Transportation Code, §545.0651, authorizes the Texas Department of Transportation (department) to restrict through traffic, by class of vehicle, to two or more designated lanes of traffic on certain portions of the designated state highway system. As required, the Texas Transportation Commission (commission) adopted 43 TAC §§25.601-25.604 that became effective on January 8, 2004, to implement the statute.

The department, working in conjunction with local jurisdictions developed proposed lane restrictions shown in Exhibit A. In accordance with §25.604(e)(3), the department conducted traffic studies to evaluate the impact of the lane restrictions. In accordance with §25.604(d), the department published a notice in the Texas Register for a 30 day comment period and held public hearings in the local jurisdictions on the proposed restrictions. Ten people commented on the proposed lane restrictions. Five individuals opposed the restrictions, stating that the restrictions would likely cause more traffic problems; result in more tailgating and unsafe passing maneuvers; discourage smart, safe driving practices; and result in more motor vehicle crashes. One commenter also stated that restricting truck traffic to the left lanes would be more beneficial. Three individuals voiced their support of the lane restrictions and one commenter raised issues with enforcement of the restrictions and truck speed limits.

Texas currently has lane restrictions in place on various highways in Bexar, Comal, Dallas, El Paso, Harris, Hays, Tarrant, Travis and Williamson counties. These existing lane restrictions have not produced increased congestion or safety problems. Lane restrictions for trucks are generally considered to improve safety by reducing differential vehicle speeds, lane changes, and passing maneuvers. A traffic study was performed by the Texas Transportation Institute after a restricted truck lane was enacted on I-10 East in Houston. Although there are several factors that impact crash rates, the lane restriction likely had a role in reducing vehicle crashes by 68 percent along the highway mainlanes during the 36 weeks that were monitored. Additional studies have been performed on I-20 and I-30 in Dallas and Fort Worth and shown beneficial results from lane restrictions. These studies showed that the rate of motor vehicle crashes decreased by 78 percent on I-20 and 22 percent on I-30.

In accordance with Transportation Code §545.601 and 43 TAC §§25.601-25.604, the department is proposing a lane restriction that would establish consistent lane use restrictions applicable to trucks, as defined in Transportation Code, §541.201, with three or more axles, and to truck tractors, also as defined in Transportation Code, §541.201, regardless of whether the truck tractor is drawing another vehicle or trailer. The proposed lane restrictions prohibit those vehicles from using lane one (inside left lane) of controlled access lanes on each side of the highways listed in Exhibit A. The proposed lane restrictions would be in effect 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and would allow the operation of those vehicles in a prohibited traffic lane for the purposes of passing another vehicle or entering or exiting the highway.

In accordance with 43 TAC §25.604(h)(2), the executive director may temporarily suspend the lane restrictions in an emergency.

The commission, having evaluated the truck lane restriction proposals based on the safety of the traveling public and the factors listed in 43 TAC §25.604(f), finds that the proposed lane restrictions should be approved.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the commission that the proposed lane restrictions are approved and shall become effective upon placement of all necessary traffic control devices.

Submitted and reviewed by:

Caroline Mauldon, P.E.

Interim Director, Traffic Operations Division

Recommended by:

Executive Director

112021 OCT 29 09

Minute Number Date Passed

RESTRICTED TRUCK LANES

County	Highway	Limits		Texas Register	Public Hearing
		BEGIN (City)	END (City)		
Dallas District					
Dallas	IH 20	Tarrant County Line (Grand Prairie)	Kaufman County Line (Mesquite)	July 24, 2009	August 12, 2009
Dallas	IH 45	IH 30 (Dallas)	Ellis County Line (Ferris)	July 24, 2009	August 10, 2009
Ellis	IH 45	Dallas County Line (Ferris)	FM 3413 (Ennis)	July 24, 2009	August 10, 2009
Kaufman	IH 20	Dallas County Line (Mesquite)	FM 740 (Mesquite)	July 24, 2009	August 12, 2009
Fort Worth District					
Tarrant	IH 20	US 377 (Fort Worth)	Dallas County Line (Grand Prairie)	July 24, 2009	August 11, 2009
Tarrant	IH 30	Dale Ln. (Fort Worth)	FM 157 (Arlington)	July 24, 2009	August 11, 2009
Tarrant	IH 820	Westpoint Blvd. (Fort Worth)	IH 20 (Fort Worth)	July 24, 2009	August 11, 2009