



TRUCK SIZE AND WEIGHT PROVISIONS

Purpose

The FAST Act includes a number of provisions that modify Federal requirements regarding the size and weight of vehicles that may travel on the Interstate System and the National Network.

Statutory citations: FAST Act §§ 1409, 1410, 5502, 5516, 5520, 5523, 5525; 23 U.S.C. 127; 49 U.S.C. 31111

Exemptions from vehicle weight limitations

Heavy-duty tow and recovery vehicles

The FAST Act exempts covered heavy-duty tow and recovery vehicles from Federal Interstate weight limits. [FAST Act §1410; 23 U.S.C. 127(m)]

Grandfathering of existing limits on certain highways

The FAST Act allows for the continuation of current State *weight* limits on certain routes in Texas designated as I-69. [FAST Act §1410; 23 U.S.C. 127(n)]

The FAST Act allows for the continuation of current State *size and weight* limits on a segment of U.S. 63 in Arkansas if the segment is designated as an Interstate System route. [FAST Act §1410; 23 U.S.C. 127(p)]

Logging vehicles in Wisconsin and Minnesota

The FAST Act increases the allowable weight of covered logging vehicles that may travel on certain segments of I-39 in Wisconsin and I-35 in Minnesota to gross weights of 98,000 and 99,000 pounds, respectively. [FAST Act §1410; 23 U.S.C. 127(o), (q)]

Emergency vehicles

The FAST Act increases the maximum gross vehicle weight allowance of an emergency vehicle on the Interstate System to 86,000 pounds. [FAST Act §1410; 23 U.S.C. 127(r)]

Natural gas vehicles

For the purpose of Interstate System weight limitations, the FAST Act increases the allowable weight of a natural gas vehicle by an amount equal to the difference between the weight attributable to the vehicle's natural gas tank and fueling system and the weight of a comparable diesel tank and fueling system, up to a maximum gross vehicle weight of 82,000 pounds. [FAST Act §1410; 23 U.S.C. 127(s)]

Clarification of Vehicle or Load Definitions

Vehicles carrying fluid milk

For the purpose of Federal Interstate System weight limits, the FAST Act defines a vehicle carrying fluid milk to be a "non-divisible load". Consequently, a State may issue a permit that allows such a vehicle to exceed Federal Interstate weight limits. [FAST Act §1409; 23 U.S.C. 127(a)]

Automobile transporters

The FAST Act revises the definition of the term "automobile transporter" to allow for the transport of general freight on a return trip ("backhaul"), so long as the vehicle still complies with Interstate System weight restrictions. The Act also prohibits States from imposing a length limitation of less than 80 feet and adjusts allowable front and rear overhangs on certain automobile transporters. [FAST Act §5520; 49 U.S.C. 31111(a)-(b)]

Towaway trailers

The FAST Act provides that a State may not prohibit a Towaway Trailer Transporter Combination of less than 82 feet from traveling on the National Network. For the purpose of this provision, the Act defines—

- the term “Trailer Transporter Towing Unit” to mean a power unit that is not used to carry property when in a Towaway Trailer Transporter Combination; and
- the term “Towaway Trailer Transporter Combination” to mean a combination of vehicles consisting of a Trailer Transporter Towing Unit and 2 trailers or semitrailers as inventory.

To fall within the definition of “Towaway Trailer Transporter Combination,” the total weight of the property and the combination may not exceed 26,000 pounds. [FAST Act § 5523; 49 U.S.C. 31111(a)-(b)]

Other provisions related to truck size and weight

Emergency Route Permitting Working Group

The FAST Act requires DOT to establish, within one year, a working group to determine best practices for State approval of special size and weight permits for vehicles involved in emergency response and recovery. The Working Group must submit a report to the Secretary containing findings and recommendations. [FAST Act § 5502]

South Dakota Federal-aid Primary System highways

The FAST Act provides South Dakota the opportunity to update and revise the routes designated as qualifying Federal-aid Primary System highways under 49 U.S.C 31111(e), as long as the update shifts routes to divided highways or does not increase centerline miles by more than 5 percent and is expected to increase safety performance. [FAST Act § 5516]

Report to Congress

The FAST Act requires DOT to submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, describing the safety and enforcement impacts of sections 5520, 5521, 5522, 5523, 5524, and 7208 of the FAST Act. [FAST Act §5525]