

# **California Transportation Permits Advisory Council (CTPAC) Steering Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

10:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Location: California Trucking Association  
4148 E. Commerce Way Sacramento CA 95834

## **Meeting Summary**

### **Item #1 – Welcome, Agenda and Purpose of Meeting**

Eric Sauer, Chairperson of CTPAC and Chief Executive Officer of the California Trucking Association (CTA), welcomed the attendees. He requested everyone to introduce themselves. All attendees introduced themselves.

### **Item #2 Caltrans Updates**

Thomas Schriber, Chief of Caltrans Office of Commercial Vehicle Operations, presented Caltrans update via PowerPoint slides and answered questions. He shared the sad news about the passing of the permit writer Joseph Bayless (JB). JB helped permit office and was a Variance permit writer. He issued many Variance permits with CHP escort and was a valuable member of the Caltrans team. Pictures of JB were shown in PowerPoint in his memory.

Thomas shared other news about people who retired or moved to other positions. Caltrans has new Deputy Director, Janice Benton, for Maintenance and Traffic Operations. Xinyue Yang temporarily moved to Los Angeles for another position. Ihar Blazhevich is filling in for Xinyue. Mohammad Mahboub, a permit writer, is filling in for Ihar for the vehicle inspection program. Thanh Nguyen, vehicle inspection engineer, is on leave.

Other updates include that the fax machines are going away and will no longer be used by the permit office. Instead, the online permit application system, called Caltrans Transportation Permit System (CTPS) was implemented in August 2024 and is currently working for single trip permits. The online method of payment by credit cards was also implemented in August 2024.

Annual permits do not have online system yet, and older method of processing annual permits will continue to function. Annual permit intake was added to CTPS in December 2024 and Repetitive intake in January 2025.

The Variance permits system is going through changes and all payments for Variance permit will have to be paid within 16 business hours or the application will be denied for non-payment.

### **Some questions were raised by the industry:**

1. Why there is a lag in debtor account payment processing?
  - These payments are processed by the Division of Accounting. Traffic Operations sends accounting billing invoices for the previous month at the beginning of each month.
2. Why there is a delay in permit processing time before the holidays, or when a lot of office workers are on vacation?
  - Caltrans is currently seeking ways to expedite the permitting process, including the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) software that can be used to streamline permit issuing. The procurement fee for AASHTO software is eligible for reimbursable grant that California can compete for.

Eric Sauer added that he will follow up with Deputy Director Benton to discuss permit delays

and check on the status of procuring a transportation permits software system. He pointed out that a lot of things can be done through collaboration between Caltrans, CHP, and industry. Thomas said that California will be one of the last three states to implement automated transportation permit issuance software.

Thomas shared the news that there were requests for permits to accommodate the replacement of burned-down electric poles in the Los Angeles area.

### **Item #3 CHP Updates**

Sergeant David Kelly from the Commercial Vehicle Section provided CHP updates. Sergeant Kelly reminded about the dangers of human trafficking and asked the industry to be aware and report suspected incidents of human trafficking to law enforcement personnel.

He reminded all to use all emergency flashing lights responsibly. Only amber or orange lights should be used, since flashing white warning lights are not permitted in California. Violators can be cited. Limit the use of flashing lights whenever possible. When the public sees flashing lights when they aren't necessary, they may start ignoring them which will ultimately decrease effectiveness when they are overused.

Ex-patrol vehicles used as pilot cars cannot be marked black and white or appear to be patrol vehicles. White doors must be repainted, otherwise the driver can be cited.

Eric Sauer said that he will message the industry about the use of emergency lights.

A few questions were raised from Industry:

Can drivers be cited if the emergency lights are not covered when not in use?

Answer – Yes. The pilot car driver can be cited if lights are not covered when not escorting a load. When flashing lights are used when not escorting an oversize movement, it decreases the effectiveness of the lights. Sgt. Kelly recommended that owners speak with their pilot car drivers and address the issue of emergency lights and this issue on a lower level before it becomes a problem. The vehicle code contains specific requirements for flashing lights as many warning light packages available from catalogs or vendors may not comply with California law.

Two-way radios must be carried in the vehicle when hauling oversized loads. Cellphones cannot replace the two-way radio. Use of CB radios is acceptable.

Variance loads review time will be extended from 3 days to 10 days before the move. It cannot be extended more than that because Caltrans receives information from resident engineers for closures only 15 days in advance.

Question: Is there a way to complete level 1 inspections faster and before a contract for variance move is signed?

Answer: Caltrans can issue a preapproval letter to CHP and the customer for the process to begin. CHP normally inspects the vehicle to be used for the move under contract. CHP is trying to prevent haulers from requesting level 1 inspection on all vehicles in the yard when CHP inspector arrives. CHP will only complete a Level 1 inspection on the vehicle combination that will be used during the move.

Valid level 1 inspection stickers from other states are honored by CHP.

Inspections for vehicles entering from other states can be done at the California border.

### **Item #4 Roundabouts on the State Highway System (SHS)**

Gina Lopez and Ashlyn Swan from the Caltrans Headquarters Division of Design, Office of Project Support (OPS) presented some updates on roundabouts. Ashlyn introduced herself and talked about her background. She shared that she came from a family of farmers. In her current role, she works with Gina at the Caltrans design office, reviews roundabout projects

(when requested), and develops trainings and guidelines for roundabouts.

Gina shared that the intersection control evaluation (ICE) process was replaced with the "Intersection Safety and Operational Assessment Process" (ISOAP) which was released in Sept. 2024. ICE was initially developed so that intersection control types, other than signals and stop controls (e.g., roundabouts), would need to be considered when a new intersection or interchange is constructed or when certain modifications are proposed at an existing intersection or interchange. The ISOAP emphasizes safety and under when certain criteria are met - streamlining the process of single lane roundabouts. The goal is for more roundabouts on state highways in the future because the safety and operational benefits are irrefutable. Data has shown that roundabouts result in an 80-90% reduction in fatal & incapacitating injury crashes. Unfortunately, they are hearing that some roundabout projects are being rejected because of their cost and footprint. Caltrans doesn't want that to happen.

There are a few options on how roundabouts can be installed:

- Quick-build and mini roundabout projects are becoming more popular as they reduce fatalities.
- Modular roundabouts which are much less expensive.

When a question was asked on how Turbo Roundabouts are different from a traditional roundabout, they clarified that the name "Turbo" was a misnomer since Turbo Roundabouts are designed with the same intent to slow down vehicles. Turbos are another option over multi-lane roundabouts and use raised dividers to prohibit lanes changes within the circulatory roadway.

Industry is concerned that they are not informed about the construction of new roundabouts. Roundabouts can close many routes for oversize/overweight (OSOW) vehicles and the industry cannot do anything about it. Gina answered that there is an ongoing statewide forum on roundabouts and alternative intersection and interchange types open for internal Caltrans staff to attend where this issue, along with others, can be addressed.

Hwy 46 and Hwy 43 intersection is in question for a new roundabout to be built.

The industry often damages roundabouts because OSOW vehicles are not adequately accommodated in their design. It will take some time for the state to catch up on this since the OSOW update was done in May 2022. When OPS provides courtesy reviews for **projects**, they always make sure to comment on OSOW accommodations. However, designers are not required to ask for courtesy reviews and the districts are not required to obtain headquarter approval on their roundabout design as a whole – only nondelegated design standards that aren't met. That said, Roundabouts are a performance-based design with minimal design standards. It is all about how they perform. Districts have the ability to inquire with HQ Transportation Permits to validate the OSOW template is sufficient for the intersection where improvements are proposed. The District Truck Access Manager ([District Truck Staff | Caltrans](#)) is the Designers point of contact at the District level for large truck accommodations. Large truck turn templates are a part of the performance checks that roundabouts have to evaluate.

A list of the most frequent or critical intersections/routes can be prepared by the industry and submitted to the design office. That way industry could have their input on roundabouts and create a channel of communication between the industry and the design office. Industry can provide highlights on what routes are bad and what routes are preferred by haulers. Design can help spread the word about preferred hauler routes at the forum and post it on our internal Caltrans Design website when received to help Designers understand the need

to reach out to industry with any PIO efforts.

Industry replied: Highway 6 is the only route left for over-height loads going to Nevada, and it may be ruined by a roundabout soon. The district doesn't inform the industry about new projects, the industry wants it to be changed.

How to communicate with the design office? Talk to Thomas Schriber, an office chief, he will forward all questions and concerns to the design office.

How are roundabouts justified?

- They are safer than traffic signals or stop-controlled intersection types by reducing speeds with geometric features such as curbed islands, separating driver decisions by providing a space between crosswalks and circulating roadway, and pedestrians have two-staged crossings resulting in shorter crossing distances reducing their exposure to motorists.
- There are fewer fatal and serious injury crashes after traffic signals or stop controlled intersections are replaced with roundabouts.
- Roundabouts are better for the environment since the yield-controlled entry moves traffic through without stopping when other cars are not present improving greenhouse gas emissions when compared to a traffic light or stop controlled intersection.

#### **Item #5 Workgroup Updates**

a) Crane

Nothing to report.

b) Annuals

No update.

c) Fixed Loads/Tow Trucks

No update.

d) Variance

No Update

e) Inspection Report

No update.

#### **Item #6 Caltrans Action Items Updates**

Narayan Selwal, Devinder Sandhu and Candy Chiu provided Caltrans action items updates:

##### **1) TPPM 2024-02 Variance Permit Issuance**

Caltrans received two comments on the draft TPPM for Variance permits. One from CHP and one from Industry. CHP proposed that Variance accounts need to be suspended if not paid within 90 days from the time the invoice is sent.

The comment from the industry was to address some Variance permits that may need more time than the six-month queue. Both comments were addressed in the updated final version of TPPM which will be posted soon.

##### **2) A new draft TPPM Delinquent Monthly Billing Account.**

A new draft TPPM for the Delinquent Monthly Billing Account was presented in the meeting.

Candy explained that once the monthly billing account (previously known as the Debtor Account) is suspended due to non-payment of the fees, an alternative method of payment (**e.g.**, using a credit, or debit card) cannot be used unless all balance is paid in full. Here is a summary of the proposed TPPM: Current practice: Hauler uses credit card/debit card to pay permit fee even though the monthly billing Account is suspended due to non-payment.

~~Proposed Change: upon suspension or termination of the monthly billing account, the hauler~~

is prohibited from using an alternative payment method (credit card/debit card).

There is no intent to remove the monthly payment account completely and replace it with credit cards. Both methods will be available for the public to pay.

Eric encouraged that workgroups would send reminders to the industry to pay their bills on time, to avoid losing their monthly billing account.

### 3) Route 405 Vertical Clearance

Narayan provided the following updates on vertical clearance on Route 405 from JCT 405/22 to JCT 405/73. This was a follow-up action item from the last CTPAC meeting.

District 12 Traffic Ops and the Office of Structure Construction have been working with the Design Builder. District team verifying the diagrams, some discrepancies were found which required field visits and closures to resolve. Anticipated Completion by the end of this month (Jan 31st, 2025). Once the updated clearance data is received, the Permit Database will be updated.

### 4) Route Reclassification Update

- Route 111 in Riverside County, District 8 has been reclassified as STAA route from a 65-ft CA legal route. This will be good for industry. Signs have not been installed yet. District ordered the signs and will install them once they are available.
- Route 247 in San Bernardino County, north of JCT 247/62 in District 8 changed from red to brown.
- Route 70 in Plumas County from JCT 70/89 in District 2 has been changed from brown to red due to safety concerns. However, this is in progress, District is currently doing outreach efforts to those who will be affected.
- Route 1 in Marin County from JCT 1/101 in District 4 will be changed from brown to red. However, this is in progress, District currently doing outreach efforts to those who will be affected.

### 5) TPM Chapter 10 Revision

Caltrans is revising Chapter 10 TPM. Many of the items in Chapter 10 are already included in other chapters. The Caltrans team will review for a possible update or if Chapter 10 can be retired. Caltrans will share an update later.

## **Item #7 Public Comments**

- Chris Chimoda, from California Trucking Association, brought out future challenges for local government to implement AB 98. Per AB 98, local governments are required to develop truck route maps in their cities or counties and must include them in their general plan. Cities and counties may need help from the Caltrans team while they develop such plans.
- Communication between the public and the permits office needs to get better. It is hard to receive a callback when customers are inquiring about permit status.
- There was an issue with annual permit renewals where industry lost few weeks of annual permit due to errors. Earl Ruffa, Caltrans annual permit writer, explained that there could have been human errors or other errors in the process. Normally annual permits are started on the day they are approved. Caltrans cannot backdate annual permits.

## **Item #8 Summarize Action Items from the Meeting**

1. Eric Sauer will contact Deputy Director Mrs. Benton and ask about the status of automated permit issuance software updates.
2. Eric will message the industry about the use of emergency lights. For the drivers to use the lights responsibly and only when necessary.
3. A reminder will be sent to the CTPAC group and the industry to pay their bills on time, to avoid losing monthly payment account.

4. Caltrans districts will engage with the design office to collaborate on roundabouts, to create better notifications about new roundabouts. For the public to have a chance for suggestions before the roundabout is built.
5. Caltrans is to finalize TPPM for Variance Permit and publish it.
6. CTPAC members and CHP are to review and provide comments on the draft TPPM for the monthly billing account by the end of February 2025
7. Caltrans will address comments on the TPPM for the monthly billing account and publish it.
8. Caltrans to share a revised version of Chapter 10, TPM, or propose to retire it.

**Item #9 Next meeting date, time, and place**

The next CTPAC meeting in Long Beach is tentatively in April 2025.

**Item #10 Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned by Eric Sauer.

**CTPAC Action Items:**

<b><u>No.</u></b>	<b><u>CTPAC Meeting</u></b>	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Status/Notes</u></b>
1	4/22/2019	Electronic intake for annual and repetitive permits.	<p>01/16/20: Kien stated that there are no reasons that annual electronic copy of truck permit should replace hardcopy permit given the frequency of usage. Kien fully supported the electronic copy of the single trip permit, but not annual permit. The haulers should always keep the permit in possession.</p> <p>06/17/21: Caltrans is working with IT Division to develop an online system that allows the customers to submit the permit applications electronically, including annual, repetitive and sea container.</p> <p>10/06/21: On-going.</p> <p>02/10/22: Three information technology staff are currently working on an online interface system for applying and issuing annual, repetitive, and sea container transportation permits.</p> <p>06/30/22: on-going.</p> <p>11/17/22: on-going.</p> <p>04/17/23: on-going.</p> <p>08/03/23: on-going. Eric will meet with Caltrans Director to discuss automated transportation permits.</p> <p>12/13/23: on hold. Eric affirmed that CTA supports the implementation of automated permit issuance.</p> <p>5/1/2024: Caltrans is working on developing an</p>

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			<p>online credit card payment system, and once the system is available, an annual permit can also be charged into the online system eventually.</p> <p>09/05/24: The online credit card payment system is now operational, and the electronic intake process for annual and repetitive permits is progressing.</p> <p>01/15/2025: The online credit card payment is active now. Electronic processing of single trip including fax permit completed along with annual and repetitive. Currently, working on variance and direct crossing types.</p>
2	10/06/2021	<p>Brian Frazer of Caltrans Design - Roundabouts - Described industry role in providing feedback. Discussed possible changes to CVC and CA Commercial Drivers Handbook.</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>02/10/22: Eric will reach out to DMV to discuss the possible updates of Commercial Driver Handbook. Eric will follow up with possible changes to CVC.</p> <p>06/30/22: Follow up meeting by CHP, CTA, and Caltrans on possible vehicle code changes and changes to Commercial Drivers Handbook related to commercial vehicles in roundabouts.</p> <p>Industry will review the locations of where the roundabouts are being planned and provide comments.</p> <p>11/17/22: DMV is agreed to include roundabouts info in the July 2023 update.</p> <p>04/17/23: New OS/OW design vehicle template has been added in Caltrans HDM and DMV will update roundabouts info in the next issuance.</p> <p>08/03/23: New OS/OW design vehicle template has been added in Caltrans HDM and DMV will update roundabouts info in the next issuance.</p> <p>12/13/23: New OS/OW design vehicle template has been added in Caltrans HDM and DMV will update roundabouts info in the next issuance.</p> <p>5/1/2024: Roundabout brochures were distributed to the members. Electronic versions of brochures will be made available to share with all members. The brochure contains information on how to navigate around roundabouts safely including by OSOW vehicles. Informed members that some restrictions may be applied for OSOW vehicles to</p>

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			<p>roundabouts based on the turn movement analysis.</p> <p>09/05/24: no update.</p> <p>01/15/2025: Division of Design staff provided an overview of roundabouts on SHS. Drivers' handbook has been updated. No update on CVC code changes.</p>
3	10/06/2021	<p>Inspection Report Requirements:</p> <p>Permits Processing</p> <p>1. Inspection report requirements for California haulers – CT Permits will issue clarification MEMO and update permit writers via training.</p> <p>2. Two tiered variances. Brad Tuttle will follow up with Permits Manager Devinder Sandhu via Webex, on or before week ending 10/22/2021.</p>	<p>10/27/2021: Caltrans issued clarification memo regarding inspection report requirements.</p> <p>02/10/22:</p> <p>1. Caltrans met with industry virtually on 6 January 2022 to clarify the inspection report requirement memo. Work group is formed to review vehicle inspection requirements. Eric will provide a list of inspection report work group members.</p> <p>2. Caltrans met with Bragg Heavy Transport virtually in October 2021 to discuss the issues related to two tiered variances and issues resolved.</p> <p>06/30/22: Work group submitted inspection report proposal. Caltrans will review the proposal and provide feedback.</p> <p>11/17/22: Caltrans provided feedback and is working with IT to develop a searchable database for inspection reports. Eric and Lorin will work on a band-aid solution while Caltrans develops a searchable database for inspection reports.</p> <p>04/17/23: Caltrans management approved the IT project, and the Permits Office is working closely with IT staff to develop the database.</p> <p>08/03/23: The IT project is in the queue and will be worked on in the order received.</p> <p>12/13/23: The IT staff are working on the project.</p> <p>5/1/24: Permit staff provided business requirements and the IT team is working.</p> <p>09/05/24: Caltrans is exploring various options to complete the searchable database, with the goal of finishing the project within a year.</p> <p>1/15/2025: Caltrans IT team is still working on this task.</p>



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4	06/30/2022	<p>1) Additional \$50 charge on variance permits when the work was already done on a previous permit.</p> <p>2) Variance permits turnaround time.</p> <p>3) A draft TPPM 2024_02 concerning variance permits requiring CHP escort has been proposed and sent out for comments.</p>	<p>06/30/22: Caltrans will clarify with the variance team on additional charges and provide feedback.</p> <p>11/17/22: No update.</p> <p>04/17/23: Caltrans variance permit team will work with the industry to clarify issues related to variance permits.</p> <p>08/03/23: Caltrans will continue to work with the variance workgroup to improve permit turnaround time.</p> <p>12/13/23: Caltrans will continue to work with the variance workgroup to improve permit turnaround time.</p> <p>5/1/24: Efforts continue to improve permit turnaround time.</p> <p>09/05/24: The draft TPPM will be finalized soon if no additional comments are received.</p> <p>1/15/2025: Final version of the TPPM was shared with the industry in the meeting. No further comments were received. Caltrans will finalize it and publish it soon.</p>