

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE

February 26, 2015

1:01 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Peter Micciche, Chair
Senator Mike Dunleavy
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Dennis Egan

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Click Bishop, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

INFORMATIONAL HEARING ON THE DALTON HIGHWAY

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

ROBERT CAMPBELL

Central Region Director and Acting Northern Region Director
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Talked about the capital program for the Dalton Highway, the maintenance program on the Dalton Highway, and about safety on the Dalton Highway.

AVES THOMPSON, Executive Director
Alaska Trucking Association (ATA)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on vehicular use of the Dalton Highway.

ALAN HOZA

Project Specialist
Alaska West Express

Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Said he is a former Haul Road driver and does safety officer training.

ROGER BROWN, Dispatch Manager

Carlile Enterprises

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on vehicular use of the Dalton Highway.

ART REED, Terminal Manager

Sourdough Express

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on vehicular use of the Dalton Highway.

DAN SMITH, Director

Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF)

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reviewed information on permits, inspections and violations on the Dalton Highway.

KRISTIN RYAN, Director

Division of Spill Prevention and Response (SPAR)

Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on SPAR's coordination efforts with the Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division, DOTPF.

ACTION NARRATIVE

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CHAIR PETER MICCICHE called the Senate Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Stedman, Dunleavy, and Chair Micciche.

Informational Hearing on the Dalton Highway

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CHAIR MICCICHE announced that the committee would take up an informational hearing on the Dalton Highway from the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) and industry representatives.

SENATOR EGAN joined the committee.

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ROBERT CAMPBELL, Central Region Director and Acting Northern Region Director, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), Anchorage, Alaska, said he wanted to talk about three main topics today: the capital program for the Dalton Highway, the maintenance program on the Dalton Highway, and about safety on the Dalton Highway.

He said the capital program involves four different categories:
-historical capital projects for a total of \$45 million
-projects active in construction for about \$100 million
-projects in the design phase for about \$250 million
-long range projects 2015-2018

Nearly \$800 million of capital work has been completed or will be completed on the Dalton Highway in the next 10 years. One can say they are vigorously investing in this corridor.

MR. CAMPBELL stated that all of these projects are federally funded, so they are somewhat at the whim of a steady stream of federal funds. It also comes with a lot of red tape and process that minimizes the efficiency of delivering some of these projects.

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MR. CAMPBELL said the Dalton Highway is about 400 miles long and has seven maintenance stations. Each station is responsible for 60-70 miles of highway and has relatively small crews - two or three people at a time who work a week on/a week off. Some of these remote camps have employee retention issues, because it's hard to have a family working that schedule in a remote location and because other industries offer better wages.

MR. CAMPBELL said going forward they are looking at a 10 percent cut in the maintenance budget which will affect every route in the state. The higher class and higher volume and commercial value facilities will be maintained first. So, roads like the Dalton Highway will not bear the brunt of those cuts, but there will be impacts.

He said the department does a lot of analysis every year on all routes statewide to determine their relative safety. The Dalton Highway is one of the safest routes, statistically, with only one-quarter the rate of accidents of the average for rural two-lane roads. However, their safety numbers are based on reported accidents only, so it may not be a complete picture.

SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked what percentage of traffic on the Dalton Highway is tied in directly to activity in Prudhoe Bay and Kuparuk.

MR. CAMPBELL answered about one-third of all vehicles go all the way to Deadhorse.

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SENATOR STEDMAN said this subject matter had been on the table for 10 years in anticipation of constructing a gasline and asked if this highway is on track to handle upcoming construction.

MR. CAMPBELL answered yes. The Haul Road was built in 1974 and it has been improved a lot since then, but it could be better.

SENATOR STEDMAN asked if that includes bridges and culverts and choke points.

MR. CAMPBELL replied it's not a stationary target; every spring thaw the roads have problems. The road can handle a lot of freight traffic now, but it could be improved to accommodate construction of a pipeline. Two-thirds of it is already paved.

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SENATOR STEDMAN asked about availability of rock and gravel.

MR. CAMPBELL answered that most of the northern part of the state has a shortage of good granular material. Two main agencies control the lands along the Dalton Highway: the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that handles extraction permits. It is hard to get approval to develop those sites and they are usually quite a long distance away.

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SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked about the plan, the cost and the timeline for dealing with the ice wedge creep along a portion of the highway.

MR. CAMPBELL answered that the frozen debris lobe is at mile 218 and is moving about an inch a day, pretty fast in a geological sense. It will probably need to get fixed within the next 10 years and will cost about \$70 million; most of that is for realigning the road around the node, which belongs to the BLM. However, they are not particularly interested in solving the

problem from their end, so the state will probably have to move the road.

SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked if the road is realigned would it still be in the corridor or will permits be needed.

MR. CAMPBELL said he didn't know if the state has a floating right-of-way centered on the road or not, but as with any project, complexities will come with moving the road in terms of environmental regulations and wetlands, and they would probably need somebody's land when all is said and done.

SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked if this node picks up speed unexpectedly could they move their timeline up.

MR. CAMPBELL answered that it has accelerated over the last 15 years from moving 1 foot a year to 2 or 3 feet a year. The department will respond to it as needed, as they have in every other emergency.

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CHAIR MICCICHE asked if the Richardson Highway weigh station is the feeder weigh station.

MR. CAMPBELL didn't know the answer to that.

CHAIR MICCICHE said the third and fourth quarter of 2014 had a higher number of commercial motor vehicles (CMV) over 60,000 pounds and asked what that means for road quality.

MR. CAMPBELL answered that heavier vehicles are more destructive to a road exponentially. A 20,000-pound vehicle is not twice as damaging as a 10,000 pound vehicle; it's six times as damaging or whatever. That is why they have road closures and monitor the temperatures and moisture content of the road. They try to limit those larger vehicles to times when the road is structurally sounder and is able to resist the impacts better, like in the winter time.

SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked the average annual maintenance and operations budget for the road.

MR. CAMPBELL said the Dalton Highway budget is \$15-20 million.

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AVES THOMPSON, Executive Director, Alaska Trucking Association (ATA), Anchorage, Alaska, said this hearing deals with one of

the most important freight corridors in the state. Hundreds and sometimes thousands of loaded trucks head north from Fairbanks monthly on the only land link to the North Slope oil field. The Dalton Highway is the route to carry freight of all kinds to supply the oil field operations for the several oil fields from Pt. Thomson on the east to Kuparuk and Milne Point on the west. It carries drill pipe, groceries, drilling mud, chemicals, explosives, hazardous gases, heavy construction equipment, living quarters and many other products.

The Dalton also carries a lot of tourists in the summer time. Motor coaches make daily trips north and south with passengers from all over the world. Several state and federal agencies use this road every day year-round in the performance of their duties. Hunters, snow-machiners, skiers, campers, all make their way north throughout the year.

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The ATA identified the Dalton Highway as their number-one legislative priority this year, he said, but they understand the budget crisis that exists and recognize the limitations. Clearly, though, the work goes on at the North Slope and the road continues to be driven. Their four areas of concern are:

1. Maintenance. Work goes on day and night every day of the week and it's important to maintain the road on a 24/7 basis.

2. Enforcement. The culture has been that everyone looks out for each other over the last 30-40 years. But with a change in demographics of the truck-driving corps, a lot of new drivers are not engrained with that same safety culture. An enforcement presence is needed to help create a reasonable certainty that if you break the rules, you're going to get caught, creating a safer workplace for drivers. Incidentally, he said, the feeder weigh station is the Fox weigh station at the junction of the Steese and Dalton Highways. The Richardson weigh station is between Eielson Air Force Base and downtown Fairbanks near the Badger Road intersection.

In the absence of personnel present on the Haul Road itself, perhaps the Fox weigh station could be opened 24/7. Then problems could be identified before vehicles even get on to the road.

3. Infrastructure is always an issue. They appreciate the work that DOTPF has done and will do to keep the road up to standards. The new delineators were a great improvement; they

are the markers on the side of the road that help identify the edge of the road. However, they should not be white, but a contrasting color. Pullouts are important as drivers need to put chains on their truck to make a hill.

4. He frequently gets asked how many trucks move between Fairbanks and Prudhoe Bay and that leads to the fourth item which is producing and maintaining current survey data to help get a better handle on how much traffic is going all the way to Prudhoe Bay.

SENATOR STEDMAN asked him to elaborate more on safety and the culture change issue.

MR. THOMPSON answered that as the driver corps ages, new drivers come in from Outside. Some folks are bringing loads from the Lower 48 destined for Prudhoe Bay; they get to Fairbanks or Coldfoot and don't go any further. They don't have the same sense of caring for each other that was seen in the last 30 or 40 years. An enforcement presence or checking in at Fox weigh station will help cure that problem.

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SENATOR STEDMAN said he expected the public safety budget to shrink and wondered if industry could do something to get the message down to the new drivers.

MR. THOMPSON said that was a good idea and that the industry had formed the Haul Road Safety Committee that consists of producers, contractors, trucking companies, the motor carriers, and the folks who are doing work on the roads. They get together on a quarterly or more frequent basis and talk about safety concerns.

He said communication is an important issue. For example, a couple of years ago, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) implemented a new rule on the use of very high frequency (VHF) radios that required written agreements to be in place for a driver of one company to communicate with the driver of another company. So, the ATA in conjunction with the Haul Road Safety Committee put together a plan and a program whereby the ATA acquired licenses for 12 different frequencies. Another organization of just motor carriers recently convened to consider different issues.

He said it's important to remember that the trucking industry is one of the most heavily regulated industries in the country. It

probably spends much more than the state on safety, because that is where they work every day.

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SENATOR EGAN said road delineators were a number-one priority when he went up there in 2010 and asked why almost \$3 million was spent on delineators that were white in color. What happens in the white-out condition?

MR. THOMPSON said he didn't have an answer.

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CHAIR MICCICHE said that vehicle counts and weights had gone up pretty steadily and asked if the major operators had considered funding enforcement through a self-imposed toll or any other kind of agreement.

MR. THOMPSON said he wasn't aware of any. He also wasn't sure that the number of trucks and weights had increased. The weight laws had been the same for years, but there probably had been an increase in the number of permitted loads that have strict guidelines created by the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF).

CHAIR MICCICHE referenced a chart that indicated an increase in commercial vehicles over 60,000 pounds.

MR. THOMPSON explained that that chart referred to the number of trucks that are 60,000 pounds or more as measured at the Fox weigh station, which is not open 24 hours a day. There can be wide variations depending on how often it is open.

CHAIR MICCICHE said the chart clearly shows that four months in 2014 had 871, 937, 1163, and 1061 vehicles over 60,000 pounds, more than in the last two years.

MR. THOMPSON admitted that was true, but counting vehicles in the same timeframe for earlier years would have resulted in similar numbers.

CHAIR MICCICHE said that he wanted a comprehensive traffic flow and weight pattern over the last decade.

MR. THOMPSON replied that that is one of the primary reasons why they want survey data developed for the Dalton Highway.

SENATOR STEDMAN asked why there was zero traffic over 60,000 pounds in March.

CHAIR MICCICHE mentioned that the data reflects the hours the Fox weigh station was open and mentioned that if you are overweight and know the hours of operation, you can just wait to go through until it is closed.

MR. THOMPSON explained that this chart reflects the trucks that were there when the weigh station was open.

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SENATOR STEDMAN asked if there had been any noticeable traffic increases due to Pt. Thomson.

MR. THOMPSON replied, anecdotally, yes.

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ALAN HOZA, Project Specialist, Alaska West Express, Fairbanks, Alaska, said he is a former driver and does safety officer training. He observed that Alaska is concerned about access to resources and the Dalton Highway is the access for nearly all levels of supply to and from the top resource for the state. The state must not underfund this supply line to the North Slope oil and gas fields. The safety of those using the Dalton to supply the North Slope along with those using the highway for every purpose from subsistence hunting to tourism requires a constant level of maintenance and improvements.

He explained that in general, the DOTPF maintenance crews currently work primarily day-time shifts. However, many of the materials needed to keep the oil field resource engine producing need to keep moving up the Dalton on nearly a constant basis. It is often used twice as many hours as the maintenance crews operate. Adverse weather conditions encountered along the Arctic corridor at times makes it very difficult to keep those materials moving. Severe conditions often risk the safety of those Alaskans driving the Dalton due to the limited maintenance hours of operation. This is why the ATA carriers are promoting 24/7 maintenance on it.

He said the DOTPF maintenance facilities were placed about 60 miles apart in strategic locations, but that is quite far apart. The crews go in both directions, so it effectively becomes twice the distance. Therefore, critical sections of the Dalton are severely neglected, because of the vast distances between DOTPF camps. If those sections are neglected due to the severity of

the extreme Arctic conditions it can take many hours to open drifted or avalanche-closed sections of the road.

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The proposed 10 percent cuts would drastically affect the current level of maintenance and larger cuts could lead to unacceptable road closures and potentially more accidents and/or spills. It could even lead to oil facility shutdowns. Even now there are times during winter storms when crews are unable to keep the roads plowed and sanded leaving trucks to fend for themselves or simply cease movement due to impassability. Even the shortest road closures can easily result in backups of 30-50 trucks.

MR. HOZA said he had been driving the Dalton Highway on and off since 1981 and it is not a comfortable feeling sitting on the bottom of a hill with a truck blocking the road or to be waiting miles from any services for hours or days for winds to stop blowing in areas that are plugged with snow drifts.

If the amount of Dalton traffic is the major consideration for funding allotments, then the number of vehicles is less important than the type of traffic, and though there are comparatively low numbers of vehicles on the Dalton, that traffic consists of mostly trucks.

Much of the Dalton Highway is built on some very unstable ground and that in addition to heavy industrial traffic leads to a need to maintain that road on an ongoing basis just to keep it from falling into disrepair. He urged, "For the safety and materials, people and environment, we would contend that the maintenance and operations funding the Dalton should not be cut."

Projects such as milepost 0 to 9-mile reconstruction, currently under STIP, are critical to the continued improvement of the road which improves its safety for all traffic.

MR. HOZA said current capital projects such as Pt. Thomson and Alpine CD-5 are critical to growth, which is why oil companies have gone forward in spending capital monies in Alaska. Road improvements and maintenance directly support these projects. The DOTPF Northern Region group has done a great job of consulting with the transportation industry, focusing on continued improvement and maintenance on the Dalton. The Haul Road Safety Committee meetings are held in Fairbanks to discuss projects, maintenance and safety between the groups using the road. Everyone from USDOT to the Alaska Trucking Association,

Commercial Motor Vehicles, the DOTPF Northern Reconstruction group, DOTPF maintenance groups, BLM, and the UAF attend the meetings. Some say that the Dalton has functioned fine for the last 40 years, but that is only due to the increased reconstruction and ongoing maintenance.

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There has been some cultural change over the years, Mr. Hoza said, and he participates in a training center. He was asked by a seasoned driver to create a class to orient new drivers to not just Haul Road safety but Haul Road etiquette and try to regain some of that culture and camaraderie the road used to have.

MR. HOZA said the 12,000 delineators are white. But a couple of years ago, they found that many colors were much better than white, but got some federal push-back on that issue. He understood that white delineators were found to illuminate the roadway in the darker hours, but in an extreme blow situation the old white on right and yellow on left more quickly showed you if you were going in the wrong direction.

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MR. HOZA said the March issue sounded like a weight restriction timeframe; many of the loads are lighter that time of year. It's a six-week timeframe and customers push them to haul more per load because of economics.

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ROGER BROWN, Dispatch Manager, Carlile Enterprises, Anchorage, Alaska, said the Dalton Highway corridor is increasingly being used by tourism. He said Carlile sends an average of 30 loads a day up the Dalton and more this time of year. They support all major oil field operations and haul everything from the buildings the workers live in to the groceries they eat, the vehicles and equipment they operate and the fuel used to run them.

MR. BROWN said the Dalton Highway corridor is the sole over-land link to the oil fields and has increasingly become a tourist destination. Hunters can be found at nearly any time of the year from one end to the other. New driver turnover is making training increasingly difficult.

He said the state can help increase efficiencies and provide a safe environment by doing maintenance and infrastructure. Transportation is a 24/7 operation and 24/7 maintenance and upkeep is needed. The major issue this time of year is the

inclement weather, but in the summer it will go weeks without maintenance and it falls apart really quickly; a lot of it has to do with weight and speed. It's too narrow in many places and the edge is not well defined. Five instances of trucks going off the road have happened over the last 48 hours. Traffic meets in a narrow section of the road and one guy is too afraid to get too close to the edge because he can't tell where it is and then the other guy gets over too far.

Over the last few years, infrastructure has become more of an issue, not for the regulars, but for other people who don't know where the pullouts are and don't know the risk of just parking in the middle of the road. More pullouts are needed so people don't stop in the middle of the road.

During the peak of hunting season there are a few Fish and Wildlife Troopers that help keep traffic moving; the truckers have radio communication with them. Increasing enforcement for the 500-mile stretch of road that has none on a regular basis would slow people down as would having a class for the new drivers. The majority of safety concerns are from people not knowing the unwritten rules that experienced drivers use.

MR. BROWN said the Richardson Highway has a new weigh station with enforcement officers, which has been open not quite 24/7, but 99 percent of the time for the last six months.

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CHAIR MICCICHE said they will be looking forward to getting better data on the Dalton Highway.

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ART REED, Terminal Manager, Sourdough Express, Anchorage, Alaska, said they are a statewide transportation carrier and a major part of their business includes supplying goods of all kinds to the North Slope oil field companies to support construction, maintenance and merchandises for those working there. They use the Dalton Highway daily and safety is always a number one concern, not only for their employees but for all others using the highway. They are very appreciative of the work currently being done to keep the road open in a safe and operable condition. He stressed the need for that to continue.

One area of concern that is still brought up regularly by operators on the road is the delineators, Mr. Reed said. There is always a need for more and a need for contrasting colors. More pullouts are needed not only for rest areas, but for

putting on tire chains and making spot repairs. They would also like to see an increase in enforcement and training of new drivers.

He said a lot of time, the question that most comes up is in regards to the quantity of trucks and/or trips on the road, and collectively they try to provide the best answer they can, but coming up with real numbers is difficult if not impossible if just their organization, alone, is doing it.

CHAIR MICCICHE asked his vision of enforcement at a reasonable cost without too much burden on the department or the industry.

MR. REED answered that some sort of roaming presence in different areas would be very helpful, just so people know someone is up there and spot checks, as well as keeping the Fox weigh station open 24/7.

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DAN SMITH, Director, Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (DSCVE), Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), Juneau, Alaska, said a research analyst pulled data together on permits, inspections and violations from internal sources and other information from outside the division.

The first issue was to open Fox weigh station 24/7. The DSCVE has eight officers in the northern region. Presently, they have two weigh stations and by this fall they will have four. They have Fox and Ester, and around September the north-bound and south-bound Richardson weigh stations will come on line. Fully staffed, they have a plan for 24-hour operation of the Fox weigh station. That would lead to two shifts at the Richardson North and two shifts at the Richardson South, and three random shifts at the Ester weigh station. Ester is primarily used at this time of the year; it's a single-section scale, not a 100-foot deck for large commercial vehicles, but one on which the axel weights can be checked to come up with the overall gross weight of the vehicle to make sure that when the weight restrictions are in place that those vehicles are in compliance. Shifts are adjusted to known shipping patterns and are mixed up so drivers don't know when they are there.

Maintaining a roving enforcement presence on the Dalton: currently the division in the northern region has one person that works with Alaska State Troopers away from the weigh station. He is trained in the use of radar and portable weights.

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MR. SMITH said an officer finally had his first trip all the way up the Dalton this past summer; he had 43 contacts with people and wrote several citations that were mostly for speeding. He did a lot of education and outreach, but mainly he provided enforcement presence along that corridor. In general, his division is not the lead police agency in crash investigations. They are called upon if the State Trooper doesn't have the credentials to do the driver vehicle examination after a crash.

MR. SMITH said his division has a tremendous amount of turnover. Last year they hired 10 people and 2 failed the initial certification; out of the 8 that were left, 4 left within the last year. Including attrition from other areas, they will be running the North American Standard Part A and B with another 11 inspectors in the hopes of retaining those folks.

He said the commercial vehicle enforcement officer is an entry level position and starts at a Range 12, Step A, position. When that person gets to be able to do an inspection of a vehicle or the driver on his own, he is flexed to the commercial vehicle enforcement officer 2 level, a Range 14 position.

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MR. SMITH said the department took two years to write an accurate job description and hopefully a job class study will get done that will place these individuals into the proper category so a high level of expertise can be maintained within the commercial vehicle enforcement division. Right now 60 percent of folks are turning over at the entry level.

He said the division is also tasked with hazardous material, dangerous goods, compliance review of carriers, and motor coach inspections. So, there really is no incentive to go from level 1 to level 2 training. This is one thing the job class study could remedy.

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MR. SMITH said the current survey data (Table 2) indicates that 19,000 permits were sold in 2014. He explained that size and weight applies to everybody, so these could be folks who want to tow their airplane floats down the road or have a vessel that is over 8'6" wide, snow removal equipment and that sort of thing. But the ones they have been able to identify 3,257 over-size and/or over-weight permits for the Fox/Elliott area.

Table 3 indicates the total inspection count statewide for 2014 was a little over 6,000 vehicles, and the Dalton/Fox/Elliot section is 1,113 that they know the load is going through that area and a total of 1,256. They do very few inspections on the Dalton, itself, and that number was 10. The Fox area has roadside locations where signs can be set up and commercial vehicles can be pulled over; that number was 223.

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CHAIR MICCICHE asked if all this work depends on one employee.

MR. SMITH answered no; the total number of inspectors is eight, but there is just one for the Dalton Highway. He explained that a close weigh station can be shut down and the person that is normally on that shift can be used to work with the officer.

The vehicle out-of-service rate for the Dalton is 9.4 percent and 11.3 percent for the Elliot; this is below the national average. The driver out-of-service rate at 2 percent is much lower than the national average.

CHAIR MICCICHE asked him to explain what vehicle and driver out-of-service means.

MR. SMITH replied that is when the driver is stopped because of an imminent hazard or danger to other drivers using the road. It could be for intoxication or something like bad suspension parts that could lead to a crash.

CHAIR MICCICHE asked if that number is increasing with the less-experienced drivers.

MR. SMITH replied that he didn't have that information, but would get it.

He said there are 374 driver violations for the Dalton Highway and a total of 417 for the entire Fox/Elliot/Dalton. Hazmat and vehicle violations are 258 for the Dalton and 344 for the entire area. These numbers are actually different than in other parts of the state. Generally, vehicle violations are higher than driver violations. That tells them something is going on with driver behavior that is leading to more violations. The number-one unsafe practice by drivers was speeding.

SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked the posted speed limit on the Dalton Highway.

MR. SMITH answered that it varies, but generally it's 50 mph. Driver citations were for 59-69 mph.

SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked the fastest one could go legally on the Dalton.

MR. SMITH said he didn't know that.

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SENATOR MICCICHE asked if there is a posted speed limit that varies in different sections.

MR. SMITH apologized that he didn't have that answer and explained that the primary focus of their enforcement is at fixed weigh stations and, other than the one trip with one officer, they have very little data.

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MR. SMITH said 80 citations were written in the Dalton/Elliot area in 2014 for a total of just under 100 citations. The crash data was interesting, he said, because the lead police agency for federally reported crashes had two years to get it back to him. No police agency normally takes the lead on the Dalton, and the department that seems to have the best information is the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Hazmat spills of more than 1 gallon need to be reported and those are usually the only information he gets on crashes on the Dalton Highway other than the ones that are federally reportable, which means that there was a fatality or injury or that the vehicle was towed from the scene.

CHAIR MICCICHE remarked that there was a clear absence of crash data and that many incidents are not reported.

MR. SMITH agreed and said the CMV data for vehicles over 60,000 pounds, however useful, may not be as accurate as they would like, because it is drawn from their weigh-in-motion (WIM) devices that live in the highway. Some trucks are very close together and it may count two as just one vehicle and the devices have to be hit straight on in order to provide a valid weight.

CHAIR MICCICHE asked if all the data from 2012-14 was collected consistently.

MR. SMITH replied that it was, other than the fact that the WIMs go down from time to time and need to be serviced or calibrated.

He said the Fox vehicle count is from the static weights and it counted 233 overweight vehicles in 2014; they may or may not have had a permit. The total number of WIM vehicles is trending upwards and is now over 70,000 every year. Interestingly, he started out by saying they sold 3,054 permits, but the Fox WIM data shows 13,000 overweight WIMs in that area. So, much like industry, he thinks an enforcement presence is needed. The department understands the importance of protecting the infrastructure and have the tools to do it and hope to be successful by attracting and retaining better CM enforcement officers.

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CHAIR MICCICHE asked if they are permitting 25 percent of the total overweight vehicles.

MR. SMITH answered that is what the WIM data shows.

SENATOR EGAN asked if he was getting better measuring equipment, as well.

MR. SMITH answered yes; they are using some pretty amazing technologies to come up with the data like automatic vehicle identification, license plate readers and products that provide 3-D modeling so that before the vehicle comes in sight the weigh station has a picture of it, knows the carrier, the weight, and whether it can bypass the weigh station. And it's getting better every year.

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KRISTIN RYAN, Director, Division of Spill Prevention and Response (SPAR), Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Anchorage, Alaska, said they are trying to coordinate better with DOTPF's Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division, because they aren't always aware of the responses SPAR is a part of. SPAR had about 77 events in the last 10 years on the Dalton Highway that resulted in a spill. About 17,000 gallons of fuel had been released as a result of those spills. A majority of the accidents were caused by equipment failure - tire blow out or breakdown - and rollovers. A spill of 3,000 gallons happened just yesterday. Last year there were nine spills on the Dalton Highway, the highest number of all the highways.

CHAIR MICCICHE asked the total gallons for the last 10 years.

MS. RYAN answered 17,500 gallons and that doesn't include the 3,000 from yesterday.

SENATOR EGAN clarified that was on just the Dalton.

MS. RYAN answered yes.

CHAIR MICCICHE asked what types of materials are spilled primarily.

MS. RYAN replied that it's mostly low sulphur diesel going to the North Slope and 70 gallons of hazardous substance release.

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SENATOR EGAN said a staff member just texted him that the Dalton Highway maximum speed limit is "50 for the 416 miles," but there are areas where the speed limit is reduced to 10-20 mph.

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CHAIR MICCICHE said this was very good information and that he may put a letter together with some questions and start a dialogue on some ways to improve safety on the Dalton. Finding no further business, he adjourned the Senate Transportation Committee meeting at 2:37 p.m.