Using exposure-based evidence to assess regulatory compliance of productivity-permitted long trucks

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This paper uses exposure-based evidence to assess compliance of productivity-permitted long trucks. Productivity-permitted long trucks are multiple trailer configurations, consisting primarily of van trailers, which operate beyond basic vehicle length limitations but within basic weight restrictions. They operate under special permits granted to increase the technical productivity of hauling relatively low-density freight. Long trucks are subject to stringent regulations related to safety, weights and dimensions, and operational conditions. The application of exposure indicators—in terms of volume and weight characteristics—provides evidence of long truck compliance with respect to these regulations. Specifically, the objectives of the paper are to:

• present a methodological framework for assessing long truck compliance using exposure-based evidence;
• describe regulations governing long truck operations in the Canadian Prairie Region; and
• provide examples of exposure-based evidence of long truck regulatory compliance in the Canadian Prairie Region with safety regulations, weight restrictions, and network-related operational conditions.

The analysis focuses on the Canadian Prairie Region experiences with long truck operations, but provides insights and lessons which have general application. These experiences began in Alberta in the late 1960s. Over the next several decades, Saskatchewan and Manitoba also permitted long trucks on intra-jurisdictional highway networks. Recent network expansions, a favourable regulatory environment, and rising demand for hauling cubic freight have generated more inter-jurisdictional opportunities for long trucks than were available a decade ago. Today, long trucks operate on rural, principally uncongested highways designed for high speed travel.

The long truck network, which measures over 10,000 centreline-kilometres, consists of both divided and undivided routes, and provides connections to all major urban centres in the region.