

Guidelines and Procedures for Processing Requests related to STAA Vehicles

June 20, 2018

I. Purpose

These guidelines and procedures exist to clarify the steps necessary to verify, review, evaluate, process, and approve/deny requests for reasonable access and designations for Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) dimensioned vehicles. The movement of these types of vehicles on routes other than the [National Network](#) is covered by general statutes ([§20-115.1](#) and [§20-116](#)) and the administrative code ([19A.02E.0426](#)).

II. Definitions

A. Overview

Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) – An act passed in 1982 by the federal government for the movement of trucks and trailers with specific combinations, lengths, or widths.

STAA-Dimensioned Vehicle – The following vehicle combinations are defined as STAA-dimensioned vehicles:

- Type A - Truck tractor semi-trailer (TTST) vehicle combinations with semi-trailer lengths exceeding 48 feet but not exceeding 53 feet ([§20-115.1, b](#))
- Type B - Truck tractors pulling two trailing units (trailer and semi-trailer) with trailer and semitrailer lengths not exceeding 28 feet (1983 or newer models) or trailer and semitrailer lengths not exceeding 28.5 feet (1982 or older models) – also called “twins” or “twin trailers” ([§20-115.1, a](#))
- Type C - Truck tractor semi-trailer (TTST) vehicle combinations with semi-trailer widths exceeding 96 inches but not exceeding 102 inches ([§20-115.1, c](#))

STAA Program Coordinator – Where mentioned in these guidelines, this role represents the individual directly responsible for coordinating and performing the daily functions of the STAA program, their immediate supervisor, or their designee.

Reasonable Access (A) – The condition where STAA-dimensioned vehicles have statutory access to “terminals, facilities for food, fuel, repairs, and rest and points of loading and unloading” within three road miles of interstates, designated highways, or primary routes, provided the routes are safe ([§20-115.1, f](#)) – see “Red Line” and “Gray Line”.

Reasonable Access (B) – The condition where one or more types of STAA-dimensioned vehicles have NCDOT approval to access terminals and points of loading and unloading more than three miles beyond an interstate, designated route, or primary route ([§20-115.1, f](#)) – see “Blue Line (solid)”.

Terminal - Any location where freight either originates, terminates, or is handled in the transportation process, or where commercial motor carriers maintain operating facilities (i.e. factories, plants, warehouses, distribution centers, shopping centers, etc.).

B. Route Types

Designated Route – A route approved for use by one or more types of STAA vehicles (see “Red Line”). Interstate routes are automatically approved for use by all types of STAA vehicles. Routes not already designated on either the [National Network](#) or the [North Carolina Truck Network](#) must go through a designation process to become part of one, or both, of these networks (§20-115.1, g). Designated routes follow the route name and not the pavement, so if a route is moved then the designation is also moved.

Federal Aid Primary (FAP) System – The Federal Aid Primary System was replaced by the National Highway System in 1991.

National Highway System (NHS) – This system replaced the Federal Aid Primary System in 1991.

National Network (NN) – The network of routes available to all types of STAA vehicles either designated by the United States Secretary of Transportation, or designated by North Carolina and submitted to, and approved by, the United States Secretary of Transportation. All [National Network](#) routes are on the [North Carolina Truck Network](#). All new interstate routes are automatically added to the National Network. Other routes designated by NCDOT for use by all types of STAA vehicles may be elevated to [National Network](#) status.

North Carolina Truck Network (NCTN) – The network of routes in North Carolina, which includes the [National Network](#), where at least one type of STAA vehicle may travel.

Reasonable Access Route – A reasonable access route is a route approved for use by one or more types of STAA vehicles, to travel between an interstate or designated route and a specific terminal ([20-115.1, f](#), and [19A:02E.0426](#)). Reasonable access routes are specific to the destination and, therefore, follow the pavement and not the route name so if a route is moved the reasonable access does not move. This may also be referred to as a “terminal specific access” route. Only terminal officials and truck operators may apply for reasonable access.

Short-Cut Route – A route connecting two or more [National Network](#) routes. These routes are not authorized for reasonable access ([19A:02E.0426, vi](#)). Routes connecting non-National Network routes, and routes connecting a National Network route and a non-National Network route, are not considered short-cut routes.

State Highway System (SHS) – The network of roads in North Carolina composed of interstate (I), primary (US and NC), and secondary (SR) routes.

C. *Map Route Classifications*

Black Line (bold) – A primary or secondary route that has a truck restriction, which may affect one or more types of STAA vehicles. Black lines may be on top of red lines or blue (solid) lines.

Blue Line (dashed) – A route approved for use by type “A” vehicles. Blue lines are not on the National Network and only began showing up on the [North Carolina Truck Network](#) on September 1, 2008 as a result of [Session Law 2008-221 \(Senate Bill 1695\)](#). Blue lines were a temporary condition and were under investigation by NCDOT for restrictions. However, the deadline for investigating these routes was May 31, 2009 and they were removed from the map effective December 22, 2011.

Blue Line (solid) – A route approved for reasonable access for one or more types of STAA dimensioned vehicles.

Gray Line – A route statutorily approved for use by type “A” vehicles. Primary routes not on the National Network, but on the Federal Aid Primary system as of June 1, 1991, were automatically designated as gray lines on the [North Carolina Truck Network](#) in February 2008 due to an advisory ruling by the North Carolina Attorney General’s office. All other primary routes not already designated as red or gray lines automatically became gray lines (unless restrictions were put in place) on September 1, 2008, due to the passage of [Session Law 2008-221 \(Senate Bill 1695\)](#). On October 12, 2017, the State Traffic Engineer interpreted that the intent of the General Assembly through their legislative change in Section 5 of [Session Law 2008-221 \(Senate Bill 1695\)](#) was to allow truck tractors with 53-foot trailers on all public roads within North Carolina.

Red Line – An interstate or route designated for use by all types of STAA vehicles. Red lines are a part of the [North Carolina Truck Network](#), and may be a part of the [National Network](#). Routes are automatically identified as red lines if on the [National Network](#), but not all red lines are part of the [National Network](#). A route designated as a red line by NCDOT may only be on the [National Network](#) if submitted to, and approved by, the United States Secretary of Transportation.

