

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAASTO expands truck weights to speed disaster relief

Kansas proactively agrees to regional emergency strategy

Extreme flooding, tornadoes, the COVID pandemic and other disasters have demonstrated the importance of the trucking industry to deliver life-saving and sustaining relief supplies. The state departments of transportation comprising the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO) have proactively agreed to expedite the movement of emergency supplies across state lines during presidentially declared major disasters.

Transporting emergency loads during a disaster can be slowed because states have different bridge weight limits and varying regulations. The 10 MAASTO-member states collaborated to identify acceptable emergency divisible load (EDL) truck weights for disasters in the region. This first-in-the-nation unified permitting approach enables better coordination of multistate transportation of critical loads.

“We learned the importance of working regionally during the pandemic and are using those lessons to be better prepared for the next disaster,” said Julie Lorenz, President of MAASTO and Kansas Secretary of Transportation. “We need to help truckers speed delivery to communities by setting the same emergency weight limits and cutting red tape before the disaster hits.”

The states agreeing to implement the “MAASTO EDL Strategy” of increased truck weight limits after a major disaster declaration are Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin. The approval represents the first harmonized EDL management approach in the U.S.

The policy expands emergency interstate truck weights from 80,000 pounds to a permitted weight of 88,000 pounds, with no more than a 10 percent increase per axle. While this represents the base level for the region, individual states may allow heavier permitted weights.

Freight movement in the MAASTO region's freight corridors is a critical component of the economy and everyday lives. Over \$6 billion worth of goods move across MAASTO region's freight corridors each year. Over 70 percent of the total freight value of all modes is moved by trucks. By weight, 66 percent of all tonnage is moved on trucks across the MAASTO states.

"The nation's freight corridors connect our communities, our homes and our economy," said Secretary Lorenz. "More than 55 percent of all business and 60 percent of all employees reside within three miles of the major freight corridors. These critical corridor connections heighten the importance of uninterrupted freight service."

Secretary Lorenz said she hopes efforts in MAASTO to expand emergency permitted weight limits will lead to additional nationwide efforts to harmonize and create regional efficiencies in logistics and freight movement.

MAASTO's mission is to foster the development, operation and maintenance of an integrated and balanced transportation system that serves the transportation needs of its member states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin. It is affiliated with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). To learn more about MAASTO, visit <http://www.maasto.net/>.

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