

What Is “Mainstreaming”?

The purpose of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)’s “mainstreaming” program is to organize and manage the deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) for Commercial Vehicle Operations (CVO). ITS/CVO services are streamlining the administration of motor carrier regulations, focusing safety enforcement activities on high-risk carriers, and reducing congestion costs for motor carriers. ITS/CVO services involve automating existing operations, networking information systems, and changing the way that states and carriers do business.

The objectives of the mainstreaming program are to:

- ♦ Incorporate ITS/CVO more fully into state and metropolitan transportation planning activities;
- ♦ Coordinate ITS/CVO activities among agencies and among states; and
- ♦ Explain the ITS/CVO program to key decision makers in the public and private sectors.

Why Do We Need a Mainstreaming Program?

A mainstreaming program is necessary because ITS/CVO involves the introduction of new technology into a complex organizational environment and asks states and carriers to change the way they do business. Early operational tests and research projects indicates that most barriers to ITS/CVO deployment are institutional, not technical. These barriers include the needs to:

- ♦ Bring operations personnel from states and carriers together to discuss solutions to common problems;
- ♦ Build a constituency for ITS/CVO in public sector transportation planning processes; and
- ♦ Convince state administrators and legislators, as well as carrier executives, to invest scarce resources in ITS/CVO.

The experience of the past five years confirms that support for these types of activities will advance the ITS/CVO program.

What Activities Does Mainstreaming Include?

The mainstreaming program includes the following types of activities:

- ♦ Support for state and regional working groups comprising representatives of key public and private sector CVO stakeholders.
 - ♦ Development of state and regional CVO business plans that identify specific projects, milestones, funding sources, and responsibilities.
 - ♦ Benefit/cost analyses and other technical studies that provide supporting information for deployment planning activities.
 - ♦ Appointment of a CVO “champion” in each region to work with the regional and state working groups and encourage CVO deployment.
 - ♦ Outreach to and education of state and industry stakeholders that will increase the awareness of and support for ITS/CVO activities.
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How Much Funding Is Available?

The FHWA has approved a total of \$2.26 million for state and regional mainstreaming activities in fiscal year 1996. The FHWA will provide a minimum of \$30,000 to each interested state and \$100,000 to each of seven regional consortia. If fewer than 50 states participate, the FHWA will redistribute the remaining funds to accelerate the regional efforts. Individual states must provide a cost share equal to the amount of Federal funds received. The FHWA encourages, but does not require, cash contributions. The \$100,000 in regional funds requires no cost sharing. Pending Congressional approval, additional funding will be available in fiscal year 1997.

How Will Mainstreaming Activities Be Organized?

Through its mainstreaming activities, the ITS/CVO program will develop policies, plans, and projects at three levels:

- ♦ The state level, because it is the states that have the first-line responsibility for motor carrier regulations.
- ♦ The regional level, because many truck trips are interstate.
- ♦ The national level, because of the need to ensure uniformity of services for carriers operating in more than one region.

What Is the Role of the State Program?

The state program will emphasize planning for and deployment of specific ITS/CVO technologies and services, with a particular emphasis on the deployment of the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN), a framework for electronic data interchange among agencies and carriers. This will be achieved through the following activities:

- ♦ **Working Groups:** Each participating state will form a working group comprising representatives of the full range of agencies involved in CVO regulation and enforcement, as well as the motor carrier industry. The experience of operational tests and institutional issues studies demonstrates that these groups are effective at improving awareness and communication within the CVO community.
- ♦ **Business Plans:** The working groups will develop business plans with specific projects, milestones, and funding sources. These business plans will formalize the CVO planning process, promote the development of public/private partnerships, and provide justification for ITS/CVO funding in state budgets. The business plans also will guide the integration of ITS/CVO technologies with existing state regulatory programs.

What Is the Role of the Regional Program?

Regional CVO programs will provide the context for the state programs. These regional programs will reflect the reality that most truck movements are regional and local rather than national; that most state-to-state interaction occurs within loosely defined regions or “trucksheds”; and that the needs and interests of state agencies and motor carriers differ more across regions than within them.

Available data on freight generation and truck traffic loosely define seven “trucksheds.” Participating states are encouraged to join one or more such regional consortia. This structure will ensure that the development and deployment of ITS/CVO services matches the markets.

The regional mainstreaming program will include the following activities:

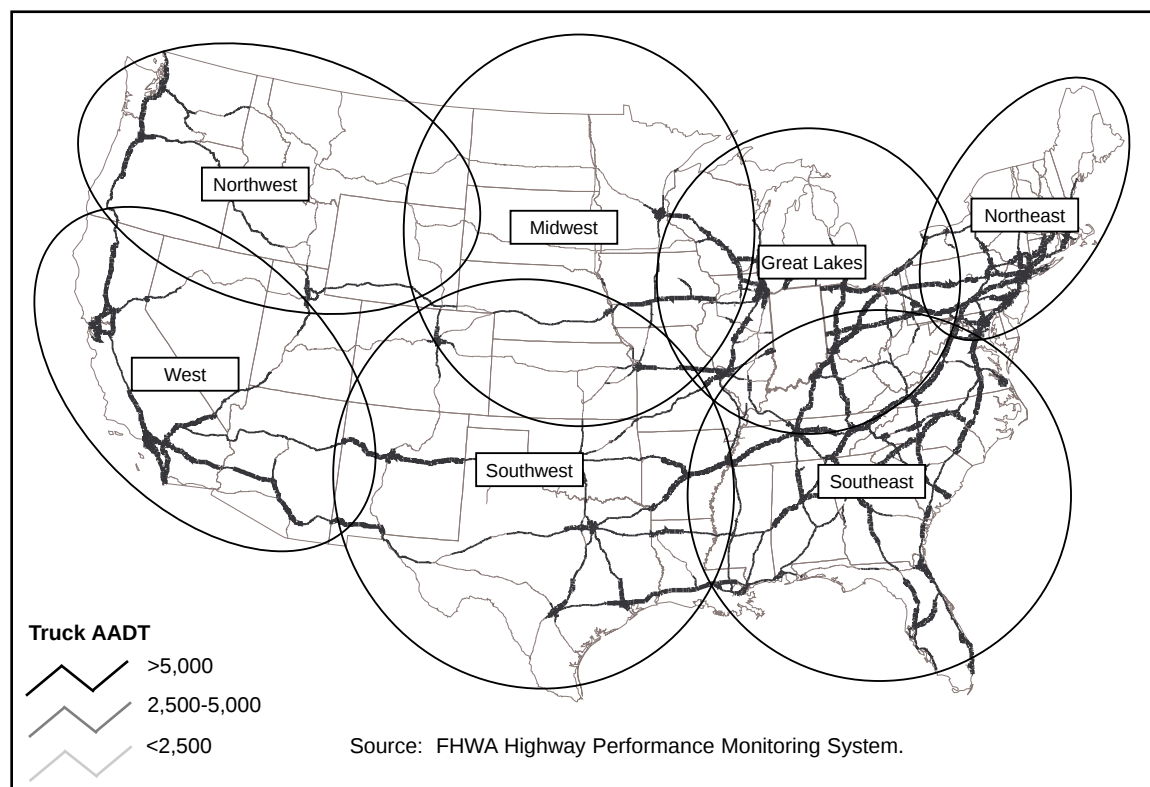
- ♦ **Regional Forums:** The primary objective of the regional consortia will be to establish an ongoing, regional CVO forum that can provide policy and program direction. These forums will include both public agencies and motor carriers. Although state government provides a framework for coordinating CVO activities at the local level, and Federal government and trade associations provide a framework at the national level, little integration occurs at the regional level. These forums will fill a critical gap in the current CVO organizational structure.
- ♦ **Business Plans:** Each regional consortium will produce and regularly update an ITS/CVO business plan. The regional plan will reflect coordination with the constituent state CVO plans, and show how the regional program will integrate its effort with the national ITS/CVO program.
- ♦ **Regional “Champion”:** Each regional consortium will hire the equivalent of a full-time “champion” or program director. This “champion” will facilitate the work of the forum and the development of the business plan. The champion also will present and explain ITS/CVO services and their potential benefits to administrators, legislators, motor carriers, and the public. A strong outreach and education program targeted at ITS/CVO users is critical to ensuring long-term deployment success.

What Is the Role of the National Program?

The national program will emphasize the development of standards and uniform policies in areas that affect interstate commerce. Working with the FHWA, the ITS America CVO Committee will play an important role in the evolution of the national program. The development of the national ITS/CVO program will be coordinated with the broader national ITS program and architecture.

Regional Trucksheds:

Average Annual Daily Truck Traffic on Interstate Highways



How Will the Program Be Managed?

The FHWA will manage the mainstreaming program through its Office of Motor Carriers region and division offices, in cooperation with the Federal-aid offices. The ITS/CVO division in the FHWA headquarters will provide high-level oversight and support.

What Is the Implementation Schedule?

The FHWA expects that the first round of state and regional business plans will be completed by March 1998. Pending Congressional approval, it is anticipated that the mainstreaming program will continue through fiscal year 1999, with the Federal share of the costs decreasing each year.

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Produced by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Motor Carriers, ITS/CVO Division.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration