

Federal Highway Administration

Resources for Commercial Vehicles Involved in Emergency Response



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FOREWORD

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Operations (HOP) is pleased to present *Resources for Commercial Vehicles Involved in Emergency Response*. This document provides information on legal and regulatory requirements for those moving equipment and supplies to provide emergency response and recovery operations. Resources for understanding emergency declarations, waivers, and emergency permits are included. Additionally, tips for trip planning and other resources for emergency response and recovery operations are discussed.

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ACRONYMS

AAR	After Action Review
AHC	All-Hazards Consortium
ATA	American Trucking Association
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDL	Commercial Driver's License
CMV	Commercial Motor Vehicle
CCN	Convoy Control Numbers
DMCs	Defense Movement Coordinators
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
ELD	Electronic Logging Device
ERWG	Emergency Route Working Group
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMCSA	Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
GVWR	Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
HM	Hazardous Materials
HMR	Hazardous Materials Regulations
IFTA	International Fuel Tax Agreement
IRP	International Registration Plan
MOBCON	Mobilization Movement Control System
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act
NGA	National Governors Association
NN	National Network
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
NASTO	Northeast Association of State Transportation Officials
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
OS/OW	Oversize/Overweight
PHMSA	Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
RODS	Records of Duty Status
SDOT	State Department of Transportation
SDLA	State Driver License Agencies
TMCs	Traffic Management Centers
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation

CHAPTER 1. OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESOURCE DOCUMENT

The objective of this document is to provide information that can help facilitate the large-scale movement of relief equipment during an emergency. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) assembled the information in this document based upon the recommendation of the Emergency Route Working Group (ERWG) to minimize impediments to expeditious State approval of special permits for vehicles involved in emergency response and recovery. The ERWG was formed as requirement of Section 5502 the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act of 2015 (FAST Act) (Pub. L. 114-94). The purpose of the group is to provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation on best practices for expeditious State approval of special permits for vehicles involved in emergency response and recovery.

Information on the Emergency Route Working Group is available at:
<https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/erwg/index.htm>.

Intended Audience

The intended audience for this resource document is emergency responders and the agencies that support emergency responders (e.g., State Department of Transportation (SDOT), State Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Agency, or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)).

Responding to disasters relies heavily on the timely receipt of equipment and workers from other States, such as when electric utilities send trucks, equipment, and staff to restore energy infrastructure after a hurricane. Staff at these companies may not have experience moving their equipment across State lines and may be unfamiliar with the State and Federal requirements for doing so. Emergency responders may encounter obstacles that add time and expense when efficient delivery of resources is critical. For instance, it may be difficult to obtain oversize and overweight permits to move equipment and supplies on short notice. The resources provided in this document will help emergency responders (and the agencies that support them) plan their trips, comply with relevant regulations, and understand the waivers and other regulatory relief that may be available to emergency responders.

Emergency Responder

Any entity, including utilities, freight carriers, Federal, State, and local governmental and nongovernmental emergency public safety personnel that provides relief services to assist with the immediate restoration of essential services (such as electricity, medical care, sewer, water, telecommunications, and telecommunication transmissions) or essential supplies (such as food, fuel and medicine) after an emergency.

[As defined in the ERWG final report, 2018]

Chapter Overview

The following chapters are included:

- **Chapter 1 – Objectives of this Resource Document**, including the intended audience for this resource document.
- **Chapter 2 – Legal & Regulatory Requirements**, including size and weight restrictions, International Registration Plan (IRP), International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA), motor carrier identification numbers, hours-of-service regulations, and Federal hazardous materials regulations.
- **Chapter 3 – Understanding Declarations, Waivers, and Emergency Permits**, including Immediate Waivers, Non-waivable Regulations, State Oversize/Overweight Permits issued during major disaster declarations, Blanket Permits, IFTA/IRP Exemptions, Hazardous Material Waiver/Special Permits, Toll Waivers and Truck/Weigh Station Bypass.
- **Chapter 4 – Trip Planning**, including voluntary, nonbinding, and nonregulatory ideas and other factors to consider when planning these interstate trips, such as understanding the scope of the disaster and area affected, identifying sources of information, and securing the route and supplies.
- **Chapter 5 – Case Studies**, providing examples of actual response efforts, lessons learned from Hurricane Sandy and Hurricane Harvey, procedures, communications, and solutions that have helped to reduce the barriers to routing vehicles in an emergency.

CHAPTER 2. REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Below are some of the most important regulations that can affect trucks and drivers traveling across State lines to support emergency response and recovery efforts. This chapter provides a summary of the requirements, who must comply, what drivers need to do, and what types of waivers or emergency permits may be available. The regulations and requirements reviewed in this section include the following:

- Size and weight regulations
- International Registration Plan requirements
- International Fuel Tax Agreement requirements
- Motor carrier identification number requirements (USDOT Number) (49 CFR Part 390)
- Hours-of-service regulations (49 CFR Part 395)
- Other Federal Motor Carrier Safety regulations (49 CFR Parts 390 – 399)
- Federal hazardous materials regulations (49 CFR Parts 100 – 180)

This is not an exhaustive list of relevant regulations, but instead discusses some of those most pertinent to the movement of emergency response vehicles. Noncompliance with these requirements can cause delays in deploying emergency response and recovery vehicles across State lines.

Size and Weight Regulations

What is the Requirement?

The following are the Federally mandated maximum weights for the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways and reasonable access thereto (23 CFR 658.17(b)-(e); 658.19):

- 20,000 lb single-axle weight
- 34,000 lb tandem-axle weight
- 80,000 lb gross vehicle weight—including all enforcement tolerances, except for those vehicles and loads which cannot be easily dismantled or divided and which have been issued special permits in accordance with applicable State laws

FHWA Oversize/Overweight Load Permits Web page link:
https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/sw/permit_report/index.htm.

The Federal Government regulates the weight and length between the vehicle's axles to ensure the safety of bridges and requires weight distribution to fall within the following formula:

$$W = 500(LN/N-1 + 12N + 36)$$

Figure 1. Bridge Formula.

Where:

W = overall gross weight on any group of two or more consecutive axles to the nearest 500 lb.

L = distance in feet between the extreme of any group of two or more consecutive axles.

N = number of axles in the group under consideration. (23 CFR 658.17(e))

The Federal standard width for regular sized loads is 8 ft, 6 in. (102 in.) on the National Network (NN) of highways. (23 CFR 658.5) While States determine length limits, the minimum Federal limit semi-trailer length is 48 ft. Most States set 53 ft as the maximum legal length for a semi-trailer, and length limits for the remaining States vary from 48 ft to values over 53 ft for some States with grandfathered trailer-length exemptions. There are some exceptions in Federal law for specialized vehicles.

There is no Federal height requirement for trucks, leaving States to set their own. This results in a wide variety of requirements, with 29 States and the District of Columbia setting the maximum vehicle height at 13 ft, 6 in., while the other 21 States allow vehicles to be from 14 ft to 15 ft.¹ Most height limits range from 13 ft, 6 in. to 14 ft. Vehicles with dimensions in excess of the State legal height limits must obtain a permit in accordance with applicable State laws and regulations.

Anything outside of these bounds requires special oversize/overweight permits. (23 CFR 658.15(c) and 658.17(h)) An important part of the permitting process is that the State identifies routes with bridges that can accommodate the increased load.

Who Must Comply with This Regulation?

National weight standards apply to commercial motor vehicle operations on the Interstate Highway System (23 CFR 658.17). National vehicle size standards apply on NN. (23 CFR 658.9(a)) The NN includes: (1) the Interstate Highway System, and (2) highways, formerly classified as Primary System routes, capable of safely handling larger commercial motor vehicles, as identified by States and provided to FHWA (see 23 CFR 658 Appendix A thereto for a listing of NN routes).

¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2015). *Transportation Safety: Results of Collection of Information on State Permitting Practices for Oversize Vehicles*. Publication No. GAO-15-235SP. E-supplement to GAO-15-236. Retrieved from <https://www.gao.gov/assets/670/668711.pdf>

What Do You Need to Do?

Vehicles that do not comply with the Federal size and weight standards must obtain a permit from every State through which they travel. (23 CFR 658.15(c) and 658.17(h)) States may issue Oversize/Overweight (OS/OW) permits for increased axle weight, gross vehicle weight, or Federal bridge formula requirements for nondivisible loads. (23 CFR 658.17(h)) Examples of nondivisible loads include bulldozers, large generators, scrapers, and modular homes. "Nondivisible" is defined as any load or vehicle exceeding applicable length or weight limits, which, if separated into smaller loads or vehicles, would:

- Compromise the intended use of the vehicle; i.e., make it unable to perform the function for which it was intended.
- Destroy the value of the load or vehicle; i.e., make it unusable for its intended purpose.
- Require more than 8 work hours to dismantle using appropriate equipment. The applicant for a nondivisible load permit has the burden of proof of the number of work hours required to dismantle the load. (23 CFR 658.5)

The FHWA Freight Management and Operations web page provides contact information for each State agency responsible for issuing oversize/overweight/nondivisible permits. On this page, there is a list of all participating jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction will have an associated phone number and link to the State's responsible permitting agency.

FHWA Web page link: https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/sw/permit_report/index.htm#obt

Are Waivers or Regulatory Relief Provided?

Federal statute 23 U.S.C. 127(i) provides that States may issue special permits to vehicles with divisible loads delivering relief supplies during events declared by the President to be major disasters under the Stafford Act. Special permits are issued under 23 U.S.C. 127(i) and expire no later than 120 days after the date on which the President declares a major disaster.

States may issue special permits to divisible OS/OW vehicles and loads during times of a presidentially declared major disaster under the Stafford Act if **all** the conditions of 23 U.S.C. 127(i)(1)) are met:

- The President has declared a major disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. (42 U.S.C. 5121)
- The permits are issued in accordance with State law.
- The permits are issued exclusively to vehicles and loads that are delivering relief supplies.

The authority granted by these exemptions does not permit vehicle operators to traverse load-posted roads or bridges when exceeding the posted weight and clearance restrictions established under 23 CFR 650.313(c). Most States require operators utilizing emergency permits to carry, at a minimum, both the permit and the State's emergency declaration in the vehicle.

States may make a judgment call to allow certain vehicles to bypass the truck/weight stations based on the configurations of known vehicles during emergency and disaster response. This is up to each individual State. For guidance on special permits, see the FHWA Web page.

FHWA Web page link: https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/sw/permit_report/index.htm

To check for active emergency declarations, waivers, exemptions, and permits, view the FMCSA webpage link listed below this paragraph. Note that this site contains the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) waivers but does not have a comprehensive list of all State Emergency Declarations.

FMCSA Web page link: www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency

International Registration Plan

What is the Requirement?

The International Registration Plan (IRP) is a non-Federal reciprocity agreement administered by the American States, the District of Columbia, and Provinces of Canada that recognizes the registration of commercial motor vehicles registered by other jurisdictions. It provides for payment of apportioned licensing fees based on the total distance operated in all member jurisdictions. The IRP facilitates the registration of around 2.9 million commercial motor vehicles in the United States and Canada and almost US\$3 billion in revenue for United States and Canadian jurisdictions each year. The IRP-apportioned license plates indicate legal participation, allowing the holder to operate in multiple States or provinces. Carriers can also obtain trip permits if they do not have apportioned plates.

Who Must Comply?

The IRP requires a vehicle registration or trip permit for companies that have vehicles crossing State lines that have more than a 26,000-lb gross vehicle weight or have three or more axles on the power unit.

The IRP does not require vehicle registrations or trip permits for recreational vehicles, vehicles displaying restricted plates, or government-owned vehicles.

What Do You Need to Do?

The IRP requires applicants to register for IRP plates or permits in their base jurisdiction (State or province). The primary agency responsible varies for each jurisdiction. The IRP website contains a search page that allows drivers to type in their home jurisdiction and receive area-specific contact and registration information.

IRP Jurisdiction Directory Link: <https://www.irponline.org/search/custom.asp?id=5283>

Are Waivers or Relief Provided?

States can provide exemptions from IRP permit requirements in times of declared emergencies in accordance with applicable State laws and regulations. IRP provides these exemptions through notifications on its websites.

IRP Notifications Link: <https://www.irponline.org/news/?id=4392>

International Fuel Tax Agreement

What is the Requirement?

The International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) is a non-Federal fuel tax collection and sharing agreement for the redistribution of fuel taxes paid by interstate commercial carriers based upon the miles driven in their jurisdictions of operation. Participants include the contiguous U.S. States and 10 Canadian Provinces.

Who Must Comply?

The IFTA requires vehicle registration or trip permits for motor vehicles crossing State lines that are used, designed, or maintained for the transportation of persons or property and have the following properties:

- The Power Unit has two axles and a gross vehicle weight or registered gross vehicle weight in excess of 26,000 pounds;
- The Power Unit has three or more axles regardless of weight; or
- The weight of a combination vehicle exceeds 26,000 pounds gross vehicle weight or registered gross vehicle weight.

The IFTA provides exceptions for recreational vehicles such as motor homes, pickup trucks with attached campers, and buses when used exclusively for personal pleasure by an individual. Some States have their own exemptions that often apply to farm vehicles or government vehicles.

What Do You Need to Do?

Applicants must obtain IFTA permits in accordance with the laws and regulations of the base jurisdiction (State or Province). The primary agency responsible varies for each jurisdiction. The official IFTA website contains a carrier information page that allows drivers to scroll through a drop-down menu to find their home jurisdiction and receive area-specific contact and registration information.

IFTA Carrier Information Page: <https://www.iftach.org/Carriers/>

Are Waivers or Relief Provided?

States can provide exemptions from IFTA permit requirements in times of declared emergency. IFTA provides these exemptions through notifications on its websites.

IFTA Notifications Link: <https://www.iftach.org/>

USDOT Numbers

What is the Requirement?

FMCSA requires persons who operate commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) in interstate commerce to obtain a USDOT Number. and comply with Federal regulations. (49 CFR 300.19T, 390.200T) Interstate commerce includes CMV movements across State lines, but may also include movements within a single State. Apart from Federal regulations, some States require their intrastate commercial motor vehicle registrants to obtain a USDOT Number. These states include Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Who Must Comply with This Regulation?

Companies that operate CMVs transporting passengers or hauling cargo in interstate commerce must apply for a USDOT Number. (49 CFR 390.19T, 390.200T) In addition, intrastate hazardous materials carriers who haul types and quantities requiring a safety permit or placard must also apply for a USDOT Number. (49 CFR 390.19T, 385.403) As noted above, some States require this for intrastate operation as well.

U.S. Department of Transportation Identification Number: In general, a USDOT Number is required if you operate in a commercial motor vehicle in interstate commerce that:

- Has a GVWR, GCWR, GVW, or GCW of 10,001 pounds or more;
- Is used to transport between 9 and 15 passengers (including the driver) for compensation, whether direct or indirect;
- Is used to transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver) not for compensation; or
- Is used to haul hazardous materials in a quantity that requires placarding. (49 CFR 390.5T)

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration/do-i-need-usdot-number>.

Operating Authority Registration (MC/MX Number): The FMCSA assigns the operating authority number (MC/MX) to interstate for-hire and Mexico-domiciled motor carriers that apply

for operating authority. (49 CFR Parts 365 and 368) An MC number identifies a U.S. or Canadian-domiciled carrier that transports regulated commodities for hire in interstate commerce. An MX number identifies a Mexico-domiciled motor carrier that transports international cargo in the United States.

The FMCSA determines whether an MC number in addition to a USDOT Number is required. Information about operating authority registration can be found on the FMCSA website.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration/get-mc-number-authority-operate>.

What Do You Need to Do?

Most carriers may apply for or update a USDOT number or operating authority registration using the FMCSA web page link below.

FMCSA Webpage Link: https://li-public.fmcsa.dot.gov/LIVIEW/PKG_REGISTRATION.prc_option

Once obtained, the USDOT Number must be displayed as specified in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (49 CFR 390.21T), which requires that the number:

1. Appear on both sides of the self-propelled commercial motor vehicle;
2. Be in letters that contrast sharply in color with the background on which the letters are placed;
3. Be readily legible, during daylight hours, from a distance of 50 feet while the commercial motor vehicle is stationary (lettering should be a minimum of 2 inches high to meet this requirement); and
4. Be kept and maintained in a manner that retains the legibility. (49 CFR 390.21T(c))

Are Waivers or Regulatory Relief Provided?

Requirements for a USDOT number or operating authority registration generally cannot be waived.

Hours of Service Regulations

What Is the Requirement?

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has issued the Hours-of-Service (HOS) regulations to govern the working hours of almost anyone operating a commercial motor vehicle in interstate commerce in the United States (49 CFR 395.1). The HOS limits are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Hours of Service Rules.

PROPERTY-CARRYING DRIVERS	PASSENGER-CARRYING DRIVERS
<p>11-Hour Driving Limit May drive a maximum of 11 hours after 10 consecutive hours off duty.</p>	<p>10-Hour Driving Limit May drive a maximum of 10 hours after 8 consecutive hours off duty.</p>
<p>14-Hour Limit May not drive beyond the 14th consecutive hour after coming on duty, following 10 consecutive hours off duty. Off-duty time does not extend the 14-hour period.</p>	<p>15-Hour Limit May not drive after having been on duty for 15 non-consecutive hours, following 8 consecutive hours off duty. Off-duty time is not included in the 15-hour period.</p>
<p>Rest Breaks May drive only if 8 hours or less of driving time have passed without at least a consecutive 30-minute interruption in driving status. The break requirement does not apply to drivers using the short-haul exceptions in 395.1(e)(1) or (2).</p>	<p>60/70-Hour Limit May not drive after 60/70 hours on duty in 7/8 consecutive days.</p>
<p>60/70-Hour Limit May not drive after 60/70 hours on duty in 7/8 consecutive days. A driver may restart a 7/8 consecutive day period after taking 34 or more consecutive hours off duty.</p>	<p>Sleeper Berth Provision Drivers using a sleeper berth must take at least 8 hours in the sleeper berth and may split the sleeper berth time into two periods provided neither is less than 2 hours.</p>
<p>Sleeper Berth Provision Drivers using the sleeper berth provision must take at least 7 consecutive hours in the sleeper berth, plus a separate rest period of at least 2 consecutive hours either in the sleeper berth, off duty, or any combination of the two, provided the total of the two periods is at least 10 hours. Additional details can be found in 49 CFR 395.1(g).</p>	

FMCSA Summary of Hours of Service Regulations Link:

<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hours-service/summary-hours-service-regulations>

Hours of service regulations link:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/06/01/2020-11469/hours-of-service-of-drivers>

Who Must Comply with This Regulation?

The Hours-of-Service Regulations apply to most drivers of commercial motor vehicles. (49 CFR Part 395) A commercial motor vehicle is any self-propelled or towed motor vehicle used on a highway in interstate commerce to transport passengers or property when the vehicle:

- Has a gross vehicle weight (GVW), gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR), gross combination weight (GCW), or gross combination weight rating (GCWR) of 10,001 pounds or more, whichever is greater;
- Is designed or used to transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver) not for compensation;
- Is designed or used to transport 9 or more passengers (including the driver) for compensation; or
- Is transporting hazardous materials in a quantity requiring placards.

What Do You Need to Do?

Most drivers must keep track of and record their hours of service using an electronic logging device (ELD), or in certain instances, a logbook that is then reported to the drivers' employers and can be produced to safety officials on request. (49 CFR 395.8, 395.24)

As specified in the ELD regulations, the following drivers are not required to use ELDs (but carriers may choose to use ELDs even if they are not required):

- Drivers who are required to complete a record of duty status on not more than 8 days during any 30-day period (mainly those operating under the short-haul exception in 49 CFR 395.1(e)(1));
- Driveaway-towaway drivers (where the vehicle driven is the commodity) or the vehicle being transported is a motor home or a recreation vehicle trailer (at least one set of wheels of the vehicle being transported must be on the surface while being transported); or
- Drivers of vehicles manufactured before model year 2000. (49 CFR 395.8(a)(1)(iii)(A))

FMCSA also provides the fact sheet "Exemptions to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR)" that helps to clarify exemptions from using an ELD.

FMCSA Fact Sheet Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/hours-service/elds/agricultural-exceptions-and-exemptions-fmcsa-safety>

For those drivers required to maintain a record of duty status, FMCSA provides additional information on the "Driver's Records of Duty (RODs) and Supporting Documentation" web page.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://ai.fmcsa.dot.gov/NewEntrant/MC/Content.aspx?nav=Logs>

Are Waivers or Regulatory Relief Provided?

Note that utility service vehicles are always exempt from Hours-of-Service limitations when they are used in the furtherance of repairing, maintaining, or operating any structures or physical facilities necessary for the delivery of public utility services. (49 CFR 395.1(n) and 49 CFR 395.2)

Relief from regulations in 49 CFR Parts 390-399 is available under 49 CFR 390.23 to a motor carrier or driver operating a commercial motor vehicle to provide “direct assistance” to “emergency relief” efforts when an “emergency” (as those terms are defined in 49 CFR 390.5) has been declared by a Federal, State or local official authorized to do so. “Emergency” is defined broadly, but includes hurricanes, ice storms, floods, fires, etc., that interrupt the delivery of essential services or essential supplies or otherwise immediately threaten life or public welfare.

More information regarding 49 CFR 390.23 that describes relief from these regulations is available on the FMCSA web page listed below.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/title49/section/390.23>

FMCSA maintains a website showing all emergency declarations issued by FMCSA.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency-declarations>

This web page may also include State emergency declarations, waivers, and exemptions.

Additionally, information on Electronic Logging Device (ELD) Exemptions, Waivers and Vendor Malfunction Extensions is available on the FMCSA web page listed below

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/hours-service/elds/electronic-logging-device-eld-exemptions-and-waivers>

In accordance with 49 CFR 381.315, applications for exemptions and FMCSA decisions to grant or deny an exemption request are published in the Federal Register. FMCSA maintains information on notices published in the Federal Register on its Website.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/notices>

Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations

What Is the Requirement?

Managed by FMCSA, the Federal Hazardous Materials Safety Permit Program is for intrastate, interstate, and foreign motor carriers transporting certain types and amounts of hazardous materials. These carriers must maintain a certain level of safety in their operations and certify they have programs in place as required by the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR) and the Hazardous Materials (HM) Permit Regulations (49 CFR Part 385, subpart E).

Who Must Comply with This Regulation?

Motor carriers and other vehicle operators that are transporting certain types and amounts of hazardous materials must comply. (49 CFR 385.403) A list of materials is available at the following FMCSA Web page.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hazardous-materials/how-comply-federal-hazardous-materials-regulations>

What Do You Need to Do?

To register a new or update an existing Federal hazmat permit, visit the FMCSA website and complete an MCS-150B form. Additional information is available at the FMCSA link below.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hazardous-materials/hazardous-materials-safety-permit-program-hmsp>

Are Waivers or Regulatory Relief Provided?

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) can issue a temporary relief notice and hazardous materials emergency special permits to companies to facilitate the movement of particular products during an emergency. The actions of PHMSA and FMCSA ensure that the transportation of these hazardous materials provides a safety level that is at least equal to that required under the existing law or if a law is not currently in place, they ensure it is consistent with the standards outlined in 49 U.S.C. 5103(c)(1).

There are three possible types of special permits:

1. Those authorizing the offer of a hazardous material for transportation differently than otherwise required in the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR);
2. Those authorizing the transport of a hazardous material in a different manner than required in the HMR; or
3. Those authorizing the manufacture and sale of a packaging for use in transporting hazardous material when the packaging does not meet the design specification or performance requirements in the HMR.

CHAPTER 3. UNDERSTANDING EMERGENCY AND DISASTER DECLARATIONS, WAIVERS, AND EMERGENCY PERMITS

Regulatory and permit relief is often provided for the transportation of needed services and supplies in times of emergency. This can come in many forms, including declarations, waivers, blanket permits, immediate waivers, and emergency permits. This relief is provided by different Federal and State agencies and may apply to different types of relief supplies, vehicles, or roadway types (Interstate, State highways, etc.). Relief may be provided for different periods of time or regions of the country. The terminology and meaning of different types of relief (temporary emergency permitting, waiver, blanket permit, etc.) may not always be clear to those operating vehicles for emergency response and recovery operations. This chapter clarifies the different types of relief provided, whom it applies to, and some of the terminology used. Through a better understanding of the terminology used, emergency response and recovery managers can better utilize the available relief.

Emergency Declarations Overview

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121–5207) provides authority to issue disaster relief and emergency assistance in the form of national emergency and major disaster declarations. Generally known as the Stafford Act, it authorizes the President to provide financial and other forms of assistance to eligible State and local governments. It also allows individuals and certain private and nonprofit organizations that provide essential government services to support response, recovery, and mitigation efforts following presidentially declared major disasters. The Stafford Act describes the declaration process, the types and extent of assistance that may be provided, and assistance eligibility requirements.

Declarations are often classified into the category of an emergency or a major disaster (42 U.S.C. 5122). A major disaster declaration is used for events of the highest severity in damage. It is initiated through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with a request by a State governor to the President, in accordance with the Stafford Act and its implementing regulations. The governor bases the request on a finding that the situation is of such severity and magnitude that an effective response is beyond the State, local, and tribal government capabilities and that Federal assistance is necessary to supplement the efforts and available resources from the State.

A national emergency declaration is reserved for less severe instances. The process for requesting an emergency declaration is similar to the process for requesting a major disaster declaration, except the time in which to submit an emergency declaration request generally is shorter. The request must be submitted within five days after the need for assistance becomes apparent, but no longer than 30 days after the incident has occurred.

Procedural information regarding the Stafford Act declaration process is available from FEMA at: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/how-declared>.

The Stafford Act uses the following definitions:

- **Major Disaster** – “any natural catastrophe (including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought), or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under this act to supplement the efforts and available resources of States, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby.”
- **Emergency** – defined by the Stafford Act as less severe than a disaster and any occasion or instance for which, in the determination of the President, Federal assistance is needed to supplement State and local efforts and capabilities to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the United States. (42 U.S.C. 5122)

A compilation of the Stafford Act and related authorities is available from FEMA at: https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/stafford-act_2019.pdf.

State and local emergency declarations are not Stafford Act events, but they can be used to provide support for transportation of supplies and equipment for emergency response and recovery operations. The table below compares national, State, and local emergency declarations.

Table 2. Types of Emergency Declarations.

Declaration Type	Providing Entity	Description
Local Emergency Declaration	Governor’s Office and Local Officials	Governors and local officials can declare a local emergency for local disasters, such as tornados or floods that have localized impacts. Local emergencies are not Stafford Act declared emergencies. Therefore, States may not issue special permits for divisible loads under 23 U.S.C. 127(i). Some enforcement officials in other states may not be aware of this declaration, leading to delays in permit issuances and freight movement. 49 CFR 390.23(a)(2) allows for relief from 49 CFR Parts 390-399 for a maximum of 5 days for local emergencies declared by authorized officials.
Statewide Emergency	Governor’s Office	Can be issued by Governors for emergencies occurring within their State and to coordinate with Governors in the surrounding States to issue similar waivers. Statewide emergency declarations for emergencies as defined in 49 CFR 390.5T trigger the FMCSA regulatory relief described above for a maximum period of 30 days from the date of issuance. Some equipment coming from far away will still need to obtain the necessary oversize and overweight permits from multiple States, and some States have faster-permitting processes than others.

Table 2. Types of Emergency Declarations. (Continuation)

Declaration Type	Providing Entity	Description
National Emergency Declaration	President	The issuance of the National Emergency Declaration allows for the expedited transportation of needed supplies and services to disaster areas. A national emergency declaration triggers temporary relief from a range of FMCSA safety regulations, of which the Hours-of-Service rules in 49 CFR, Part 395 are often the most critical. Under the umbrella of a National Emergency, other emergency declarations or waivers may be issued by the Governors of States or FMCSA to waive additional FMCSA regulations. Governors of States may waive State regulations, but only FMCSA can waive Federal regulations that are not part of the relief automatically triggered under 390.23.
Presidentially Declared Major Disaster	President	The President can declare a major disaster for any event that the President determines has caused damage of such severity that it is beyond the combined capabilities of state and local governments to respond. Similar to statewide and national emergency declarations, a presidentially declared major disaster triggers the temporary relief from a range of FMCSA safety regulations, including Hours of Service requirements. Neither FHWA nor a State has the authority to waive federal weight requirements for overweight vehicles on the Interstate System. However, in the event of a presidentially declared major disaster under the Stafford Act, States may issue special permits, pursuant to state law, to allow vehicles to carry a divisible load exceeding federal weight limitations under 23 U.S.C. 127 on the Interstate System. (23 U.S.C. 127(i))

Types of Waivers, Permits, and Exemptions

This section discusses several different types of regulatory and permitting relief, including the following:

- Immediate waiver
- Non-waivable regulation
- Special overweight divisible load permit
- Emergency Blanket permits
- Exemptions
- Hazardous materials emergency special permits
- Toll waivers
- Weigh station bypass

Some of this relief is provided by States and some by Federal agencies. The definitions and terminology associated with these waivers, special permits, emergency blanket permits, and other mechanisms used to provide relief are described below.

Immediate Waivers

In accordance with 49 CFR 390.23, when the President of the United States, FMCSA, a State Governor, or a local government official issues a declaration of emergency, relief from a number of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations may be triggered for motor carriers and drivers providing direct assistance to an emergency meeting the definition in 49 CFR 390.5T. Presidential/State declarations can be effective for up to 30 days. Only FMCSA can extend the emergency relief from Federal safety regulations past that time period or put additional restrictions on the emergency relief. Local declarations are effective for up to 5 days and cannot be extended. The regulatory relief applies to any motor carrier or driver responding from any location in the U.S. to provide direct assistance to an emergency or disaster.²

Where does emergency regulatory relief apply?

Drivers responding to provide direct assistance to a declared emergency are exempt from applicable regulations in all States on their route to the emergency, even though those States may not be involved in the emergency or stated in the declaration of emergency.

FMCSA Support for Regulatory Compliance: FMCSA Service Centers support motor carrier and driver compliance with regulations and provide a resource for those seeking to understand what regulatory relief and waivers are available. Regional emergency declarations can be issued by the President of the U.S., a Governor of a State, or FMCSA. The FMCSA Headquarters is located in Washington, DC. The FMCSA extends its services through the use of service centers and field offices. The FMCSA operates four service centers for different regions across the U.S. and many of its territories, as shown in the table below.

Table 3. FMCSA Service Centers.

Location	States and Territories Included
Eastern Service Center	CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, Puerto Rico, RI, VA, VT, WV
Midwestern Service Center	IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, OH, WI
Southern Service Center	AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN
Western Service Center	AK, American Samoa, AZ, CA, CO, Guam, HI, ID, Northern Mariana Islands, MT, ND, NM, NV, OR, SD, TX, UT, WA, WY

² U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2015). *Transportation Safety: Results of Collection of Information on State Permitting Practices for Oversize Vehicles*. Publication No. GAO-15-235SP. E-supplement to GAO 15-236. Retrieved from <https://www.gao.gov/assets/670/668711.pdf>.

Each State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico has its own dedicated field office. The role of field offices is to extend the services of FMCSA and serve as a resource for motor carriers and drivers seeking to comply with applicable statutes and regulations. Contact information and the address of each service center and field office can be found on the FMCSA website listed below.

FMCSA Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/mission/field-offices#Service-Centers>

Special Overweight Divisible Load Permit

Except for States that have grandfather rights for divisible loads, overweight (OW) loads that are divisible ordinarily cannot obtain permits since the expectation is that the operator will divide the load to make it legal. (23 CFR 658.5) Neither FHWA nor a State has the authority to waive Federal weight limitations for overweight vehicles on the Interstate System. (23 U.S.C. 127) However, in the event of a presidentially declared major disaster under the Stafford Act, States may issue Special Permits under state law to allow vehicles to carry a divisible load with a gross vehicle weight exceeding the legal limit of 80,000 pounds on the Interstate System (23 U.S.C. 127(i)).

The FHWA maintains a list of State Permit Office contacts at the following address:
https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/sw/permit_report/index.htm

State Blanket Permits for Emergencies

Blanket permits provide a written authorization granted by States for the movement of a vehicle or combination vehicle and its nondivisible load within prescribed limits of size and weight. States can issue blanket permits for multiple trips. In some states, this can be for a period of up to a year for commercial operations. Issuance of blanket permits is regulated by the States under State law. The Federal government does not regulate blanket permits.

States often use blanket permits for emergencies for divisible loads. They may provide emergency relief to vehicle operators while the permitting office is closed. Typically, States post these permits on their website. Fleet managers with vehicles that fall within the size and weight threshold covered by the permit can download and use the permit. Only vehicles that are moving products used in emergency response and recovery are covered. Typically, the permit will define which products are covered. The vehicle operators may be required to download the permit and carry it with them in their truck. The text box below shows an example of some conditions included in an emergency blanket permit from Ohio, issued during a Stafford Act Emergency Declaration.

Example: Ohio DOT Emergency Blanket Permit

The Ohio Department of Transportation “approved a special blanket permit for haulers carrying heavy or oversized loads of food, non-alcoholic beverages, medical supplies, cleaning products, and other household goods.”

“The emergency blanket permit applies to travel on roads and bridges maintained by the Ohio Department of Transportation (Interstate, U.S., and State Routes). Hauler loads may not exceed a maximum of 90,000 pounds gross vehicle weight and must comply with all posted bridge weight and height restrictions.

“The hauler is also required, within 24 hours after the trip is completed, to report back to the department where they traveled and how much weight they carried.”

Ohio DOT Permits Web Page Link:

<https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odot/working/permits>

IFTA/IRP Exemptions

States can provide exemptions for both IRP and IFTA permit requirements in times of declared emergency in accordance with State-specific law and regulations. IRP and IFTA provide these exemptions through notifications on their websites.

IRP Notifications Link: <https://www.irponline.org/news/?id=4392>

IFTA Notifications Link: <https://www.iftach.org/>

Hazardous Material Waiver/Special Permits

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) is the agency responsible for issuing special permits for the transportation of various hazardous materials. The actions of PHMSA ensure that the transportation of these hazardous materials provides a safety level that is at least equal to that required under the existing law, or if a law is not currently in place, they ensure it is consistent with the standards outlined in 49 U.S.C. 5103(c)(1).

Hazardous Material Special Permit

PHMSA provided relief to shippers of alcohol-based sanitizer by issuing a temporary enforcement policy for the highway mode. The temporary policy provided liberalized minimum requirements for transporting sanitizer products composed of up to 80 percent alcohol in packages up to 119 gallons.

As stated by USDOT, there are three possible types of special permits:

1. Those authorizing the offer of a hazardous material for transportation in a different manner than otherwise required in the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR).
2. Those authorizing the transport of a hazardous material differently than required in the HMR.
3. Those authorizing the manufacture and sale of a packaging for use in transporting hazardous material when the packaging does not meet the design specification or performance requirements in the HMR.

PHMSA can issue a temporary relief notice and hazardous materials emergency special permits to companies to facilitate the movement of particular products during an emergency. The text box above provides an example.

Toll Waivers

Each individual State and its tolling authorities decide, on a case-by-case basis, to waive or suspend tolls. Toll authorities provide information on toll waivers/suspensions in a given area. Toll waivers are often included as part of State emergency declarations, some of which are posted on this site.

FMCSA Web Page Link: www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency

Truck/Weigh Station Bypass

Similarly, it is up to the judgement of each State to allow vehicles to bypass truck weigh stations in times of emergency or disaster response. State DOTs or State Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Patrols operate weigh stations. Each State has a website that may provide information regarding the protocol for responders. FMCSA may also post some of these notices on its emergency website (listed above) if they are part of a State emergency declaration.

Table 4 summarizes the different mechanisms to provide regulatory and permit relief provided by different agencies and for different purposes (safety, size, and weight, vehicle registration).

Table 4. Types of Regulatory and Permit Relief.

Permit/Waiver	Type	Providing Entity	Duration	Description
Special Permits issued under 23 U.S.C. 127(i)	Special Divisible Load Permit	States during times of declared emergency	120 days after President declares emergency	During presidentially declared major disasters under the Stafford Act, States may issue permits under state law to divisible overweight cargos. This applies to the vehicles on the Interstate System.

Table 4. Types of Regulatory and Permit Relief. (Continuation)

Permit/Waiver	Type	Providing Entity	Duration	Description
Special Permits Issued for Non-Interstates	Special Divisible Load Permit	States	Dependent on Circumstances	During declared emergencies, States sometimes issue permits to divisible overweight cargos for non-interstate roadways.
Size and Weight Blanket Permits	Blanket Permit	States	Dependent on Circumstances and subject to State law.	Allows vehicles below a certain overweight or oversize threshold to use a blanket size and weight permit if transporting supplies for emergency response and recovery subject to State law and at each State's discretion. Vehicle operators must carry the permit with them and obey all posted bridge weight and clearance (width and height) limits.
International Registration Plan	Waiver	State	Dependent on Circumstances	Waives requirement for IRP registration, trip permits, or fees.
International Fuel Tax Agreement	Waiver & Extension	State	Dependent on Circumstances	Waives requirement for IFTA registration, trip permits, or fees.
Toll Waivers	Waiver	State or Tolling Authorities	At the discretion of the State/tolling authority	Waives/Suspends Toll fees for vehicles responding to emergency conditions.
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulatory relief	Emergency regulatory relief (49 CFR 390.23)	FMCSA	The shorter of the duration of the emergency or a maximum of 30 days unless extended by FMCSA	Qualifying emergency declarations trigger temporary relief from certain Federal safety regulations, including Hours of Service, for motor carriers and drivers engaged in direct assistance to emergency relief efforts.

Table 4. Types of Regulatory and Permit Relief. (Continuation)

Permit/Waiver	Type	Providing Entity	Duration	Description
Hazardous Material Waiver/Special Permits/ Approvals	Permit Waiver Approval	PHMSA	Dependent on the situation	FMCSA and PHMSA share oversight responsibility for hazardous material and its transport. Special permits and waivers authorize a person to perform a function outside of PHMSA regulations (or to not perform a function currently required under the PHMSA regulations). Approvals authorize the transportation of designated hazardous materials (i.e., explosives) or the performance of a designated hazardous materials function (i.e., cylinder retester) under the PHMSA regulations.

Understanding the Terms of Permits, Waivers, and Temporary Exemptions

As seen above, there is a multitude of ways that emergency responders can receive relief from regulations to expedite the movement of vehicles. Because multiple agencies and levels of government are involved, the terminology or applicability of regulatory relief may not always be consistent. For example, different agencies may provide waivers or emergency permits to different types of relief supplies or types of vehicles. In some cases, vehicle operators may be able to utilize regulatory relief for empty vehicles returning from the emergency, but in other cases, this may not be the case. The time period and geography of the relief provided may differ. These complexities often make it difficult for vehicle operators to understand what relief government agencies have provided.

The complexities and nuances of the relief government agencies have provided may also make it difficult for enforcement officials to apply the rules correctly. Vehicle operators may have trouble discerning what documentation they need to bring with them to show that they are eligible for relief.

Lastly, the terminology used by different agencies may differ. Agencies may refer to waivers or blanket permits interchangeably. Agencies can provide clarity by specifically defining which type of relief waivers or blanket permits they are providing.

Definition of Relief Supplies

An important difference in terminology is the definition of relief supplies, a term not defined in 23 U.S.C. 127(i). As seen below, guidance on this topic differs across the FHWA, the FMCSA, and States.

FHWA Relief Supplies: FHWA guidance on 23 U.S.C. 127(i) states that “relief supplies may include, but are not limited to:

- Medicine and medical equipment;
- Food supplies (including feed for livestock);
- Water;
- Materials used to provide or construct temporary housing; and
- Other supplies directly supporting the type of relief needed following a disaster.”³

Moreover, 23 USC 127(i) mandates that “[special] permit[s] are issued exclusively to vehicles and loads that are delivering relief supplies. According to FHWA guidance, “delivering” means “transporting relief supplies to any destination that is part of the geographical area covered by the emergency or major disaster declaration. A State may issue permits to vehicles destined for a disaster area located in another State.”⁴

FMCSA Relief Supplies: FMCSA regulations at 49 CFR 390.23 outline a set number of rules to be followed by motor carriers and drivers during and outside of times of declared emergency. The definitions in 49 CFR 390.5T do not include an explicit definition of supplies or services. The examples given in the definition of an “emergency” include “...essential services (such as, electricity, medical care, sewer, water, telecommunications, and telecommunication transmissions) or essential supplies (such as food and fuel).”

More detail on what supplies and services are included can often be found in the emergency declaration itself. An example can be seen in an FMCSA Expanded Emergency Declaration relating to COVID-19.⁵ Within this document, FMCSA clearly identifies the supplies and services that qualify for relief from the outlined FMCSA regulations.

State Relief Supplies: Similar to how FMCSA defines relief supplies, a State’s definition often varies situationally, depending on the nature of the emergency. This can be seen in a waiver

³ Federal Highway Administration. 2013. MAP-21, Section 1511 - Special Permits During Periods of National Emergency Implementation Guidance, Revised. Retrieved from: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guideemergency.cfm>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. 2020. Expanded Emergency Declaration Under 49 CFR § 390.23 No. 2020-002 (Relating to COVID-19). Retrieved from: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency/expanded-emergency-declaration-under-49-cfr-ss-39023-no-2020-002-relating-covid-19>

(link below) produced by Virginia in March of 2020. The waiver applies to “all carriers transporting essential emergency relief supplies to, through, and from any area of the Commonwealth. This authorization also applies to water, food, heating oil, motor fuels or propane, or agricultural products, agricultural supplies, livestock and poultry, livestock and poultry feed and forest products, or providing restoration of utilities (including but not limited to electricity, gas, phone, water, wastewater, and cable) or removal of waste to, through, and from any area of the Commonwealth to support the response and recovery, regardless of their point of origin or destination”.⁶ The different States will often define relief supplies in ways different from their neighbors for the same disaster.

Virginia Waiver Web Page Link: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency/va-waiver-carriers-transporting-essential-emergency-relief-supplies-or-providing>

Geography: The geographies that different waivers and permits apply to can differ. FMCSA’s emergency relief during qualifying declared emergencies apply to motor carriers and drivers of vehicles travelling anywhere in the country that are transporting relief supplies to the area of the emergency. State blanket permits for size and weight apply only to vehicles travelling in the State issuing the permit. Some emergency permits may apply only to non-interstates. For instance, States may issue emergency divisible load overweight permits on non-interstates roadways in emergencies. After October 1, 2020, only those events that receive a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration will be eligible for Special Permit authority on interstates.

Waiver and Blanket Emergency Permit Compared

States often use the term blanket permit and waiver interchangeably, but there are some important differences. A waiver provides a limited exemption to a legal or regulatory requirement, such as the temporary suspension of the vehicle and hours of service requirements for drivers, during a declared emergency. Technically, States cannot waive vehicle size and weight requirements on the Interstate, but the State can provide blanket or emergency permits that allow vehicles within specific dimensions and weights to operate on the Interstate. Many blanket permits still require the drivers to print out the online permit and carry it with them. Drivers must obey all posted bridge limits, and, for the permits issued under the authority of the Stafford Act, be traveling to the area affected by the emergency. Drivers may be required to document that they carry a cargo that is a relief supply.

⁶ Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. 2020. VA Waiver for carriers transporting essential emergency relief supplies or providing emergency restoration of infrastructure services. Retrieved from: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency/va-waiver-carriers-transporting-essential-emergency-relief-supplies-or-providing>

CHAPTER 4. TRIP PLANNING

This checklist may help aid in trip planning for emergency responders, preparing to travel to a destination, and providing disaster relief supplies/services. The questions posed in this checklist may allow for drivers and fleets to think over and discuss if they have obtained the needed vehicle registration, identification, and/or permits. In addition, the checklist will help fleet managers to think through the trip procedures they need to use to have a successful journey. For additional information about the items mentioned in this checklist, read their corresponding sections in this resource.

Table 5. Trip Planning Checklist.

Checkbox	Vehicle Registration/Identification/Permitting	Explanation (when applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have you registered your vehicle with the International Registration Plan (IRP) to move across State lines?	If not, you need to obtain an IRP trip permit in accordance with State law.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have you registered your vehicle with the International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA)?	If not, you need to obtain an IFTA trip permit in accordance with State law.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your company/vehicle have a United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) number?	If not, go to the FMCSA website to get a number. https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/registration/do-i-need-usdot-number
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the load you are moving oversize or overweight?	If so, you need to obtain a permit through every State in which you will move. (23 CFR 658.15) https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/sw/permit_report/index.htm#obt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have you checked whether emergency declarations are providing regulatory relief or whether other state level emergency permits are available?	If not, go to the FMCSA emergency website. In addition, check state websites for relevant emergency relief related to state requirements (tolling, emergency OS\OW permits, etc.). https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency-declarations

Table 5. Trip Planning Checklist. (Continuation)

Checkbox	Vehicle Registration/Identification/ Permitting	Explanation (when applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Will you cross one or more State lines? Do any of the states you are travelling through provide emergency relief from state level requirements in those states? Has an emergency been declared for the destination State?	Check the FMCSA emergency website for additional information. Additionally, review state level websites for any additional relevant declarations that may provide relief from state requirements. https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/emergency-declarations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Will your waiver/permit expire before the return trip?	For long-term recovery efforts, plan for the possibility that waivers and emergency permits may expire before you return.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you are carrying hazardous materials, have you registered with PHMSA?	Obtain PHMSA registration information at the following website: https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/registration/registration-overview
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you are carrying hazardous materials, have you registered with FMCSA for a HM Safety Permit?	Review HM Safety Permit information at the following website: https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hazardous-materials/hazardous-materials-safety-permit-program-hmsp
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you are carrying hazardous materials, have you taken into consideration the highway routing of hazardous materials pursuant to 49 CFR Part 397 Subpart C?	Plan your route using the National Hazardous Materials Route Registry available at the following website: https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/hazardous-materials/national-hazardous-materials-route-registry

Table 5. Trip Planning Checklist. (Continuation)

Checkbox	Trip Procedures	Explanation (when applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there tolls on the route you will take?	If so, have you calculated how much they will cost? Do your drivers have enough cash to pay these tolls?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you exempt from the FMCSA Hours of Service regulations?	If not, educate your drivers on the need to comply with the hours of service requirements, including recording their duty status. (49 CFR Part 395)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has your route planning taken into account pre-designated emergency routes?	If not, confirm with the State permitting offices or FMCSA’s Emergency Declarations, Waivers, Exemptions and Permits web site to ensure waivers or emergency permits received have not designated a specified route you should be taking.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you know where to go to get real-time information on road closures or other restrictions to travel along your route?	If not, dial 511 on your phone and check other available State resources.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you are driving a large commercial vehicle, have you used commercial grade routing software to plan your route? Have you accounted for vehicle height and weight restrictions on bridges, tunnels, and roads?	If not, account for vehicle weight and dimensional restrictions in your route planning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have a plan for the redeployment of your equipment if the vehicle needs to be rerouted based on changing emergency needs?	If not, develop a plan to get any additional permits you might need. The plan should include designating staff who will do this and ensuring they know whom to contact.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have a plan for the redeployment of your equipment after the emergency is over when emergency permits or waivers may no longer be in effect?	Ensure that your drivers know how to check whether regulatory relief or waivers are still available or plan to communicate this information to them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Will you have access to supplies along your trip route and at your destination (e.g., fuel, food, first aid, shelter, etc.)?	Fully fuel and supply vehicles before entering a disaster area. Coordinate with emergency officials to be aware if you need to bring fuel or other supplies.

Table 5. Trip Planning Checklist. (Continuation)

Checkbox	Trip Procedures	Explanation (when applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there a secure area to store equipment and supplies? Are you required to move equipment and supplies through a staging area?	Confirm with local emergency managers to discover if staging areas/warehouses will be available for use.

Additional Explanations on Checklist Items

The following sections provide additional information on checklist items not discussed elsewhere in the resource document.

Travel Information and 511 Services

Simply stated, 511 is an easy-to-remember, 3-digit telephone number, available in most States, that provides current information about travel conditions, allowing travelers to make better choices—including choice of time, choice of mode of transportation, and choice of route. There are no Federal requirements or mandates to implement 511, and a few States do not have a 511 call-in service. Along with telephone services, many States also have web-based resources that can be utilized. A map of these States and their corresponding websites is available at the FHWA link listed below. The link also shows the States that currently do not have 511 call-in services, but some of these States have other available resources that provide similar services.

FHWA Web Page Link: <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/511/index.htm>

Route Planning and Routing Software

It is important to account for any roadway restrictions that apply to larger vehicles with higher weights and larger dimensions. Routing choices need to consider designated truck routes and restrictions; turning radius restrictions at intersections; vertical clearances for bridges, tunnels, and other structures; horizontal clearances; bridge weight limitations; and other factors. Routing also needs to consider any construction, road closures, or special events that may limit the use of specific routes.

Drivers should also consider regional differences in roadway structures and climate when planning a route. In certain States, some roadways may not grant access to certain sized freight vehicles during different seasons of the year due to predominant weather conditions normal for that time of year. Additionally, some road systems will have unfamiliar regulations regarding vehicle height clearances for bridges and underpasses that drivers who normally operate in other regions/States would not know. Commercial Routing software is one tool that may help simplify and facilitate routing as it takes into account all of these factors when it provides a route to drivers.

Equipment Redeployment

It is also essential to plan for the fact that conditions can change in disaster situations. These changing conditions could result in drivers being routed to different locations than anticipated or extending the time that they are needed at a location. In these situations, drivers should be aware that they may need to reapply for permits for their continued work or for their journey back to their origin as the emergency declaration and any waivers the driver initially used may have expired or be for a location or route that differs from what they had planned for initially.

Available Supplies and Staging Areas

Other key factors to plan for are the state of supplies along the route a driver will follow and the state of supplies at the destination. These supplies include fuel for your vehicle or equipment; food; shelter; first aid kits; or staging areas where personnel, supplies, and equipment can be temporarily housed, parked, or moored while awaiting an operational assignment. There have been numerous occasions where a lack of such items/areas has prohibited emergency response supplies and services from reaching disaster locations on time. Examples of such instances have been seen recently as fellow responders and evacuees had depleted fuel, or power outages had prevented fuel from being pumped for their vehicles and equipment. In situations where power outages may prohibit drivers from refueling, it is essential to identify which refueling stations have backup generators that are not reliant on the power grid, which may be down.

CHAPTER 5. CASE STUDIES

Emergency responders, including utility convoys, face many challenges in planning and implementing response and recovery operations. Important lessons can be learned by examining how other agencies have overcome past challenges and the circumstances they have faced.

This section also identifies other resources that emergency responders can use to improve emergency logistics. Provided in this chapter are brief case studies that provide examples of laws, communications, procedures, and commercial solutions that have helped to reduce the barriers to routing vehicles in an emergency. Each of these case studies provides at least one relevant takeaway for those trying to improve emergency routing. Below we discuss a number of cases that illuminate the following key lessons learned:

- **Be aware of relevant State legal exemptions.** Examples are provided of State legal exemptions. Many States provide similar exemptions to facilitate emergency routing.
- **Take advantage of the provision of information about waivers.** During Hurricane Sandy permitting offices provided information to vehicle operators and managers to understand what waivers were available to them.
- **Understand related convoy procedures used by others.** Examples are provided of procedures for military convoys, utility convoys, and commercial carrier convoys.
- **Consider commercial technology and services if applicable.** Commercial permitting services and weigh station bypass technology applications could be relevant in some cases.

State-Level Legal Exemptions for Utility and Pole Truck Length

Some states have legal exemptions in State law to facilitate the movement of vehicles during emergencies. Although not a comprehensive list, the bullets below provide some examples of these legal exemptions. Note that these examples were applicable when the report was written, but may have changed since.

- **Minnesota pole truck exemption** – Public utility vehicles transporting poles that cannot be shortened or trucks transporting pole-length pulp woods can operate at lengths up to 75 feet.
- **Florida utility truck exemption** – Florida law provides a length limitation exemption for “Utility vehicles owned or operated by governmental entities or public utility corporations, or operated under contract with such entities or corporations.” These allow the vehicle and load to be as much as 120 feet in overall length, provided proper flags, and flashers are located at the rearmost end of the load. Florida law also provides an exemption “when transporting poles during emergencies or required maintenance. Such movements may be made on all days and at all hours, provided the respective daytime or nighttime requirements are otherwise met.”
- **Wisconsin utility truck exemption** – Wisconsin law allows that vehicles may be operated without a permit for excessive length if the overall length does not exceed the

indicated limitations of 120 feet for a 2-vehicle combination used by a pipeline company or operator, public service corporation, municipal utility, or cooperative association or by a motor carrier operating under contract with a pipeline company or operator, public service corporation, municipal utility, or cooperative association.

- **Michigan 70-Foot timber hauler length exception** – Timber haulers transporting saw logs, pulpwood, and tree length poles can move trailers or semi-trailers up to 70 feet in length, and they may be operated on designated routes, including National Network routes.⁷

Takeaway: Be aware of relevant State-level legal exemptions that may be available to you.

Permitting Offices Lessons Learned and Other Considerations from Hurricane Sandy

Preparation of information resources for transportation providers prior to an emergency can facilitate emergency permitting during and after a major event. In some cases, permitting offices have provided information resources to help carriers understand what vehicles are covered by emergency permits. The Hurricane Sandy After Action Report found that “another challenge was having the right mix of permits to cover different emergency situations. In New Jersey, for example, staff ended up evaluating eight common size/weight/configuration scenarios and posting the results online so that carriers could ascertain if they would qualify for a fee and permit review waiver. Additional configurations were identified in coordination with the fuel industry in response to widespread fuel shortages across both New Jersey and lower New York.” The report found that making these preparations prior to landfall would have been beneficial.^{8 9}

The Northeast Association of State Transportation Officials (NASTO) also created an NASTO/I-95 Corridor Coalition Hurricane Sandy After Action Review (AAR).¹⁰ The AAR contains findings that can improve future emergency/disaster response protocols. A significant finding was that some NASTO States have specific “carriers who are pre-qualified to operate during an emergency, either with a specialized blanket multi-trip permit or with a permit with relaxed permit review processes.” Some States also have policies that allow for an expedited permit process after the State Governor has issued an emergency proclamation. The expedited permit process allows permits to be self-issued if paired with conservative weight and dimensional information and a waiver of applicable fees. According to the AAR, a majority of States indicated that during the expedited permit process, they needed more coordination to help with the Oversize/Overweight (OS/OW) emergency process responses as they lacked a formal

⁷ Emergency Route Working Group (ERWG) Report of Recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation, December 2018. <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/erwg/reports/erwgreport/appdx.htm>

⁸ Ibid., p. 28.

⁹ FEMA. Hurricane Sandy After Action Report. Retrieved from: https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/dam-production/uploads/20130726-1923-25045-7442/sandy_fema_aar.pdf

¹⁰ I-95 Corridor Coalition. 2013. NASTO / I-95 Corridor Coalition Hurricane Sandy After Action Review (AAR). Retrieved from: http://tetcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/NASTO-Hurricane-Sandy-After-Action-Report_FINAL_06.06.13.pdf?dd650d

approach for coordinating these processes. Rhode Island was able to fare better, though, as it had a permits manager embedded in its emergency response center.

Under 23 U.S.C. 127(i), a Presidentially Declared Major Disaster triggers a waiver to States allowing them to permit overweight divisible loads that carry emergency supplies. A challenge associated with the legislation was that many governors issued appropriate emergency declarations two to three days prior to Hurricane Sandy making landfall, while the presidential declaration was not issued until after Sandy had made landfall. This mismatch meant that overweight divisible equipment and supplies being shipped before the hurricane made landfall could not legally use the Interstate System as the Federal declaration was not yet in effect. Additionally, after Hurricane Sandy made landfall, another issue that arose was power outages. The power outages caused State permitting offices to lose power for about a day, and offices in New York City were without power for three days. This required permitting staff to work from another office or a home that had the ability to process permits. Finally, widespread fuel shortages were encountered in New Jersey and lower New York. Emergency response vehicles need to prepare for fuel shortages before departing to an emergency/disaster area.

Takeaway: Proactively gathering and disseminating information can help responders obtain permits ahead of a potential emergency/disaster. This can streamline the permit issuance process. Emergency responders should work closely with permitting offices to get the information they need to access the emergency permits available.

Military Procedures

The U.S. military has plans for moving oversize and overweight equipment during emergencies. The military maintains an inventory of vehicles and a database of oversize equipment. It conducts advanced planning to understand what routes equipment will move on and what restrictions those routes have.

The United States military designates military personnel, State Defense Movement Coordinators (DMCs), to handle communication about military convoy travel between the military and the State Departments of Transportation (SDOTs). DMCs are National Guard-appointed positions in each State. DMCs enter a convoy route into the military database, Mobilization Movement Control System (MOBCON). DMCs in the other States along the convoy route are then notified of the convoy's details so the convoy can obtain any necessary OS/OW permits for that State. While traveling, all military vehicles in the convoy display the convoy control numbers (CCN), whether they are oversize, overweight, or of standard weight and dimensions. The DMCs share the travel plan for the convoy with the SDOT and, if applicable, the Traffic Management Centers (TMCs) throughout the State. State agencies can then assist with real-time traffic information to help convoy leaders to reroute the convoy if necessary. Though OS/OW vehicles are subject to individual permits for each State, these procedures help State DOTs support more efficient military convoy travel.¹¹

¹¹ Coordinating Military Deployments on Roads and Highways: A Guide for State and Local Agencies. May 2005, <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop05029/fhwahop05029.pdf>

Takeaway: Military procedures provide for advanced planning to move oversize and overweight equipment. Centralized permitting uses an expert staff. Procedures are used to coordinate and identify the convoy. During the convoy movement, the military staff maintains active communications with relevant authorities.

Convoys, Escort, and Coordination with Enforcement

FHWA has developed the Pilot/Escort Vehicle Operators Practices Guidelines for Law Enforcement Escorts.¹² The guidance describes a detailed planning and implementation process that may inform the convoy procedures for emergency response in five tasks:

1. Plan for the Escort
2. Make the Initial On-Site Contact
3. Plan En-Route Vehicle Communications and Vehicle Positioning
4. Safely Escort the Oversize/Overweight Movement
5. Debrief and Depart

Each task contains supporting steps that may be followed for safe convoy trips. During Task 1, Plan for the Escort, officials may conduct background research to ensure all necessary oversize/overweight permits are compliant and checked. If the convoy will travel on city or county streets, extra attention should be paid to the highways that the oversize/overweight permits apply to as States cannot issue localized permits to approve driving in these areas. Officials decide if the load characteristics merit an escort. The permits may be reviewed again to confirm they accurately contain the size and weight of the oversize/overweight load. The convoy vehicle may be measured according to specific procedures outlined in the task for its height, width, length, ground clearance, and wheelbase requirements. Potential traffic flow issues related to possible obstructions, such as bridges and construction, should be noted so the route and the number of law enforcement escorts can be planned for accordingly and escort permits updated. A list of relevant contacts from government agencies and utility stakeholders should be compiled so they can be easily contacted during the trip if necessary. Finally, a reliable communication system should be established, a real-time permitting assistance person should be designated, and a contingency plan should be finalized to outline trip stopping points and account for issues that may potentially arise during the trip.

Once the escort is planned, officials proceed to Task 2, Initial On-Site Contact, and go to the convoy dispatch point. Officials conduct an in-person inspection of the vehicle, check the driver for fatigue, and confirm the escort vehicle has all the required identification, registration materials, and vehicle safety kits. Officials should then review the permits an additional time to confirm they are still appropriate for the time, the load, and review the permitted route and route plan again.

¹² Federal Highway Administration. 2020. Pilot/Escort Vehicle Operators Best Practices Guidelines for Law Enforcement Escorts. Retrieved from: <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop16071/index.htm>

Next, under Task 3, Plan En-Route Vehicle Communications, and Vehicle Positioning, a safety briefing occurs to discuss the role all convoy members will play. The safety briefing should include routing and any special conditions along the route, any unusual weather conditions, identify both the lead contact and lead communications contact in the enforcement agency. It should also identify if enforcement will travel the entire route or fall out at a point where they are no longer deemed critical. All communication equipment is tested, and convoy vehicles preordered into proper position.

As the convoy departs and carries out Task 4, Safely Escort the Oversize/Overweight Movement, it is crucial that at all times, communications are monitored, and laws are obeyed, especially ones that required special permits. The escort vehicle also should adjust to changing traffic conditions to maintain an appropriate travel environment the convoy can follow. If the convoy runs into disruptions, it is essential that the pre-established contingency plan goes into effect. The convoy route should be adjusted as needed if a specific arrival time has to be met.

Finally, in Task 5, Debrief and Depart, when the trip has been completed, officials should complete a post-inspection report to record any incidents that occurred during the trip and later make this summary available to appropriate stakeholders.

Takeaway: Be proactive in trip preparation, communications, and safety to accomplish a convoy trip. The document outlines a set of tasks that may be used to prepare and check the convoy prior to travel, maintain communication and adhere to safety procedures during travel, and evaluate the trip upon its completion through an After Action Review. The document also encourages constant communication, frequent permit checks, and group planning to deal with possible disruptions readily.

American Public Power Association Restoration Best Practices Guidebook

The American Public Power Association has published a voluntary and nonbinding Restoration Best Practices Guidebook,¹³ which includes helpful guidelines for fleets. The five fleet suggestions are:

- **Host utilities should work with States to obtain necessary emergency permits and waivers in advance.** Convoys should obtain waivers ahead of their departure to avoid delays during their trip. It is best if utilities that request the mutual aid obtain or identify the waivers for the incoming convoy crews by communicating with states or other applicable agencies. In some cases, the police can escort convoys, as is done with first responders. Conversely, if permitting agencies will not grant emergency permits and exceptions, the utilities requesting mutual aid should make clear to convoys coming in that they will have to travel without a waiver. Prior to departure, convoys should prepare for any possible adverse weather or any terrain they may encounter on the trip.

¹³ American Public Power Association. 2021. Restoration Best Practices Guidebook. Retrieved from: <https://www.publicpower.org/resource/restoration-best-practices-guidebook>

- **Public power utilities should participate in the All-Hazards Consortium Multi-State Fleet Response Working Group.** The All-Hazards Consortium (AHC) is a nonprofit organization that defines itself as “a trusted community of industry and government stakeholders solving operational problems through planning, research, and trusted information sharing” (AHC, 2020). The AHC helps to safely and quickly restore critical infrastructure by creating a working group comprised of public and private utility agencies and stakeholders. Utility companies can improve how quickly convoys respond to incidents by becoming members of the AHC to expedite convoy movement with the help of member agencies. For example, during Hurricane Sandy, out-of-state responding utility convoys faced challenges in providing mutual aid due to an information backlog that would have caused delays at toll stations. AHC was able to help these responding out-of-state utility convoys by quickly and efficiently moving the convoys through toll stations.¹⁴
- **Host utilities should provide clear travel orders and a point of contact to incoming crews.** Some convoys may not have deployed with specific travel orders, creating potential challenges as they may not have a destination contact to call for questions or a point of contact to reference if the convoy is pulled over. To avoid these disruptive situations, it is essential that responding utility convoys are given a point of contact from the utility agencies requesting aid. This information should be covered in the Safety Briefing before the convoy departs.
- **Utilities should send mutual aid resources in manageably sized groups.** Since many responding convoys may not have escorts, it is better if they travel in smaller groups. The smaller groups will make it easier to park and refuel.
- **Utilities might consider shipping vehicles and equipment and flying crews to limit wear and overuse before actual restoration work.** Since some convoys may be requested to travel extremely long distances, it may be best at times to ship vehicles and equipment and fly convoy drivers. These measures can help cut down on driver fatigue and result in less wear on the equipment.

Takeaway: Emergency responders should be aware of noteworthy practices for convoy movement. Guidelines the convoy may follow include getting waivers before departure, participating in the AHC, establishing utility agency and destination points of contact, traveling in small groups, shipping vehicles and equipment, and flying convoy drivers.

¹⁴ AHCUSA. 2021. The AHC's system for Private Sector integration. Retrieved from: <https://www.ahcusa.org/ahcs-system.html>

Commercial Permitting Services

There are commercial firms that offer assistance with oversize, overweight, IRP, IFTA, and specialty permits. These firms work with fleet managers to ensure vehicles are legally compliant prior to departing to the emergency/disaster area.

Takeaway: Commercial permitting services may provide an option to help some fleets obtain permits and decrease the time that it takes to get a permit.

Weigh Station Bypass Technology Applications

In some cases, emergency response and recovery vehicles may use weigh station bypass app-based technology to limit time spent at weigh stations. Not all State weigh stations participate in this technology. The technology works by alerting convoys in advance of the weigh station if they are approved to bypass the station or if they are required to stop. The technology may also offer other benefits such as fuel and time savings. Advance planning is generally necessary to register with such services and to learn how to use the app, and thus it may not be appropriate for all vehicles and circumstances.

Takeaway: For some fleets, technology may be available to streamline interactions with enforcement personnel.

Emergency Support Functions

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines 15 specific Emergency Support Functions (ESF) to help coordinate Federal interagency support when the Federal response to an incident occurs. The functions provide a wider understanding of how Federal Agencies can work to provide support to other Federal agencies or States during incidents that may or may not qualify for Stafford Act declarations. Each function contains numerous core capabilities, covering important incident information such as managing supply chains, monitoring and reporting damage to infrastructure and operations, sharing information, providing resources for evacuations, and restoring services. The functions detailed below were chosen because they focus on transportation's role in responding to an incident and highlight the transportation-related capabilities of each function.¹⁵

¹⁵ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). (2016-2019). Emergency Support Functions. Retrieved from: <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks/response>

Table 6. Key Emergency Support Functions.

Emergency Support Function (ESF)	Summary
1: Transportation	ESF #1 is coordinated by the USDOT and supported by other Federal agencies. It assists state and local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and private transportation stakeholders. Core capabilities for ESF #1 include monitoring and reporting on the status of damage to the transportation system and infrastructure, identifying and implementing temporary transportation solutions, and coordinating regulatory waivers and exemptions. In the long term, ESF #1 may also include coordinating restoration and recovery for affected systems and infrastructure.
6: Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services	ESF #6 is coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/FEMA and is supported by other Federal agencies. It provides assistance when the needs of incident survivors exceed the capabilities of state and local governments. ESF #6's primary functions include Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services. Other Core Capabilities for ESF #6 include the reporting of transportation infrastructure damage and transportation resources for critical needs and for mass evacuations. Additionally, highway information may also be provided to support transportation activities, infrastructure, and operations.
7: Logistics	ESF #7 is coordinated by the General Services Administration and DHS/FEMA and supported by other Federal agencies. It provides a centralized management of supply chain function assistance to responders and incident survivors. Core Capabilities for ESF #7 include critical transportation where procedures are followed to move equipment to incident areas. Other Core Capabilities include monitoring and reporting damage to the transportation system and infrastructure and coordinating temporary alternative transportation solutions. Further down the road, other Core Capabilities may include reestablishing transportation systems and infrastructure and coordinating among transportation infrastructure stakeholders to prevent, prepare, and mitigate incidents.

Table 6. Key Emergency Support Functions. (Continuation)

Emergency Support Function (ESF)	Summary
<p>14: Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure</p>	<p>ESF #14 is coordinated by the DHS/Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and supported by other Federal agencies. It supports coordinating cross-sector operations, including stabilizing key supply chains and community lifelines, as well as more efforts for collaboration among critical infrastructure sectors. Core Capabilities for ESF #14 include transportation supporting engagement efforts with transportation sector business and infrastructure owners and operators, determining if FEMA requests for assistance are eligible, and ensuring emergency/alternative routes consider the needs of first responders and critical lifeline sectors. Other Core Capabilities include working with a variety of State, local, and private partners on capturing, assessing, and reporting damage to the Transportation Systems Sector; analyzing national and regional impacts on the transportation system; addressing private sector requests for support or offers of assistance; and facilitating the sharing of Transportation Systems Sector incident-related information.</p>

Takeaway: FEMA has defined ESFs that describe how Federal agencies coordinate on transportation and other related emergency support functions. These define the institutional environment in which emergency routing takes place.

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