



California Department of Transportation

Division of Traffic Operations, Office of Traffic Management

Traveler Information	Date: December 2, 2014
Subject: Criteria for Designating Routes of Significance (23 CFR 511)	Statewide Quarterly Traveler Information Meeting

PURPOSE

In compliance with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under regulation 23 CFR 511 Subpart C, requires States to work with local or regional agencies to designate Routes of Significance (RoS) in metropolitan areas with a population exceeding one million. The purpose of this document is to outline the criteria to designate a roadway as a RoS.

There are six regional areas with a population exceeding one million in California. These areas fall under the jurisdiction of one or more of the following metropolitan areas:

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)
- Council of San Benito County Governments (San Benito COG)
- El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC)
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA)
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
- Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA)
- Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA)
- Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC)
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)
- San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG)
- San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- Tahoe Metropolitan Planning Organization (TMPO)
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)

DEFINITION

FHWA defines RoS as non-interstate roadways in metropolitan areas designated by States as meriting the collection and provisions of information related to traffic and travel conditions. Factors to consider in designating RoS include roadway safety (e.g., crash rate, routes affected by environmental events), public safety (e.g., evacuation routes), economic productivity, severity and frequency of congestion and utility of the highway to serve as a diversion route for congestion locations.

REQUIRED ACTION AND DEADLINES

Please provide contact information for the individual/s that will assume responsibilities for your agency regarding RoS to Caltrans' Traveler Information Coordinator by **November 7, 2014**.

Please plan to attend the "Meet and Greet" Traveler Information teleconference on **December 2, 2014 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.**

Please provide the proposed RoS and strategic plan to Caltrans' Traveler Information Coordinator by **April 10, 2015**.

Caltrans will work with MPOs and RTPAs to establish RoS in their regions. It is expected that MPOs and RTPAs coordinate directly with local agencies in identifying, reporting and monitoring RoS. MPOs and RTPAs proposing RoS must meet specific reporting criteria as outlined in the table in order to reach compliance and meet the upcoming deadline. **If the criteria and strategic plan for the proposed RoS are not met by April 10, 2015, the RoS will not be approved.**

The strategic plan shall address the four provisions for traffic and travel conditions reporting for each proposed RoS:

- 1) construction activities***
- 2) roadway or lane blocking incidents***
- 3) roadway weather observations***
- 4) travel times***

For all of the above referenced areas, Caltrans requires a description of how the data is 85 percent accurate and the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITSs) are 90 percent available. Descriptions of the database/s used to store information should also be included in the strategic plan.

Provisions for Traffic and Travel Conditions Reporting	Criteria	Supporting Justification
Construction Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information must be stored in a database in an XML format. • Information must be available to Caltrans within 5 minutes or less from the time of the closure or reopening for roadways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most compatible format to transport, store and share data. • Caltrans must have the capability to access the information within 5 minutes in order to meet the timeliness of availability of 10 minutes or less (FHWA reporting purposes).
Roadway or Lane Blocking Incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information must be stored in a database in an XML format. • Information must be available to Caltrans within 5 minutes or less from the time the incident is verified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most compatible format to transport, store and share data. • Caltrans must have the capability to access the information within 5 minutes in order to meet the timeliness of availability of 10 minutes or less (FHWA reporting purposes).
Roadway Weather Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information must be stored in a database in an XML format. • Information must be available to Caltrans within 15 minutes or less from the time the hazardous conditions, blockage or closure is observed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most compatible format to transport, store and share data. • Caltrans must have the capability to access the information within 15 minutes in order to meet the timeliness of availability of 20 minutes or less (FHWA reporting purposes).
Travel Time Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information must be stored in a database in an XML format. • Information must be available to Caltrans within 5 minutes or less from the time the travel time calculation is completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most compatible format to transport, store and share data. • Caltrans must have the capability to access the information within 5 minutes in order to meet the timeliness of availability of 10 minutes or less (FHWA reporting purposes).
Information Accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local or regional agency shall have a strategic plan to monitor and maintain a level of accuracy at or above 85% or demonstrate a maximum error rate of 15% by April 10, 2015. • The local or regional agency must share the strategic plan with Caltrans by April 10, 2015. • Accuracy levels must be shared with Caltrans on a quarterly basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategic plan is necessary to ensure the accuracy is monitored and maintained on a consistent basis. • The plan shall be shared with Caltrans in order to meet approval by FHWA. • Caltrans must have the capability to retrieve the accuracy levels on a quarterly basis for reporting purposes to FHWA.
Information Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local or regional agency shall have a strategic plan to monitor and maintain the availability of reported information at a minimum of 90% by April 10, 2015. • The local or regional agency must share the strategic plan with Caltrans by April 10, 2015. • Availability levels must be shared with Caltrans on a quarterly basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategic plan is necessary to ensure the availability is monitored and maintained on a consistent basis. • The plan shall be shared with Caltrans in order to meet approval by FHWA. • Caltrans must have the capability to retrieve the availability levels on a quarterly basis for reporting purposes to FHWA.

BACKGROUND

23 CFR 511 Subpart C establishes the Real-Time System Management Information Program (RTSMIP). The RTSMIP is the program used by States to gather and make available data for traffic and travel conditions.

The RTSMIP is to provide the capability to monitor the real-time traffic and travel conditions of the major highways of the United States and to share this data with State and local governments and the traveling public. Establishment of the RTSMIP for traffic and travel conditions on interstate highways shall be completed no later than **November 8, 2014**. The compliance report for the 2014 deadline has been submitted and Caltrans received an official letter of compliance with 23 CFR 511 from FHWA. Traffic and travel conditions include:

- Road and lane closures due to construction, traffic incidents or other events
- Roadway weather or other environmental conditions restricting or adversely affecting travel
- Travel times or speeds on limited access roadways in metropolitan areas that experience recurring congestion

The specific regulations, as designated in 23 CFR 511.309, are listed below:

- *Construction Activities:* The timeliness for the availability of information about full construction activities that close or reopen roadways or lanes will be 10 minutes or less from the time of the closure or reopening for roadways within Metropolitan areas. Short-term or intermittent lane closures of limited duration that are less than the required reporting times are not included as a minimum requirement under this section.
- *Roadway or Lane Blocking Incidents:* The timeliness for the availability of information related to roadway or lane blocking traffic incidents will be 10 minutes or less from the time that the incident is verified for roadways within Metropolitan Areas.
- *Roadway Weather Observations:* The timeliness for the availability of information about hazardous driving conditions and roadway or lane closures or blockages because of adverse weather conditions will be 20 minutes or less from the time the hazardous condition, blockage, or closure is observed.
- *Travel Time Information:* The timeliness for the availability of travel time information along limited access roadway segments within Metropolitan Areas will be 10 minutes or less from the time that the travel time calculation is completed.
- *Information Accuracy:* The designed accuracy for a real-time information program shall be 85% accurate at a minimum, or have a maximum error rate of 15%.
- *Information Availability:* The designed availability for a real-time information program shall be 90 percent available at a minimum.

As a supplement to the RTSMIP, States shall collaborate with local or regional agencies to designate RoS in metropolitan areas that exceed a population of one million. All public roadways including arterial highways, toll facilities and other facilities that apply end user pricing mechanisms shall be considered when designating RoS. Caltrans is working to establish the RTSMIP for traffic and travel conditions reporting along State-designated RoS by **late spring 2016**.