

# CTPAC-SC Proposal

Subject: Fixed Load 4 Group Combination Tridem up to Maximum 60,000 lbs

Date: August 07, 2008

Policy: Fixed Load WG12 080708-001

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## I. OBJECTIVE

To modify the current policy allowing up to 60,000 lb tridem groups from a 2 group tridem combination with a 25' spacing up to a 4 groups tridem combination to be no closer than 14' 0", measured from center of last axle to center of first axle, to the next tridem axle group for routine permit issuance. This will increase transportation efficiencies and promote safety and there by eliminate unnecessary dismantling at the California border.

## II. BACKGROUND

Transportation Permit Policy Memorandum, TPPM 2006-04 authorizes up to 60,000 lb maximum weight on two tridems group combinations with a 25 foot minimum spacing between tridems groups. The vast majority of the WASHTO and other states presently permit 60,000 pounds on tridems for multiply axle groups. Today 39 of the 48 contiguous continental states recognize tridems as viable suspension systems, which do not impose undue damage to highways or structures when limited to 60,000 pounds per tridem. Trunnion trailer with up to 4 group combination are currently permitted 60,000 pounds with an approximate 14' spacing without limitations.

## III. EXISTING DOCUMENTATION

### A. Transportation Permit Manual

The manual states that the purpose is to provide uniform policy and procedures to Department personnel in the issuance of transportation permits for the movement of extralegal vehicles and/or loads over California state highways. It further states that it is consistent with the goals of protecting the public's investment in the transportation infrastructure and ensuring safety of the traveling public. The Department of Transportation has the discretionary authority to issue special permits for the movement of vehicles/loads exceeding statutory limitations on the size, weight, and loading of vehicles contained in Division 15 of the California Vehicle Code. TPPM-2006-04 Allowing 2 Group Tridem Bonus Purple, which included Fixed Loads up to 60,000 lbs, was approved March 1, 2006.

The weight limitations and other restrictions are intended to protect the public's interest. However, an analysis of a specific vehicle or load may indicate that it is in the public's interest to deviate from, or exceed, those guidelines. Therefore, a procedure for appeals and variances is available.

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Section 304 of the Permit Manual, Rating Classification states, in part, if the semi-trailer was equipped with a tridem, it would still be viewed as one loading group and assigned a number of two (2) for axle count and still given a five (5) axle rating.

**B. Government Code Section 14000**

14000. The Legislature hereby finds and declares as follows:

(a) Continued growth in transport demand ,,,, indicate a need for innovative, as well as improved, systems to accommodate increased demand.

(b) The diversity of conditions in California is such as to require a variety of solutions to transportation problems within various areas of the state. ... Particular attention must be given to differences among the metropolitan, the less urbanized, and the more rural areas of the state.

**C. California Vehicle Code (CVC)**

There is no change requested to the Vehicle Code for this proposal, however it should be noted that currently additional weight is allowed when there are three axles versus two axles in a group with the same spacing.

**IV. PROPOSED CHANGES**

**A. Transportation Permit Manual**

This proposal seeks to change issuance of permits with recognition of increased and more equal weight for all tridem configurations. This standard would establish a more uniform allowance consistent with the need to establish and maintain uniformity in laws, regulations, and practices based upon safety, freight mobility, regulatory uniformity, and industry productivity.

Delete the following from TPPM 2006-04

- Be no closer than ~~25' 0"~~, 14' 0", measured from center of last axle to center of first axle, to the next tridem axle group using this policy.

- ~~Not contain more than two, bonus weight, tridems per vehicle combination~~
- ~~Not be a crane~~

Tridems qualifying under this policy at any or all positions in the combination and shall be routed according to the existing Trunnion Policy:

- ~~7 axle 4 axle tractor 3 axle trailer.~~
- ~~9 axle tridem(s) in a 3 vehicle combination~~
- ~~11 axle tridems (s) in 4 vehicle combination~~

#### **IV. BENEFITS / IMPACT / JUSTIFICATION**

We can all agree upon is that the academic, administrative and industry interest can agree is that the lack of uniformity causes confusion and inefficient equipment utilization. Today 39 of the 48 contiguous continental states recognize tridems as viable suspension systems, which do not impose undue damage to highways or structures when limited to 60,000 pounds per tridem. The benefits of granting this change would improve compliance, improve safety, reduce cost to industry and related businesses, and would increase efficiencies by reducing equipment changes or dismantling by interstate carriers at ports of entry into California.

Efforts to develop more uniformity, wherever possible, in the movement of products adds to productivity and reduces unnecessary cost. Consistent with efforts to promote uniformity in laws, regulations and practices it would be appropriate to approve reasonably equal weight allowances for multiple tridem axle configurations when used in interstate transportation. Trunnion trailer with up to 3 group combination are currently permitted for 60,000 pounds with an approximate 14' spacing.

Where bridge structures have acceptable integrity, a tridem axle group would receive a 15% bonus rating thus increasing the maximum allowable permitted 60,000 for a group with 9' 9" spacing when using the maximum (purple) weight category. No additional weight above 60,000 would be granted for a 3 axle, 4 tires per axle load group regardless of additional axle spacing.

According to the Center for Transportation Research, The University of Texas at Austin, Project Summary Report 1713-52, flexible pavements by a tridem axles is about 3-4 times more damaging that a Trunnion axles. For rigid pavements, Trunnion axles are more damaging than tridem axles.

We have been limited by regulations on what were are allowed to bring into California for example, Texas is issuing routine overload permits to vehicles with tridem axles but not to those with Trunnion axles and California provides routine overload permits to vehicles with Trunnion axle groups but not to vehicles with tridem axles.

The Construction Industry until just recently, March 1, 2006, was given the ability to able to purchase fixed loads with tridem axles for such things as crushers and not have to absorb the additional cost of having to install Trunnion axles. Units such as this are manufactured outside of California and designed mainly for the

other 49 states. If you place an order, it would still be designed with tridem axles, because there states don't recognize Trunnion axles and there are only a few states adjoining California that recognizes Trunnion axles.

The Construction Industry represents a major share of fixed loads and these applications are low mileage. They move from jobsite to jobsite, sometimes months at a time on the same project if not longer. This will be a major benefit to the Construction Industry, their customers and the ultimately the consumer in increased job production.

**Requestor's Names: Telephone Numbers:**

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