
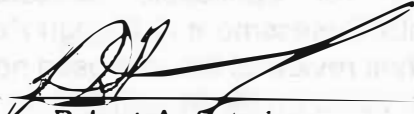


<b>SUPERSEDED BY EB 21-057 EFFECTIVE 11/24/21</b>		<i>New York State Department of Transportation</i> <b>ENGINEERING INSTRUCTION</b>	<b>EI</b> <b>98-018</b>
<b>Title: REQUIRED COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ON NON-STANDARD VERTICAL CLEARANCES OVER INTERSTATE ROUTES</b>			
<b>Distribution:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Manufacturers (18) <input type="checkbox"/> Surveyors (33) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main Office (30) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultants (34) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Govt. (31) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contractors (39) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regions/Agencies (32) <input type="checkbox"/> _____ ( )		<b>Approved:</b>  _____ Robert A. Dennison Deputy Chief Engineer (Design) <p style="text-align: right;">05/27/98 Date</p>	

## EFFECTIVE DATE

This EI is effective immediately.

## INTRODUCTION

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has informed us that the FHWA and Department of Defense (DOD) have updated the inter-agency coordination when a project on an Interstate System roadway is to be advanced with a design exception to standard vertical clearance. This EI describes our Department's procedures to provide this coordination. The procedures are based on the guidance in the attached August 15, 1997 memo, "Vertical Clearance, Interstate System Coordination of Design Exceptions" from FHWA's Associate Administrator for Program Development to the FHWA Regional Administrators and the Federal Lands Highway Program Administrator.

## REQUIREMENTS

For projects on the Interstate System to be advanced with a design exception to the standard 4.9 m (16') vertical clearance, the NYSDOT or the New York State Thruway Authority will coordinate with the Military Traffic Management Command Transportation Engineering Agency (MTMCTEA) during preliminary design, prior to requesting FHWA's concurrence with the design exception. This coordination applies for all Interstate routes except:

- (1) Interstates in urban areas where another route provides the single 4.9 m (16') routing for the urban area. (These single 4.9 m (16') routings are identified for the New York City, Kingston, Albany-Schenectady, Utica, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo urban areas in the package from FHWA that the Planning and Program Development Group's December 11, 1997 memo forwarded to the Regional Planning and Program Managers.).
- (2) Sections of I-90, I-87 and I-190, which were exempted from the 4.9 m (16') vertical clearance as described in EI 91-22. (NYSDOT will still have to submit justifications to FHWA on these bridges as described in EI 91-22. However, FHWA has agreed to accept a justification to retain clearances of not less than 4.3 m (14') based on the fact

that the structures located on these sections of Interstate highways are no longer part of the 4.9 m (16') vertical clearance network, as long as the existing vertical clearance is not diminished.)

For projects to be advanced with a design exception to the standard vertical clearance over an Interstate route, except those routes noted in (1) and (2) above, the NYSDOT Region or Thruway Authority will coordinate with the MTMCTEA. This will be done late in Design Phase I by forwarding a copy (or applicable sections) of the draft Design Report, Design Report/Environmental Assessment or Design Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement to the MTMCTEA for their review of the proposed non-standard vertical clearance. This MTMCTEA coordination step is listed in the Design Phase I steps in the October 31, 1997 version of the Design Procedure Manual (DPM). FHWA and the Design Quality Assurance Bureau should be carbon copied on this letter.

The MTMCTEA is to reply by letter or e-mail within 15 calendar days. If no reply is received within 15 calendar days, it is assumed they have no comment. The text of Chapter III.C.2.a of the "Full" Design Report should then be modified to state that coordination with the Department of Defense has occurred and whether or not the MTMCTEA replied. If they do reply, a copy of their response is to be included in the attached appendices of the design report as important correspondence received on the project. Appropriate consideration should be given to any MTMCTEA comments and the treatment of the non-standard feature and/or the justification of the non-standard feature modified accordingly. FHWA will consider any MTMCTEA comments in their evaluation of the retention of the non-standard vertical clearance.

The request for coordination should be addressed to:

Director  
Military Traffic Management Command  
Transportation Engineering Agency (MTMCTEA)  
ATTN: MTTE-SA  
720 Thimble Shoals Boulevard, Suite 130  
Newport News, VA 23606-2574  
(Telephone - 757-599-1117  
Fax 757-599-1560)

A sample letter for this coordination with the MTMCTEA is included on pages 3 and 4 of this EI.

## **HELP**

Questions regarding this EI should be directed to your Regional Quality Control Engineer. Further questions may be directed to your Regional Liaison Engineer in the Design Quality Assurance Bureau and/or Jim Dunham at (518) 485 7321.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

August 15, 1997 memo, "Vertical Clearance, Interstate System Coordination of Design Exceptions" from FHWA's Associate Administrator for Program Development to the FHWA Regional Administrators and the Federal Lands Highway Program Administrator.

SAMPLE LETTER



STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
ALBANY, N.Y. 12232

JOSEPH H. BOARDMAN  
COMMISSIONER

GEORGE E. PATAKI  
GOVERNOR

William S. Brown, P.E.  
Regional Design Engineer  
New York State Department of  
Transportation  
State Office Building  
1 Washington Drive  
Sample, New York 12201

January 21, 1998

Director  
Military Traffic Management Command  
Transportation Engineering Agency (MTMCTEA)  
ATTN: MTTE-SA  
720 Thimble Shoals Boulevard, Suite 130  
Newport News, VA 23606-2574

RE: PIN 9999.99  
Route 33/I777 Interchange  
Town of Washington, Lincoln Co.

Dear Sir/Madam:

This letter is to provide coordination in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration/Department of Defense inter-agency coordination procedures when a project on an interstate system roadway is to be advanced with a design exception to standard vertical clearance.

The subject project, to reconstruct the Route 33/I-777 interchange, includes retention of a nonstandard vertical clearance at the Francis Palmer Road Bridge over I-777. This nonstandard feature and the justification for its retention is described in Section III.C.2.a. on page 19 of the attached draft of the Design Report/Environmental Assessment, dated January, 1998.

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Page 2 of 2  
May 7, 1998

Please inform us of your comments on the retention of this nonstandard vertical clearance by responding by letter or e-mail. If we do not receive a response within 15 calendar days from the date of this memo, we will assume you have no comments.

If you have any questions, please contact John Smith at (555) 555-5555. A response by e-mail should be sent to smith-j@gw.dot.state.ny.us.

Sincerely,

**WILLIAM S. BROWN, P.E.**  
Regional Design Engineer

WSB:bb

bcc: H. J. Brown, Division Administrator, FHWA  
Director, Design Quality Assurance Bureau, 5-410, MC 0751



# Memorandum

U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Highway  
Administration**

ACTION: Vertical Clearance, Interstate

Subject: System Coordination of Design  
Exceptions

Date: August 15, 1997

From: Associate Administrator for  
Program Development

Reply to  
Attn of: HNG-14

To: Regional Administrators  
Federal Lands Highway Program Administrator

For almost 30 years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Military Traffic Management Command Transportation Engineering Agency (MTMCTEA) of the Department of Defense (DOD) have cooperated to meet the demands of military traffic on the Interstate System, particularly in the area of vertical clearances. This need has been met with the adoption of standards by FHWA for vertical clearance on the Interstate that require a clear height of structures over the entire roadway width, including the useable width of shoulder, of 4.9 meters for the rural Interstate. In urban areas, the 4.9-meter clearance is applied to a single route, with other Interstate routings in the urban area having at least 4.3-meter vertical clearance.

In 1960, at the request of the DOD, and with the cooperation of the States, the above standards were established to accommodate military traffic on the Interstate. At that time, a large number of structures on the Interstate, constructed under previous criteria, existed which did not conform to the new minimum standard. The correction of all these deficiencies could not be economically justified. Consequently, in 1969, the MTMCTEA, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) (then AASHO) and the FHWA agreed to concentrate on a subset of the Interstate judged to be priority routes. The subset contained a significantly smaller number of deficient structures on 41 842 kilometers of the Interstate. The 41 842-kilometer priority network served about 95 percent of the major military installations.

Since then, the MTMCTEA has developed and continues to refine the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET). The STRAHNET report dated January 1991 was distributed to Regional Federal Highway Administrators by memorandum from the Director, office of Environment and Planning dated March 22, 1991. Since 1991,

there have been a few changes made to STRAHNET. These changes have been coordinated with the States and the field offices. Maps delineating the changes were distributed to the affected regional offices by HEP-10. The STRAHNET is a system of highways that provides defense access, continuity and emergency capabilities for movements of personnel and equipment in both peacetime and wartime. The STRAHNET was based on quantifiable DOD requirements, addressing their peacetime, wartime, strategic, and oversize/overweight highway demands. The network consists of approximately 96 000 kilometers of highway. The STRAHNET has been incorporated into the National Highway System (NHS). Almost 75 percent of the system in the continental United States (about 70 000 kilometers) consists of roadways on the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways.

The currently established procedures require the FHWA to coordinate with the MTMCTEA when a clear height of structures of less than 4.9 meters is created as the result of a construction project or the project does not provide for the correction of existing substandard vertical clearance on the 41 842-kilometer priority network prior to approving the exception. For routes not on the priority network, coordination is not required although the FHWA policy provides that the MTMCTEA be notified of all exceptions to vertical clearance on the remainder of the Interstate System. The Approval action for exceptions to vertical clearance has been delegated to the field offices, which can contact the MTMCTEA directly. When the State highway agency (SHA) has approval authority for design exceptions under one of the 23 U.S.C. 106(b) exemption provisions, coordination with the MTMCTEA is still required and may be accomplished through the FHWA or directly with the MTMCTEA.

The development of the STRAHNET, the establishment of Power Projection Platforms, base realignments, and the evolving role of the military have created a need to revise coordination procedures between the MTMCTEA and the FHWA, concerning exceptions to the vertical clearance requirements on the Interstate System. Therefore, the FHWA and the MTMCTEA have agreed that all exceptions to the 4.9-meter vertical clearance standard for the rural Interstate and the single routing in urban areas, whether it is a new construction project, a project that does not provide for correction of an existing substandard condition, or a project which creates a substandard condition at an existing structure, will be coordinated with the MTMCTEA beginning upon receipt of this memorandum. This agreement

extends to the full roadway width including shoulders for the through lanes, as well as ramps and collector-distributor roadways in Interstate-to-Interstate interchanges. This change in effect eliminates the 41 842-kilometer priority network as a separate subset of the Interstate System. The revised coordination procedures do not change the standards adopted for the Interstate enumerated in "A Policy on Design Standards - Interstate System," AASHTO, July 1991, or the delegations of authority in FHWA Order M1100.1A.

A number of toll roads are part of the STRAHNET by virtue of being incorporated into the Interstate System under the former provisions of Section 129(b) of Title 23, United States Code. While the FHWA does not have any particular "leverage" on the toll authorities to comply with Federal standards on non-federally funded projects, it is expected that the SHA's have established appropriate procedures to assure that proposed changes or alterations of the toll road will meet applicable policies established for the Interstate System. The working relationship should ensure the needs of the military are considered and that necessary coordination occurs.

A request for coordination may be forwarded to the MTMCTEA at any time during project development prior to taking any action on the design exception. It should include a time period of 10 working days (after receipt) for action on the request. The office initiating a request for coordination to the MTMCTEA should verify receipt of the request by telephone or fax. If the MTMCTEA does not respond within the time frame, the FHWA should conclude that the MTMCTEA does not have any concerns with the proposed exception. If comments are forthcoming, the FHWA and the SHA will consider mitigation to the extent feasible.

A request for coordination should be addressed to:

Director  
Military Traffic Management Command  
Transportation Engineering Agency (MTMCTEA)  
ATTN: MTTE-SA  
720 Thimble Shoals Boulevard, Suite 130  
Newport News, VA 23606-2574  
(Telephone: 757-599-1117, FAX: 757-599-1560)

The Federal-Aid Policy Guide, Non-regulatory Supplement, 23 CFR 625, Paragraph 7 of Transmittal 13 dated July 21, 1995, will be revised as appropriate at the earliest opportunity. Questions regarding this memorandum should be directed to William A. Prosser at 202-366-1332, or Robert C. Schlicht at 202-366-1317.

/s/ Thomas J. Ptak  
Thomas J. Ptak