel that crosses only those state owned bridges indicated as "OK to cross", thereby avoiding the review cost to the Applicant and any delay associated with the Department having to perform a full review of all state bridges along the proposed route. The Applicant will be required to certify on their OVERHAUL application that they have correctly completed and reviewed the bridge results outlined above and that all state bridges along the proposed route are truly "OK to cross" for the proposed overweight vehicle and load. With this certification, the Department is then able to approve the overweight permit application without the cost or time required for the Department to perform a review of those state bridges. The Department will be randomly auditing these self-certifications to ensure that the Applicant correctly performs them.

It is important to understand that there will still be instances where the program results indicate that a review of state bridges by the Department is required for a specific overweight vehicle and load on a preferred route. If this occurs, the Applicant can either: (1) try to select an alternate route along which all state bridges are "OK to cross", or, (2) submit the application and the Department will perform the bridge review. In many instances, the preferred route can be approved with additional conditions, e.g., crossing at a reduced speed, being the only vehicle on the bridge, etc., which can only be determined by a thorough engineering review.

It is also important to note that the Department only performs reviews of state bridges. All permit Applicants must still contact the municipalities to obtain approval to cross all municipally owned roads and bridges along the proposed travel route. In instances where a bridge is located on a state numbered route within the urban compact area of a city (and occasionally a town), it is still municipally owned. The Department does not have authority to grant approval for any permit traveling on a municipal roadway or bridge. As previously indicated, these bridges are listed as “*Municipal Permission Required*”.

It is recognized that there is considerable concern with implementing the new weight criteria, especially with the time Applicants may need to wait for the Department to perform a bridge review. The Department understands this concern and is working to provide timely responses to all permit Applicants. By enabling Applicants to verify the adequacy of state bridges along their selected routes, the computer program is expected to reduce the number of required bridge reviews. This will also enable the Department to be more responsive when performing those bridge reviews that are necessary. In addition, the Department has engaged the services of engineering consultants to assist Bridge Design staff with these bridge reviews, again in an effort to provide timely response to Applicants for overweight permits.

You are invited to attend one or more of the informational sessions listed below in Room 114 at the Department’s offices at 7 Hazen Drive in Concord. During these meetings, members of Bridge Design will demonstrate the bridge review/comparison program, distribute information on its use, and answer questions from Applicants. Members from the Permit Office will also be present to respond to questions as needed regarding overweight/oversize permits in general. The goal of these meetings is to instruct Applicants on how to run the review/comparison programs for their specific proposed load and vehicle configuration and to respond to any questions. In this manner it is hoped that the transition to the new weight criteria will proceed as smoothly as possible.

New Weight Criteria for Overweight Permits – Informational/Instructional Meetings		
Date	Time	Location
Friday, March 12, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Tuesday, March 16, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Friday, March 19, 2010	9:00 am to 12:00 noon	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Monday, March 22, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Tuesday, March 23, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Friday, March 26, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Monday, March 29, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Tuesday, March 30, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Wednesday, March 31, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114
Thursday, April 1, 2010	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm	NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord; Rm. 114

If you have immediate questions regarding the bridge review program/procedures, please contact Mark Richardson or Dave Powelson in Bridge Design at (603) 271-2731. If you have questions on overweight permits in general, please contact Jim Gilbert, Oversize/Overweight Permit Supervisor, at (603)-271-6489.

Sincerely,

(Signed)

Caleb B. Dobbins, PE
Highway Maintenance Engineer

CBD/mwr

cc: John Barthelmes, Commissioner, NH Department of Safety
George N. Campbell, Jr., Commissioner, NH Department of Transportation
David J. Brillhart, Assistant Commissioner/Chief Engineer, NH Department of Transportation
David Powelson, Chief, Existing Bridge Section, NH Department of Transportation