



Task 24-1: Recommendations on Initiatives to Increase the Availability of Truck Parking

FMCSA asks its Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (MCSAC) to review information on truck parking, share its collective expertise, and recommend best practices that states and the private sector have established to increase safe parking for CMV drivers.

I. Discussion of Task 24-1 and Comments on Truck Parking Presentations

- A. A parking shortage creates challenges for drivers and safety risks.
 - 1. Drivers who sleep in their Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMVs) often cannot easily find available parking with bathrooms, restaurants and other amenities.
 - 2. Drivers who do not sleep in their CMVs often cannot find available parking near motels or other facilities.
 - 3. Drivers may travel many additional miles to find parking, increasing fatigue and the risk of a crash.
 - 4. Poor weather, heavy traffic, and other factors often make it difficult for a driver to plan stops based on the location of available parking.
 - 5. Drivers who pay for online apps to find parking may face additional costs.
 - 6. Passenger vehicles or motor homes often take designated CMV spaces.
 - 7. Drivers may take safety risks or break rules because of a lack of parking spaces.
 - 8. Drivers may park on highway entrance and exit ramps, the side of a roadway or a roadway shoulder, increasing the risk of a crash.
 - 9. Drivers searching for parking may surpass federal mandates that limit their hours behind the wheel.
 - 10. Drivers may owe fines for parking in prohibited areas.
 - 11. Drivers, particularly women drivers, may leave the industry because of a lack of safe parking areas.
- B. States face challenges to provide more parking and real-time parking information.
 - 1. States may lack funding or not prioritize funding for the maintenance of existing parking areas or the development of new parking projects.
 - 2. Some states have closed rest facilities because of the cost.
 - 3. New delivery warehouses increase demand for truck parking. Local communities often block parking infrastructure projects, even for a small number of new spaces.
 - 4. States may run into hurdles when attempting to sell a property as part of a parking site development plan.
 - 5. States with truck parking information management systems (TPIMS) may find the equipment expensive to implement and maintain and that it becomes outdated rapidly.
- C. Strategies to ease a parking shortage.
 - 1. Increase investment to expand existing parking sites and develop new sites.
 - 2. Create state task forces to spur more truck parking. Include state governors and other decision makers and professionals with truck parking experience.
 - 3. Prioritize parking investments on interstates with heavy CMV traffic and highways where truck drivers often receive fines for parking illegally.
 - 4. Identify parking areas that stand empty, such as closed highway weigh stations and sports stadiums during the off season. However, states may not want to assume potential legal liabilities for offering parking at closed weigh stations.
 - 5. Identify why local communities block parking projects and provide states with assistance to address those concerns.
 - 6. Identify states, such as Colorado, with parking policies and investments that serve as models for other states.

7. Identify states that may be able to share insights from failed parking projects.
8. Connect states that closed parking areas with states that kept parking areas open despite facing similar challenges.
9. Create local public outreach campaigns to increase support for new parking projects.
10. Show local communities the benefit of parking investments that support local restaurants and other businesses serving drivers.
11. Illustrate the negative impacts of a parking shortage, such as delayed package deliveries or an increased risk of truck crashes.
12. Review past campaigns for insights into effective strategies.
 - a. Increase state investments in TPIMS, such as roadside messaging signs that provide free real-time accurate information.
 - b. Consider providing data to developers of CMV parking apps to make apps more effective.

D. Challenges and trends related to parking apps and parking demand.

1. Drivers may share personal information and supply chain information over a foreign-owned parking app. However, data privacy can be an issue with any app, whether foreign or domestic-owned.
2. Drivers may not find an app with parking information for every national route.
3. Drivers may inadvertently use an app that serves as an entryway for hackers to access a motor carrier's software.
4. More motor carriers may prefer drivers return home at night, reducing parking demand.
5. Autonomous vehicles that do not require rest stops may in the future carry a large share of freight.

II. Recommendations

- A. FMCSA should work with states to identify proven strategies to ease the parking shortage and seek to replicate them as soon as possible.
- B. FMCSA should gather insights both from states that increased parking and states that faced hurdles to implement planned parking investments.
- C. DOT should provide Federal funding to build and maintain more truck parking spaces, including surface transportation reauthorization for FHWA programs.
- D. Federal agencies should expand collaboration with states and industry groups to increase parking availability and find solutions for congested interstate routes that lack space for new construction.
- E. Federal agencies should aggregate parking data for use by existing parking apps and to provide insights into solutions to the parking shortage.

III. Suggested Data Requests and Presentation Topics

- A. State presentations about parking availability, including the locations of underutilized parking lots, and locations where drivers receive the most parking violations, which may indicate where more parking is needed.
- B. Best practices from states that successfully invested in parking.
- C. Opportunities to increase grants for infrastructure, such as truck parking information management systems.
- D. Existing public service announcements that explain the importance of truck parking and educational outreach.
- E. Organizations that discuss the challenges related to truck parking investments, such as:
 1. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) freight subcommittee.
 2. National Association of Truck Stop Owners.

3. State municipalities and regional and county government entities, such as the National Conference of Regions and the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations.
4. The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI).