

**California Transportation Advisory Council
Steering Committee Meeting**

Thursday, May 28, 2014

12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**State of California Department of Transportation Southern Regional Lab
13970 Victoria Street, Conference Room #13
Fontana, California**

Item #1 – Welcome

Greg Dineen (Greg Dineen & Associates) is chairing the meeting because Eric Sauer was not able to attend. Greg Dineen welcomed the group and introductions were made.

The California Transportation Advisory Council's (CTPAC's) purpose is to establish a forum for government and Industry's viewpoints on transportation. Both sides believe that this is a valuable venue in resolving issues and streamlining the permit process. The Work Group meetings are where the discussions happen regarding the permit process. The Industry stakeholders thanked the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to take the time to understand Industry's concerns. Further, Industry also has to understand Caltrans' perspective and its duty to the residents of California. Change does not happen overnight. The stakeholders must be involved. Caltrans needs to hear from the stakeholders (the owners) on how proposed changes will impact their businesses.

Item #2 – Public Comment

None.

Item #3 – Caltrans Update

Kris Kuhl (Caltrans) welcomed everyone and extended an invitation to meet with anyone after the meeting. Mr. Kuhl explained that the permitting function is done at Caltrans Headquarters in Sacramento. Mr. Kuhl stated that Ms. Yin-Ping Li has the largest staff at Caltrans Headquarters. In addition to the permit function, she has encroachment permits. In addition to the regular work load, Mr. Kuhl and Ms. Li are being pulled into meetings across the street to discuss the potential impacts of many Assembly and Senate bills to transportation. Kris Kuhl will be doing a 6-month rotation where he will be responsible for the transportation function as well as the maintenance function for District #3. Kris Kuhl introduced John Lew who will be taking over at the helm while Mr. Kuhl is on rotation.

Ms. Li is working on a new schedule to shift staff for training on the online application. Ms. Li is working with Caltrans system staff regarding the inability to access the application after hours. The standalone Access program does not run on Windows 7. Due to this, companies that need permits after hours may not be able to get them. They are working on this issue but it is still a work in process.

Ms. Li said that they are advertising and backfilling 6 vacancies. These vacancies sometimes create a backlog. Annuals are a little bit behind because staff is either on vacation or out long-term sick. Caltrans has also secured training for staff. This training is given in 2-hour blocks. When Caltrans members are in these training sessions, staff will not be available if there are any issues with permits. However, there will be one individual available to answer the telephone. If companies have something urgent, they will need to check with Caltrans on Monday afternoon and Caltrans will get back to the companies on Tuesday afternoon. One of the stakeholders asked how far in advance companies may apply for annual permits. Per Caltrans, companies can submit them a month in advance. Caltrans recommends that companies submit the annual permit applications early rather than late. Another stakeholder stated that when Caltrans had a South and North Region office, Caltrans advertised that they would turn the permits around in 2 hours. Is Caltrans trying to get back to this 2-hour window? Ms. Li stated that she is trying to get her staff to take more initiative in resolving backlogs. Industry understands the cycle up and cycle down. For Annuals, Caltrans is shooting for a turnaround of 14 days. Additionally, Caltrans is working on getting staff cross-trained so that they can help with all areas of permit writing. Per Industry, when the consolidation took place, the permit turnaround time has increased causing operational issues for Industry. Was the consolidation done to make the permit process more streamlined or was it due to budget cuts? Per Caltrans, one of the consequences of the consolidation was that Caltrans lost the majority of its permit writing staff. The Northern Region staff that are experienced permit writers are not familiar with the Southern California routes. Consequently, this adds time to the permit process. Caltrans set goals regarding the turnaround times for permits and also authorizes overtime for staff to write permits. Industry stakeholders wanted to know if Caltrans would consider having staff work overtime on Saturdays. No because Caltrans has to pay its staff a 4-hour minimum on Saturday. Industry stated that the more behind Caltrans is in issuing permits, the greater the temptation to run without permits. Based on operational need, Ms. Li can authorize overtime. Caltrans' goal is 2 hours for issuing STAR permits, 4 hours for faxed permits, 10 days for annuals, and 30 days for variance permits. Per Kris Kuhl, Ms. Li and her staff are thinking outside the box to deliver great customer service. Things are going to get better. Kris Kuhl asked for Industry to be more understanding. Industry has noticed that there has been a big improvement in the issuance of variance permits and it is appreciated. Caltrans will be replacing the vacant inspector position and somebody should be in this position within 6 to 8 weeks.

Item #4 – Charter Review and Action Items Status

Action Item #1: Ms. Li sent her comments to Eric Sauer. Greg Dineen will follow-up with Eric Sauer.

Action Item #2: Eric Sauer to examine reinstating the pre-meeting Work Group that reviews revisions to the Transportation Permit Manual. The Industry formed the two co-chairs for the Transportation Permit Manual Work Group. Caltrans would like Industry's input before the Transportation Permit Manual is finalized. Caltrans will probably not print any hard copies of the Transportation Manual. The newly revised Transportation Permit Manual will be available via the Internet. Eric Sauer was sent a draft of the Transportation Permit Manual. Greg will follow-up with Eric Sauer.

Action Item #3: There will be a presentation at the next CTPAC meeting regarding the potential Industry participation in the prioritization of bridge improvement projects. If there are any specific questions or areas of concern that Industry would like to have covered during the presentation, please submit the questions to Ms. Li no later than June 20, 2014. Also, if Industry has any questions regarding the upcoming legal loads presentation, please also submit these by June 20, 2014.

In District #3, they are trying to develop a strategy to open up specific corridors for streamlining the movement of goods through their District. The bridge improvement program only receives \$9 million in funding annually. Since there are other Caltrans Districts involved, there may be an opportunity to tap into other sources of funding. The bridge improvement program is not under Transportation but under Structures and Maintenance. However, Transportation is very aware that this program impacts the Permit Program. How big is this list? This list is fluid. Part of District #3's strategy is looking at how many bridges are impacted. District #3 is looking at clearing specific routes like I-5 through Sacramento. What about Interstate 40? Caltrans has replaced 8 bridges and strengthened others. But, due to the poor job done by the contractor on strengthening the bridges, these bridges need to be replaced. Per Industry, Caltrans is way ahead of the game compared to other states in drilling down to the District level to see what can be done in this arena. Caltrans should be commended on its efforts.

Action Item #4: Ms. Li has invited staff from the legal truck size and weight program to the next Sacramento meeting for introductions. Have questions for Mike Johnson by the 20th in order for him to prepare for the meeting.

Action Item #5: Greg Dineen will follow-up with Eric Sauer.

Action Item #6: The California Highway Patrol has not received any material regarding this Item.

Action Item #7: Greg Dineen sent the proposal to Eric Sauer. Caltrans will check why the proposal did not make it into the Proposal Section of the CTPAC meeting binder.

Action Item #8: Bobby Weyers and Lorin Sabin to give review dates for Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 to Kien Le. Bobby Weyers will follow-up with Eric Sauer because they have not received the information yet.

Item #5 – Crane Workgroup

The proposal for a truck crane being allowed 60,000 pounds on the tridem proposal did not get into the May 28, 2014 CTPAC Meeting Book. (Please reference Action Item #7.) The proposal was stuck in his outbox.

Item #6 – Annuals Workgroup

Greg Dineen & Associates is working to identify a technology that will satisfy the needs of Caltrans and stakeholders for the 7, 8, and 9-axle Transponder Program.

Item #7 – Variance Workgroup

An issue came up that local agencies have eliminated bridge data and Industry wanted to know why this had been done. Caltrans thought that perhaps a few haulers were looking at the Caltrans Structure and Maintenance Bridge data (except for Los Angeles County). These carriers would then contact the local agency stating that they knew what the bridge could handle as far as a load. Per Industry, the Caltrans Structure and Maintenance data was a nice tool. Conversely, many of the local agencies do not look at this data and Industry is concerned that the local agencies will move a load over a bridge that cannot handle it. If Industry can work bridge data into the routing survey prior to doing the job, it is a huge advantage. The City of Corona told Industry to go around a new bridge because it “wanted to save the bridge”. Caltrans will look into the reason(s) why this data is no longer available to Industry.

Item #8 – Fixed Loads & Tow Trucks Work Group

There is no update.

Item #9 – Status of Development of Transportation Permit Manual

Please see Action Item #8 under Item #4.

Item #10 – New Business and New Proposals

Caltrans is waiting for a Federal standard to be adopted regarding allowing electronic copies of Caltrans permits to be accessible via portable mobile devices. If the Federal government adopts a standard, would Industry need to submit a proposal regarding this issue? Caltrans does not think that the Vehicle Code allows Caltrans to issue electronic permits. At this point, Caltrans issues paper permits. (Caltrans accepts electronic submissions of permit applications.) Some other states are allowing permits to be displayed electronically via Smart telephones and I-Pads. The California Highway Patrol would be okay with an I-Pad but not with viewing the information via Smart telephones.

The California Highway Patrol will accept proof of car insurance electronically because it is a written statute. However, electronic permit display is not written as a California statute. Additionally, drivers must carry the latest restrictions with them. (Caltrans updates these restrictions on a weekly basis.) Per Industry, would it not be better to have these restrictions come via telephonically? Caltrans does not issue restrictions on a daily basis. Annual permits are not limited to a specific route whereas Single-trip permits are limited to a specific route. Per Caltrans, the reason why the restrictions are done on a weekly basis is because the Districts submit this information to Headquarters. Some of the

restrictions that are received are temporary. Headquarters goes through this information and then selects a few hundred restrictions from the 20,000 restrictions that are received from the Districts. These restrictions are then posted on the Caltrans' website. Even if Caltrans is updating this information on a weekly basis, why does it matter if the driver is looking at the restrictions in paper form or electronically? The restrictions are required to be with the driver. Kris Kuhl wanted to bring back a little historical perspective – this conversation started when one of the CTPAC members asked about exploring this technology. The reason was then the drivers would not have to come all the way back to the home office if they got another job while on the road. Industry was concerned about giving an officer a telephone due to durability issues. After the Federal government approves the electronic permit, Industry will need State authorization through the legislative process. The permit will probably be in PDF format. Additionally, Industry will need to work with Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol on developing standards for the screen standards, Pixel criteria, etc. The California Highway Patrol will also want something that indemnifies the officer from damages, how the officer gets a copy of the documents in a case of wrong-doing – would the officer take the I-Phone, I-Pad, etc. The California Highway Patrol is able to confiscate the permit and log book. (Some other states cannot do this.) Per the California Highway Patrol representative, there are many hurdles such as the evidentiary items before this becomes a reality. Industry needs to find out which other states accept electronic permits and how they handled the concerns of law enforcement. Per Caltrans, there is no leeway regarding the attachments. (The temporary restrictions and the accompaniments are part of the permit.)

Steven Todd of Specialized Carriers and Rigging Association (SC&RA) was introduced. Mr. Todd stated SC&RA on behalf of its 1,300 member companies, appreciates this opportunity to meet with Caltrans. (Many SC&RA members do business in California.) SC&RA has witnessed time and time again throughout the country that only through true partnering opportunities such as this can safety, efficiencies, and commerce growth occur. SC&RA extended an invitation to Caltrans to attend the AASHTO conference, the WASHTO conference, and the SC&RA Specialized Transportation Symposium. SC&RA is requesting that Caltrans join the one of these annual conferences to discuss ongoing harmonization issues. Unfortunately, Caltrans has travel restrictions due to budget constraints.

SC&RA voiced concerns also that permit turnaround time has risen dramatically since Caltrans consolidated the permit function. SC&RA would also like to see an automated permit routing and bridge analysis system that would operate 24/7 and most of the permits would be self-issued. This would streamline the process, provide cost savings and efficiencies to Caltrans and the taxpayers, and save carriers hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. The point SC&RA wanted to make was that if Caltrans interacts with its colleagues, it will find out that 30 states have fully automated routing and bridge analysis systems. What this means if a company has done its research, it will receive a permit within minutes instead of being at the whim of a permit writer. (The fully automated routing and bridge analysis systems do not handle the superloads.)

SC&RA would also like CTPAC to review the purpose and need for new trailer and crane inspections. SC&RA does not know of another state that requires inspections. What is the root cause as to why inspections are needed? In the other 49 states, law enforcement handles it. Industry wants to weed

out the few bad apples because the bad apples undercut the good players and make it an uneven playing field.

Kien Le discussed the formal process of submitting a proposal to the CTPAC Steering Committee. One of the items that SC&RA is requesting is that Bobby Weyers be the formal replacement for SC&RA on the Steering Committee. (SC&RA has two votes which matters when a proposal is being voted on by the CTPAC Steering Committee.)

Item #11 – Adjournment

Mr. Dineen adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m. The next meeting is September 24, 2014 at 9:00 for the Work Groups. The Steering Committee meeting will begin at noon. Be sure to submit any agenda items for the next meeting to Caltrans two weeks prior to the next meeting. Please submit any proposals to Caltrans three weeks prior to the next meeting.