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"Serving the needs of industry and government to promote safety, efficiency and infrastructure protection"

Overview of the TRAVIS Multi-Jurisdiction Permitting System

Transport Engineering Branch

April 20, 2011

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Introduction

The intent of this communiqué is to provide an introduction and overview of Alberta's TRAVIS Multi-Jurisdiction permitting initiative.

Background

The movement of overweight and overdimensional trucks requires a provincial permit in all instances and municipal approval if the trip uses municipal roads as part of the route. The current permit process lacks coordination and requires applicants to contact multiple organizations and provide the same data to each jurisdiction.

A provincial, municipal, and industrial task group reviewed the movement of oversize loads in the province and made three recommendations:

1. The province should develop an automated permitting system that would, with a single permit application, issue the provincial permit and include all provincial and municipal permissions for the oversize vehicle to travel.
2. The province should charge a single fee for this service and allocate permit revenue to the municipalities on an equitable formula based on municipal roadway type and distance traveled.
3. The province and municipalities should strive to standardize the conditions for the movement of oversize loads.

System

Following the recommendations of the task group, the province has developed the web-based TRAVIS permitting system, which currently processes and issues provincial permits. A provincial GIS routing function (TRAVIS Routing) was introduced in the spring of 2008. The final phase of the system, TRAVIS Multi-Jurisdiction (MJ), includes routing on municipal roads as well as the incorporation of municipal permit approval business rules and processes.

TRAVIS Routing automatically checks the route and vehicle information to ensure that the roads and bridges on the intended route are adequate for the safe movement of the oversize vehicle, with minimal damage to the infrastructure. If the analysis presents no issues requiring manual review, TRAVIS can automatically approve and issue the permit. This process has significantly reduced the waiting time for industry and has reduced the number of manual errors where permits were issued with incorrect or restricted routes.

The TRAVIS system checks include:

1. Axle weights for the roadway surface, based on seasonal limitations, surface type, roadway structure, etc.
2. Temporary restrictions such as road bans, construction zones, etc.

3. A bridge analysis for each bridge that is being crossed. This analysis considers the actual capacity of the bridge for the specific vehicle, and is not just a review of a list to determine if the bridge is or is not restricted.
4. Roadway width to assess the accommodation of other vehicles and the requirement for traffic control and escort vehicles.
5. Vertical clearances for bridges, overpasses, and other overhead obstacles.
6. Travel past vehicle inspection stations or through municipalities and enforcement areas. Municipal officials at their request can receive automatic notification of permits for oversize loads moving on their roads.
7. Specific business rules, based on the vehicle, commodity and highways to ensure that the proper permit conditions are included in the permit.

TRAVIS MJ has been in production, with a pilot group of municipalities, since June 2009. Many of the lessons learned during the pilot phase have been addressed and the final version of TRAVIS MJ was implemented into production in November 2010. Since then, the Province has been contacting municipalities to demonstrate the system and encourage them to join the initiative.

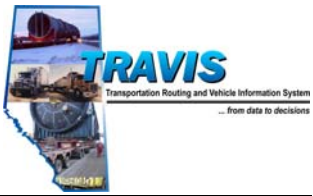
Municipalities

Each municipality using TRAVIS MJ for permitting will continue to be the sole road authority for their roads and will continue to set the criteria and make the decisions for allowing the movement of oversize loads on their roads.

The TRAVIS MJ system is designed to assist municipalities in assessing applications for the movement of oversize vehicles. TRAVIS automatically checks the suitability of oversize vehicle travel on municipal roads, based on the data and rules provided by the municipality. If the information on the application matches the municipal business rules, the system will be able to provide automatic municipal approval. Where the vehicle weights or dimensions exceed any limits stipulated by the municipality, or if there is a routing issue, the move will be denied automatic approval. The applicant can revise the application or ask for it to be forwarded to the municipality for manual review.

The TRAVIS system will consider the existence of mandatory road use agreements and other stipulations such as road bonds, inspections, etc required by the municipality, and can verify the existence of those items in the approval process.

The initial data upload will include roadway attribute data such as roadway surface type, roadway function, truck routes, local access roads, width, etc. Once the data is in place, free web-based tools will be provided to the municipalities (or their consultant) to maintain the data. Municipalities will have the ability to create business rules in the



TRAVIS system for specific reviews and checks. The tools will provide ongoing access to the TRAVIS system to add or remove temporary restrictions for road bans, construction zones, rain-out zones, etc.

Municipalities will be notified by e-mail of each application and of any permits automatically issued. This will enable them to monitor and enforce the movement of the oversize vehicle. TRAVIS will include periodic customized reports as well as the ability to search the database to answer specific questions.

The benefits to the municipalities of TRAVIS Multi-Jurisdiction include:

- Retention of full authority over municipal road use.
- An online application system to reduce the workload of phone calls and duplicate data entry of the permit information.
- A streamlined, automated approval process, ensuring that all desired analysis, factors, and rules are applied equitably and consistently. Also, the system will ensure that the proper staff members are consulted whenever manual approvals are required.
- The ability to offer 24/7 service at no cost to the municipality.
- A higher frequency of moves obtaining municipal approval, as the provincial permit will not be issued until all municipal approvals are in place.
- Easy access to a comprehensive permit database.
- Participation in a permit revenue sharing system to offset permit approval and roadway damage costs.

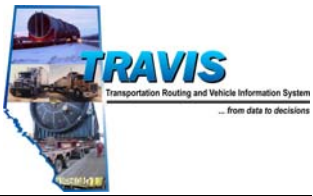
Industry

The trucking industry will realize numerous benefits from the implementation of the TRAVIS Multi-Jurisdiction permitting system:

- One window permit application, saving substantial time (and money).
- Single permit document with all provincial and municipal permit conditions.
- Single fee (saving administration costs).
- 24/7 service for permit applications and automatic approval of many permits.
- Immediate feedback on restrictions in various jurisdictions, allowing vehicle or route modification at the application stage.

Permit Fees and Revenue Sharing

The Province has historically been the only agency legally empowered to collect permit fees for the movement of oversize/overweight vehicles and has retained all the revenue. The intent of the permit fees is to cover the marginal cost of infrastructure damage as well as the costs to administer the permit system.



The Province has committed to sharing permit revenues with municipalities participating in the TRAVIS MJ initiative. A new permit fee system has been proposed which reflects municipal overhead and infrastructure costs. Under this fee system, municipalities will receive an administration fee per move as well as a prorated portion of the mileage-based permit fee. In addition, the permit fee schedule will be modified to reflect the difference in costs for varying roadway surfaces as well as seasonal effects.

The administrative portion will ensure that municipalities are able to operate and maintain their data in TRAVIS MJ at no additional cost. The prorated portion will compensate for the additional maintenance costs incurred by overweight vehicle operations.

It is anticipated that the regulations for new fee system will be come into effect in early 2012.

In addition, the Province has committed to providing, at no cost to municipalities, trained contractors to assist with the initial municipal set-up and data entry into TRAVIS MJ. The selection and training process is underway and the contractor pool will be ready in the late spring of 2011.

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Q&A

1. **Q.** Will a municipality lose control of what vehicles move on roads under their management?

   A. No, the municipality will have full control over the vehicles that are allowed to travel on their roads. TRAVIS will apply the business rules and roadway data provided by the municipality to either auto-approve or send the application to the municipality for manual review.

2. **Q.** How will municipalities using a consultant to manage their permits be affected by TRAVIS?

   A. TRAVIS can notify either the municipality or their appointed agent(s) of permit applications on their roads. The process for approving applications that require manual attention is at the discretion of the municipality. TRAVIS merely requires that a person (authorized by the municipality) submits the approval (or rejection) on a screen within TRAVIS.

3. **Q.** Will TRAVIS handle municipal permit or inspection fees?

   A. Not at this time. The TRAVIS system is limited to charging permit fees as per the Commercial Vehicle Dimension and Weight Regulation. The management of other municipal fees will remain the responsibility of the municipality, following current processes.

4. **Q.** Will TRAVIS handle permitting for municipal hauls (e.g. gravel hauls) or road ban exemptions?

   A. Not at this time. The current mandate for TRAVIS is to handle overweight and overdimensional permits only. Expansion of the mandate to include other permit types is under review.

5. **Q.** Will TRAVIS cause increased costs to municipalities?

   A. The design of TRAVIS emphasized simplicity and ease of operation. It is anticipated that the permit approval process will be simpler than the current manual processes, reducing costs. Data and business rule entry and maintenance will be new activities. The province will assist with the initial data load by providing support for municipal data entry or providing trained private contractors at no cost. Ongoing maintenance and updating of the data is a municipal responsibility.

6. **Q.** Will municipalities be able to opt out of using TRAVIS?

   A. The plan has always been that all municipalities will see the benefits of the TRAVIS program and join voluntarily. We fully expect that all municipalities will see an increase in productivity by leveraging the technology and business processes of the TRAVIS system. Municipalities that do choose to opt out will not participate in the revenue sharing program. They will be responsible for all costs associated with permitting, as they will not be able to charge any permit fees.

7. **Q.** How are TAC and tridrive permits handled?

   A. Right now, there is no approval mechanism in TRAVIS for municipalities to approve TAC and tridrive permits. There are several options and this will be one of the first agenda items for the advisory committee to address.

8. **Q.** What happens if the weather turns bad and we need to close our roads?

A. As the system sits right now, the municipality could run a report to see what permits were active and phone them to advise them of the closure. Another option is to put a condition onto the permit that travel is prohibited if the roads are wet. We are currently working on an enhancement that would identify active permits on closed roads and notify the permit holders and/or their agents via email. Other notification modes (such as text messages) are being investigated as well.