Meeting Summary

1. Welcome
   David Vieth of the Wisconsin DOT’s Bureau of Highway Operations and Ken Leonard with Cambridge Systematics provided a welcome and brief overview of the study and the intentions of the meeting.

   **Introductions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Nowak</td>
<td>Port of Milwaukee</td>
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<td>Jason Stenglein</td>
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<td>Joel Behling</td>
<td>City of Waukesha Police Department</td>
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<td>Roger Boehlke</td>
<td>Wisconsin Propane Gas Association</td>
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<td>Sgt. Tano Martino</td>
<td>Wisconsin State Patrol</td>
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<td>Perry Brown</td>
<td>Wisconsin DATCP</td>
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<td>John Marchek</td>
<td>Town of Merton</td>
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<td>Don Roberts</td>
<td>Town of Delafield</td>
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<td>Todd Martin</td>
<td>Town of Delafield</td>
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<td>Al Geurts</td>
<td>Outagamie County Highway Dept/WCHA</td>
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<td>Marvin Schaitel</td>
<td>Wisconsin Towns Association</td>
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<td>Michele Martino</td>
<td>Wisconsin State Patrol</td>
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<td>Scot Becker</td>
<td>WisDOT Bureau of Structures</td>
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<td>Beth Cannestra</td>
<td>WisDOT Bureau of Structures</td>
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<td>Doug Salentine</td>
<td>Director of DPW, Town of Vernon</td>
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<td>Terry McMahon</td>
<td>Wisconsin Towns Association</td>
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<td>Walt Raith</td>
<td>East Central Wisconsin RPC</td>
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<td>Allen Boruch</td>
<td>City of Manitowoc Engineer/Port of Manitowoc</td>
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<td>Ron Adams</td>
<td>WisDOT Railroads &amp; Harbors Sections</td>
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<td>David Vieth</td>
<td>WisDOT BHO</td>
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<td>John Corbin</td>
<td>WisDOT BHO</td>
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<td>David Leucinger</td>
<td>WisDOT, PEDS</td>
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<td>Adrian Lopez</td>
<td>WisDOT SE Region</td>
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<td>Jason Bittner</td>
<td>CFIRE</td>
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<td>Todd Szymkowski</td>
<td>UW Madison TOPS Lab</td>
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<td>Kelly Langer</td>
<td>WisDOT BHO STOC</td>
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   Also in attendance from the Study team were Sam Van Hecke (CS); Emily Silverson (WisDOT BHO); and Manfred Enburg and June Coleman (Transmart).

- Meeting Objectives
  The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is conducting a study of Wisconsin truck size and weight (TSW) laws to identify potential changes to current TSW restrictions that could allow for economic development gains and greater employment within the State without negatively impacting roadway safety, roadway performance, and the costs to build and maintain infrastructure. This Workshop is part of the outreach effort for this study. It has the following objectives:
  - Provide an opportunity for State and local agency representatives to share their expertise on how existing TSW laws impact the transportation network; and
Learn from public agency stakeholders how changes to TSW laws would likely impact Wisconsin.

2. **Study Introduction**
   A power point slide presentation was given which covered:
   - Study History
   - Study Goals
   - Outreach Plan
   - Existing TSW Laws
   - Potential for Change

   Some key points of the discussion included:
   - Balancing economic benefits and public safety
   - Role of enforcement in TSW laws
   - Number of Wisconsin exclusions and exemptions
   - Cost-benefit analysis of changes and impacts

   Before going into breakout discussions, Ken Leonard reminded the group that:
   - It is early in the study and WisDOT wants to hear from everyone
   - WisDOT is looking to identify any additional impacts not noted in the presentation
   - “Everything is on the table” as potential for change and discussion

3. **Breakout sessions** (see responses below)
   - Key Questions on Impacts of TSW Laws (Ten question topics distributed as guide discussion)
   - Whole Group Discussion of Breakout Session Responses

4. **Upcoming Additional Outreach Opportunities**
   - Similar meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 28th in Wausau
   - Meeting in December of both private and public sector agencies
   - A more targeted effort of private sector currently going on
   - Regular meetings among the Study Advisory Group (external oversight committee) and the Trucking Issues Group (WisDOT’s internal technical advisory group) are occurring
   - Website set up with the UW TOPS Lab contains additional information and schedule for upcoming events
   - Additional comments can be sent to Emily Silverson, with WisDOT BHO, through email

5. **Questions**
   - Make sure we include the industry in the discussion
   - Need to address issue of fines and penalties

6. **Meeting Adjourned (@3:30 pm)**

Visit [http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/wtsws.html](http://www.topslab.wisc.edu/workgroups/wtsws.html) for additional news on the Wisconsin Truck Size and Weight Study including the schedule for additional outreach events.
Break-out Session Discussion (presented to Whole Group)

1. IMPACT OF TRUCK SIZE AND WEIGHT LAWS TODAY

   How do existing TSW laws impact your region today?

   • Counties and towns deal with TSW issues daily because there is a major lack of compliance and enforcement due to lack of resources. Counties try to have sheriff’s department enforce, however, there are limited sheriff resources.
   • Laws are not very favorable for enforcement. There are many restrictions on how long an officer can delay a trucker and how far off the route the officer can take the trucker to reach a weigh scale. Technology to aid in enforcement (on-board scales, etc.,) is very difficult to implement widespread and are expensive for smaller trucking firms. There should be a federal mandate to require wireless scale devices installed on all trucks when built after a certain date.
   • The WisDOT Bureau of Structures is concerned if laws take effect to raise truck weight, there may be a safety risk associated with the bridges. The state and local agenda need to agree on a consistent method to analyze the safety risk of larger trucks on bridges. The cost of structural fatigue on bridges due to larger trucks should be determined and not just the monetary costs for replacing/repairing bridges.
   • Changes in geometric design, especially for roundabouts, need to be addressed when considering longer trucks. Roundabouts are becoming more prominent in Wisconsin.
   • Correlation needs to be made between state infrastructure costs and state economic costs to the industry with potential changes in the TSW laws.
   • TSW Laws limit what ports to ship in and out of and items that are shipped.
   • Towns don’t want increase weight, especially in the spring
   • It is important to identify roads that are capable of handling heavier loads; must examine impact of increased damage to local loads
   • Specifically, in Manitowoc there is an increase in heavy loads operating within the city port during the fall, which in turn, impacts urban roads and is a concern for the locals.
   • Non-conforming trucks are a risk to public safety. If TSW laws change, the impact of larger trucks may also have a negative effect on public safety.
   • Heavy loads going to Oshkosh with military equipment provide some concern to the region.
   • The existing laws and exceptions provide for some loopholes and misunderstanding. Perhaps some better training on the laws is necessary.

2. POTENTIAL CHANGE

   Should the state change existing TSW laws? If so, how?

   • Need fair and equitable laws that are easy to understand. Eliminate exceptions in law to minimize confusion and loopholes.
   • Should examine what the current infrastructure actually allows in order to determine what standardization is needed.
   • The timing for industry changes is not good. There are state and county projects for upgrading the infrastructure that are on hold due to lack of funding. At the local level, it is very difficult to improve the local roads. A process should be in place, which requires heavier loads to only travel on the routes that have been updated to handle the size and weight rather than deteriorating the roads that cannot handle the larger loads. May be helpful to designate certain routes or corridors for heavy truck traffic.
   • All impacts need to be carefully analyzed and potential laws need to be realistically considered if current or future infrastructure plans and funding can handle these changes.
• Consider the impacts on other modes (water, air, rail)
• Consider the actual impact of increasing the load weight from 80,000 pounds to 90,000 pounds. There may not be any major impact.
• Size and weight are both issues, not just one or the other.
• The federal government should consider a national standard and TSW, so that states have the same laws and can operate at a regional level without discrepancies. There may also be potential for a regional standard that could lead to a federal standard.

3. IMPACTS OF CHANGE

If TSW laws were changed, what impact would they have on your region and on Wisconsin?
• In some instances, trucks use County highways more because of the better quality roads than some secondary state-owned highways. In that case, the roads deteriorate faster than other roads, so counties place restrictions on those highways. Due to this, the Counties receive negative feedback from the trucking industry and locals for highway restrictions, but it is necessary to keep restrictions in place because the roads will deteriorate faster than they can be replaced.
• If heavier vehicles are allowed on some routes, it is important to keep them off local roads.
• Would the current geometrics designed to prevent scuffing of turning trucks if additional axles are allowed?
• Access to other modes and routes may be impacted.
• Overweight loads should be allowed on the interstate in order to take large trucks off of local roads. If no, one concern of the locals is if more trucks travel on local roads, will the state pay the locals for the impacts to their system?
• If truck weight is increased, it may improve the efficiency in shipping processed food throughout the state. The increased weight may also decrease permit needs in the state.
• The state does not have an intermodal shipping system in place; development of one would be difficult because of different weight/size limits currently in place.

4. OTHER SOLUTIONS

Outside of TSW changes, what solutions would you recommend for consideration to improve freight transportation and goods movement?
• Work with other modes to increase freight transport, especially the railroad system in order to take loads off the roads.
• Examine transfer time restrictions between travel venues; require transfer at certain periods of the day. Increase truck weight allowances at night or off-peak periods;
• Specific freight corridors should be identified and those specific corridors should be built to handle larger trucks.
• There needs to be regional consistency within the state and between adjacent states.

5. REVENUE

Do you think additional sources of revenue would need to be made available to help offset costs such as enforcement or roadway maintenance (if TSW laws were changed)? What sources of revenue should the state seek to meet these increased costs?
• An increase in revenue would be able to pay for damage/improvements to the highway system. The ultimate goal is to increase the revenues enough to cover these costs.
• Use transportation fees for actual transportation improvements
• Increase OS/OW permit fees. Overweight permit costs are very minimal to the impacts of the trucks on the roads. The risk and penalty for being caught with an overweight load by enforcement is less than if the driver made multiple underweight trips. OS/OW
permit review by WisDOT Regions is very costly. The counties/state currently move signs and traffic signals during oversize truck movements; this will increase if TSW laws were change and is costly to the state.

- Increase cost of fines for violators to increase self-compliance within the industry. Currently the revenues from fines cover the costs of doing business.
- Implement truck usage fees or other technologies to collect revenue.
- Implement toll roads.

6. STUDY METHODOLOGY
The study is examining a number of factors as part of the evaluation of proposed changes. Does the methodology presented today seem appropriate? What, if any, other factors should the team analyze?

- Wisconsin methodology (similar to Minnesota) varies throughout the state. Need diverse representation of counties and locals around the state to represent in Outreach Workshops.
- Vehicle technologies are getting better. Manufacturers are developing carbon fiber trucks that are lighter weight.
- Virtual weigh stations now make it difficult for trucks to avoid weigh stations.
- Ethanol plant routes should be analyzed in more depth due to the increasing number throughout the state.
- Talk to manufacturers (i.e., wind tower manufacturers) and truck manufacturers to understand their needs and where their industry is heading in order to accommodate it rather than find out about issues when it’s too late.

7. ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
Are there additional stakeholders we should be talking to as part of this study’s outreach effort?

- Should coordinate with Iowa and possibly implement Iowa’s OS/OW policies. Iowa has very high OS/OW permit fees and discourages OS/OW permits for through traffic.
- Consider “Grow Wisconsin”. Rather than limiting the industry, work with the industry to identify their needs. It’s the extreme violators that are hurting the infrastructure by not abiding by current TSW laws, rather than the majority of the trucking industry who abide by TSW laws.
- Have discussions at the federal level to identify what changes to weight/size limits are being talked about for on a national level.

8. FREIGHT CHALLENGES
Describe freight transportation challenges facing Wisconsin.

- Should analyze safety impacts of large heavy truck crashes, and should also look at secondary impacts of deteriorating roads due to of heavier loads.
- Technology for improving freight transportation and increasing enforcement exists, but the public agencies and private industries need to implement it (i.e., photo imaging enforcement).

9. TRENDS
What regional or national trends will affect transportation – especially goods movement – in the future?

- There appears to be a national effort to move more goods through ports, which increases truck traffic due to lack of access in waterway usage.
- Dairy farms are consolidating, becoming a larger industry in one location, rather than many smaller farms dispersed.
- Will the new federal administration look at this TSW issue?
• If weight/size increases are permitted, is transport more efficient, thus increasing demand but not increasing traffic?
• Wisconsin needs to know exactly how big/bad the problem actually is; right now only a limited percentage of the traffic is looked at compared to other states.

10. EXISTING BARRIERS
   Please describe any barriers you observe that prevent efficient freight management in the region.
   • Need to continue to increase use of waterways to try and decrease truck traffic.