

California Transportation Permits Advisory Council (CTPAC)

Meeting Summary

Tuesday, July 8th, 2025

10:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Location: Coastline Equipment

6242 N Paramount Blvd Building A, Long Beach, CA 90805

Meeting Summary

Item #1 - Welcome, Purpose, Introductions

Eric Sauer, Chair of CTPAC, opened the meeting with a note of appreciation for strong industry turnout and for outnumbering agency representatives.

He reiterated the unique nature of CTPAC: consistent and collaborative dialogue between Caltrans, CHP, and industry, with the goal of solving transportation permit issues.

Item #2 Caltrans Updates

Sri Balasubramanian, Deputy Division Chief of the Division of Traffic Operations at Caltrans, introduced new staff and announced recent leadership changes. Several senior staff from the Transportation Permits Office are retiring, like Joe Burns and J.D. Myrick-Smith.

New staff and leadership at Caltrans include:

- Director: Dina El-Tawansy
- Deputy Director: Janice Benton
- Division Chief: Duper Tong (background in signals/traffic safety)
- Acting senior engineers in the transportation permit branch: Hubert Dang for Variance Permit & Single Trip I, Kiran Gopana for Single Trip II and Kishore Gorle Annual permit

Sri asked for patience from industry as new staff are onboarded and trained. He also informed that the fax machines have been decommissioned; Caltrans now uses an online portal for permit applications. Efforts are focused on launching the Caltrans Transportation Permitting System (CTPS) — a fully automated permit system. A federal grant application has been submitted with CHP's help. The goal is to develop an

automated permitting system for Caltrans. And, in the future, maybe integrating local jurisdictions and the use of generative AI for routing. If this project is funded by the start of the federal fiscal year (October 1, 2025), development can begin immediately.

New staff are being trained, and new materials and videos are being developed for permit staff and applicants to simplify training process. A searchable inspection report database is also in development to streamline processing and reuse of reports.

Item #3 CHP Updates

Sgt. David Kelly provided updates that CHP Commercial Vehicle Section staffing dropped from 14 to 4 uniformed officers at HQ. Budget cuts have impacted travel and training capacity. CHP officers have intermittently been diverted to civil disturbance duties (e.g., World Cup, Olympics).

CHP is working with Caltrans on integrating an electronic permit verification system to streamline the verification process and make enforcement easier.

There is currently a CVSA decal shortage, as sticker prices have risen. CHP expects shortages to be resolved by January 2026.

CHP reminded carriers to use flashing lights only when necessary. Only amber lights are permitted. Any other color such as white, red, or green cannot be used by truckers, as they are reserved for authorized emergency vehicles.

CHP acknowledged limited enforcement against illegal out-of-state configurations, such as 4 axle trailers entering CA and causing unfair competition.

Currently, there is increased patrol presence due to the implementation of "Ghost Durangos" (specially marked CHP vehicles). They are being used to crack down on reckless driving.

Item #4 Roundabouts on the State Highway System

Ihar Blazhevich presented a statewide roundabout list provided by the Division of Design. The list includes clickable map links, lead agencies, and the current project phase on new or constructed roundabouts. This list is in response to an action item where industry requested earlier notification before roundabouts are designed and built due to potential impact on extralegal loads. Caltrans acknowledged that local

agency coordination remains inconsistent and is working to improve early notifications.

Item #5 Bridge Weight Rating

Raha Hezar from the Division of Structure Maintenance reported that the weight for the Pit River Bridge on Highway 5 (02-SHA-005-28.14) has been reduced. The bridge spans over Shasta Lake, carrying rail on lower deck and vehicular traffic on upper deck.

Item #6 Workgroup Updates

- a) Crane: No updates
- b) Annuals: Tow truck inspections currently require companies to resubmit inspection reports every time a tow truck changes location, even if equipment hasn't changed. Ihlar reminded industry that tow trucks are required to operate within 100-mile radius of a company address listed on the inspection report and that any change in address requires reinspection. Industry requests grandfathering of prior inspections and ending redundant submissions.
- c) Fixed Loads/Tow Trucks: No updates
- d) Variance Workgroup: No updates
- e) Inspection Report:

Equipment over 20 years old with valid reports are now being denied. Ihlar replied that only altered or illegible inspections are being denied. Reports are valid for the life of the vehicle unless modifications are made or ownership changes.

Modular trailer configurations trigger inspection report demands for each separate piece in combination, creating additional workload for the industry. In response, Caltrans clarified that old reports remain valid unless equipment changes.

A group of heavy haul companies have requested the elimination of California's vehicle inspection program, citing permit delays and application hardships. They would prefer that permit writers conduct vehicle inspection duties during the application review.

Some industry members are in favor of keeping the inspection reports for tractors, self-propelled vehicles, cranes, trailer-mounted vehicles, and boat trailers with weight, while eliminating inspections for heavy haul equipment. In the coming

weeks, a follow-up meeting will be scheduled with Caltrans and the industry to discuss inspection report issues and potential solutions.

Item #7 Caltrans Action Items Updates

Ihar Blazhevich provided Caltrans action items updates:

- Variance Transportation Permits Policy Memorandum (TPPM) and Monthly Billing Account TPPM have been published.
- Chapter 10 of the Transportation Permit Manual (TPM) is currently under review and may soon be retired because most of the information from this chapter is repeated in other sections of TPM or TPPM.
- The grant for automated permit issuance software was submitted and there is a good chance that it may be approved. CHP is the lead agency and helped Caltrans to apply for this grant.

Ihar and Raha asked the industry about the issue of lift axle controls and crossing of railroads. Per Caltrans current policy, lift axle controls must be located outside of the cab. Some drivers need in-cab switches to cross railroads. Caltrans may revisit its policy prohibiting in-cab controls on 4-axle tractors.

Item #8 Public Comments

The industry requested that Caltrans and CHP schedule a standalone inspection report meeting to finalize the policy. They also requested that the next CTPAC meeting be coordinated with SC&RA in January in San Diego to enable out-of-state carrier participation.

Item #9 Summarize Action Items

Caltrans will follow up internally on inconsistent inspection report denials, the lift axle switch policy, and inspection report requirements to find a solution.

Item #10 Next Meeting

- Tentatively set for January 2026, potentially in coordination with the SC&RA meeting in San Diego.

Item #11 Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM by Eric Sauer.