



SUBJECT: Travel Restrictions for Oversize/Overweight Loads During Travel Advisories

Managers, Victoria
Regional CVSE Managers
Area Vehicle Inspectors
Deputy Director, CVSE
ADM, Highways Department

Passenger Transportation Board
Trucking Industry
Carrier Safety Inspectors
Government Agents
Law Enforcement Agencies

Commercial Transport Insp.
(Inspection Stations)
ICBC

PURPOSE OF CIRCULAR

To advise the trucking industry and enforcement staff of new travel restrictions for loads that exceed 100,000 kg Gross Combination Vehicle Weight (GCVW) and/or 4.4 m overall width (OAW).

The restrictions take effect **November 19, 2018**, and will apply on provincial highways that are designated as 'Winter Tire' (passenger vehicle) or 'Carry Chains' (commercial vehicle) routes at any time that those routes are under a Travel Advisory, as posted on the Ministry's DriveBC website, at www.drivebc.ca.

BACKGROUND

In recent years, the Ministry has seen increasing public concern regarding both winter maintenance standards and commercial truck driver behaviour during winter events on our interior highways. The Ministry's operations and CVSE staff have noticed an increase in the number of road closures province-wide that involve commercial vehicles. At times, interior highways are snow covered, slippery and require commercial vehicles to use chains to safely travel portions of our mountainous highway network.

Provincially, we have seen a decrease of serious commercial vehicle related crashes, but ministry staff have noticed an increase in commercial vehicle related road closures, particularly in high mountain passes. The instances of commercial vehicles causing closures by spinning out on the highway or extending closures due to their inability to regain traction on the road surface have increased.

During the winter of 2017/2018, the Coquihalla Highway had 31 major highway closures totalling approximately 96 hours. Of those 31 closures, 28 involved commercial vehicles. A heavy duty tow truck is on site at the Snowshed Hill on Highway 5 anytime heavy snowfall is forecast and the mandatory chain up is implemented. On average more than 200 commercial vehicles require assistance and towing up the hill, due to loss of traction.

Also, during the winter of 2017/2018, the Coquihalla Highway had 15 extreme weather related Travel Advisories that were considered as "Major". In comparison, the Taylor Hill located in the Peace River District only experienced 2, while the Rogers Pass had zero. These three passes,

when combined, have experienced an average of 20 Travel Advisories annually over the past five years with the Coquihalla Highway seeing the highest numbers – the worst was in 2014 when there were a total of 32 Travel Advisories posted as a result of extreme weather conditions near the summit. The Taylor Hill and Rogers Pass, over the past five years have received just fewer than 3 Travel Advisories each per year due to extreme weather.

While most interventions are required for standard size and weight commercial vehicles, the effects of these incidents are potentially more disruptive when the loads are very large or very heavy. Even heavy duty tow trucks are not designed to pull loads with weights that exceed 100,000 kg, and a load exceeding 4.4 meters blocks a very significant portion of the roadway when disabled, especially in heavy snow. It is difficult for maintenance contractors to remove snow when vehicles are blocking the way, resulting in longer than usual road closures.

It is essential to be proactive in our approach to winter driving safety, timely road maintenance, and snow removal, to ensure roads remain open. There are already permit conditions that restrict large configurations from travel during periods of inclement weather. With this change, CVSE is taking the next step in keeping highways open and reducing lengthy closures as a result of winter weather.

Note that modular homes with a basic structure width of 4.4 m and one eave only, on the shoulder side, adding up to .6 m overall width will be considered to be 4.4 m wide for application of this restriction, so they will not be affected.

Provincial Incident Response and Travel Advisories:

Changeable message signs and overhead messaging boards will be used to advise drivers of Travel Advisories when possible.

Proactive Travel Advisories give the travelling public advance notice on any anticipated/forecasted weather, visibility, surface, or road conditions that is significant or unusual. Travel Advisories that involve an extreme weather alert include a reference to Environment Canada's Reports, when possible. They describe expected conditions and the forecasted timing of the conditions. For example; "Heavy or Extreme Snowfall is Expected Overnight with Limited Visibility".

DriveBC reporting is limited to the Provincial Numbered Highway network operated by the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Forest service roads, side roads and municipal roads do not fall within the reporting structure for DriveBC.

Available Staging Areas

Commercial vehicle combinations that are over 100,000 kg GCVW and/or over 4.4 m OAW **must not be dispatched** during extreme winter conditions and Travel Advisories.

For those carriers who become aware of a Travel Advisory while in transit and are unable to return to the point of dispatch, all CVSE inspection stations/weigh scales will be made available for staging and some chain up areas as space allows. These include the inspection station parking areas in the Lower Mainland and the Pacific border crossing on Highway 15, along with the three Hope area stations (Laidlaw, Hunter Creek, Haig).

Recent commercial vehicle facility expansions were undertaken at the Box Canyon chain up area on Highway 5 (Coquihalla Hwy) and, in extreme situations, provisions may be made to stage loads that are restricted from travel at the chain up area. We expect parking for an additional 56 commercial vehicles and 3 extraordinary loads to be completed by the fall of 2018.

In the Southern Interior, both Kamloops stations and the brake check area will be utilized to stage affected vehicle combinations during a Travel Advisory. All reasonable efforts will be made to intercept affected loads prior to reaching areas under travel advisories and CVSE staff will assist in staging/parking these large loads until such time as the advisory has been lifted.

For affected vehicle combinations operating in the Northern Region and Highway 97 the ministry will make the newly expanded Taylor Hill chain up area available to loads that have been dispatched and cannot easily return to the point of dispatch. Loads will remain at the brake check during Travel Advisories on the Taylor Hill and will remain there until the Travel Advisory has been removed from DriveBC.

Questions about the new restrictions may be directed to commercial.transport@gov.bc.ca or to Jan Lansing, Manager Commercial Transport, at jan.lansing@gov.bc.ca.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JanLansing". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jan Lansing
Manager Commercial Transport
Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement Branch
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure