

CHAPTER 13

OTHER INFORMATION NEEDS

The total range of FHWA forms contained in *A Guide to Reporting Highway Statistics* together with the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS), constitute a very comprehensive system of reporting highway statistics. Even so, it does not fully account for all the information that the FHWA needs to fulfill its objectives. This chapter outlines the types of additional information that State agencies and units—particularly the planning division of the State highway agency or DOT—should try to systematically obtain and forward to the Washington Headquarters. This important additional information includes: (1) supplemental tabulations concerning motor fuel, motor vehicles, and driver licenses; (2) miscellaneous traffic data; (3) State executive budgets; (4) certain published reports; (5) State highway and taxation laws; and (6) reports of special transportation authorities.

Supplemental tabulations.—In the normal course of preparing the FHWA reports, most States compile supplemental tabulations and statements concerning motor fuel, motor vehicles, and driver licenses. This supplemental information reflects detail not ordinarily provided on the reporting forms, but which can be extremely helpful in understanding transactions and clarifying entries that might otherwise require correspondence. Such tabulations should accompany the annual FHWA reports wherever appropriate.

Traffic data.—Three types of data are collected: 1) traffic volume, 2) vehicle classification, and 3) truck weigh-in-motion (WIM) data. All submitted traffic data should conform to the reporting instructions and formats provided in the current edition of the *Traffic Monitoring Guide* (TMG). Copies of traffic flow maps, annual reports, program documentation, and other traffic related publications produced by the States should be forwarded to the Travel Monitoring Division (HPPI-30) of the Office of Highway Policy Information as they become available.

Traffic volume data are used to monitor national traffic growth occurring on the nation's highways, and are reported monthly in the Traffic Volume Trends report. This report provides an early indicator of the changes occurring in travel at the national and regional levels. The data are collected continuously by automatic traffic recorders (ATRs) monitored by State and local highway agencies. Copies of the continuous traffic volume data

collected by the permanent ATRs should be sent monthly to HPPI-30 within 20 days after the close of the month for which the data were collected.

Vehicle classification data are collected annually by the States as part of the Traffic Monitoring System (TMS) program. These data are used to develop the “percent trucks” sample item for the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) and also to complete the HPMS summary screens as described in chapter III of the *Highway Performance Monitoring System Field Manual*. The *HPMS Field Manual* provides directions on the reporting of areawide and site-specific vehicle classification data.

Truck weight data are collected at continuous permanent installations and portable sites for a variety of purposes including research, monitoring of weight for pavement design and management, and for enforcement of weight limits on highways and bridges. The site-specific truck WIM and station description data should be sent to the Travel Monitoring Division (HPPI-30) using the FHWA data formats by June 15th of the year following the year for which the data are collected. Additional information is found in the *Traffic Monitoring Guide*.

Budgets.—Copies of the annual or biennial State executive budgets should be provided to the Office of Highway Policy Information when released. These are the budgets prepared for presentation to the State legislature and usually printed and given general distribution. They normally contain budget information not only for the State highway or transportation agency, but also for all other executive departments. They provide a valuable source of information on actual revenues and expenditures for the current and prior years.

Published reports.—Most States publish annual or biennial reports of the major departments. Copies of these reports should be provided to HPPI-10 as they become available. Any State highway statistical publications should also be sent to the Office of Highway Policy Information.

Legislative acts.—Copies of enacted legislation concerning highway taxation and finance should be forwarded to HPPI-10. This information serves as

reference material until bound volumes of the statutes are published. Those States that publish a compendium of highway laws from time to time are requested to provide a copy to the Office of Highway Policy Information.

Reports of special transportation authorities.—

Information about special authorities or public corporations that finance, build, or operate highway or mass transportation facilities is essential in measuring the total highway and mass transportation activity within a State. No information is sought for privately owned and operated facilities. Data on the finances and programs of special transportation authorities should be provided to HPPI-10, including when a new authority is established or debt is refinanced. Copies of the enabling legislation, feasibility reports, bond prospectus, trust agreement and operating statements should also be furnished. Periodic reports that present the results of the audit of accounts or other financial data should be provided as they become available.