





# PUBLIC ROADS

A JOURNAL OF HIGHWAY RESEARCH



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS



VOL. 16, NO. 3



MAY 1935



ROADSIDE STATION FOR DETERMINING WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF TRUCKS

---

---

# PUBLIC ROADS ▶▶▶ *A Journal of Highway Research*

*Issued by the*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS

Volume 16, No. 3

May 1935

*The reports of research published in this magazine are necessarily qualified by the conditions of the tests from which the data are obtained. Whenever it is deemed possible to do so, generalizations are drawn from the results of the tests; and, unless this is done, the conclusions formulated must be considered as specifically pertinent only to described conditions.*

## *In This Issue*

	Page
A Study of the Weights and Dimensions of Trucks . . . . .	37

THE BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS - - - - Willard Building, Washington, D. C.  
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS - - - - - Mark Sheldon Building, San Francisco, Calif.

▼

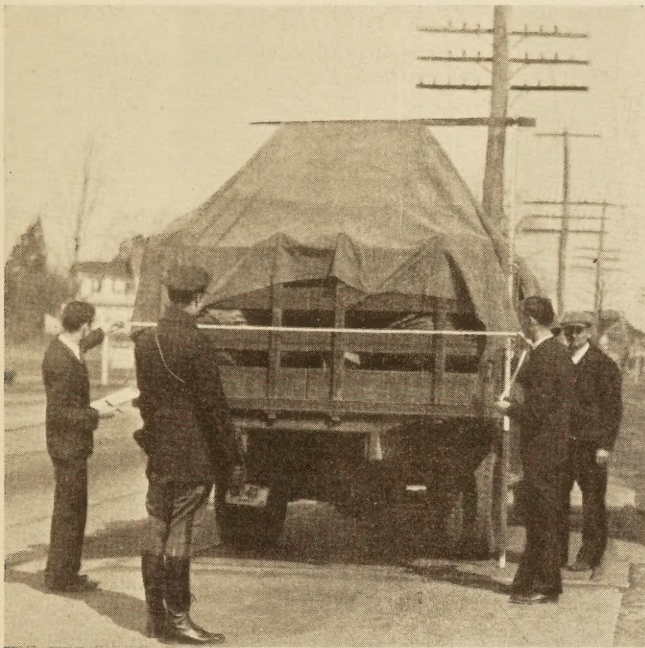
### DISTRICT OFFICES

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>DISTRICT No. 1. Oregon, Washington, and Montana.<br/>Post Office Building, Portland, Oreg.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 2. California, Arizona, and Nevada.<br/>Mark Sheldon Building, 461 Market St., San Francisco, Calif.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 3. Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming.<br/>237 Customhouse, Nineteenth and Stout Sts., Denver, Colo.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 4. Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.<br/>907 Post Office Building, St. Paul, Minn.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 5. Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.<br/>Saunders-Kennedy Building, Omaha, Nebr.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 6. Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.<br/>Room 502, United States Courthouse, Fort Worth, Tex.</p> | <p>DISTRICT No. 7. Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Michigan.<br/>South Chicago Post Office Building, Chicago, Ill.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 8. Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee.<br/>Post Office Building, Montgomery, Ala.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 9. Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.<br/>Federal Building, Troy, N. Y.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 10. Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.<br/>Willard Building, Washington, D. C.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 11. Alaska.<br/>Room 419, Federal and Territorial Building, Juneau, Alaska.</p> <p>DISTRICT No. 12. Idaho and Utah.<br/>Federal Building, Ogden, Utah.</p> |
|--|--|

Because of the necessarily limited edition of this publication it is impossible to distribute it free to any person or institutions other than State and county officials actually engaged in planning or constructing public highways, instructors in highway engineering, and periodicals upon an exchange basis. At the present time additions to the free mailing list can be made only as vacancies occur. Those desiring to obtain PUBLIC ROADS can do so by sending \$1 per year (foreign subscription \$1.50), or 10 cents per single copy, to the Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

# A STUDY OF THE WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF TRUCKS

Reported by J. T. THOMPSON, Highway Research Specialist, U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, and Professor of Civil Engineering, the Johns Hopkins University



DETERMINING THE WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF TRUCKS.

*How do the over-all dimensions of loaded motor vehicles vary with manufacturer's rated capacity?*

*How are the gross loads of motor vehicles distributed to the various axles?*

*To what extent do operators exceed the manufacturer's recommended loading, and how does prevalency of this "overloading" vary with manufacturer's ratings?*

*To what extent are tires being similarly overloaded?*

THESE ARE typical of the questions which should be answered by those who must consider dimensions and load concentrations in providing clearance and strength in the design of highways and highway bridges, by highway economists who would properly allocate highway costs to the various classes of vehicles, by manufacturers of both vehicles and tires, and by highway administrators and legislators who would intelligently restrict motor vehicle size and weight and legislate fair tax rates to sustain highway programs.

Those who have had to seek the answers to these and similar questions know that hitherto existing data, such as manufacturer's specifications, fail to provide them. So far as the writer knows, there is no way to obtain this information except by establishing roadside "clinics" where vehicles may be studied as they pass.

## OBSERVATIONS MADE ON TWO MAIN TRUCK ROUTES

The following data have been obtained from just such clinics. During the summer and fall of 1934 the Bureau of Public Roads of the United States Department

of Agriculture with the cooperation of the Johns Hopkins University, the Maryland State Roads Commission, and the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of Maryland, operated two stations at which commercial vehicles were weighed and measured. One of these was located on Route U S 40, leading north from Baltimore toward Philadelphia, the other on Route U S 1 leading south from Baltimore toward Washington. These stations were operated alternately for periods of approximately 2 weeks from the middle of June to the middle of November. During the entire period 10,700 vehicles were observed, 7,100 when loaded and 3,600 when empty. It is believed that the data constitute a representative sample of truck traffic on main highways in this area. Further investigation is needed to determine if the data are representative of truck traffic on main highways generally.

The field party of 4 men consisted of a uniformed officer to direct traffic, a notekeeper, and 2 others who shared the duties of weighing and measuring. Aside from the scales no other special equipment was used. A cloth tape and a level-rod with a horizontal arm for calipering heights answered every purpose.

In order to avoid the recurrence of data relating to identical vehicles frequently passing the station, identification cards were issued to all operators and no vehicle was recorded more than once loaded and once empty when proceeding in each direction during any one 2-week period.

The procedure was as follows: All commercial vehicles were stopped. Identification cards, if presented, were examined. If a card were presented indicating that the vehicle, loaded or empty, had already

been recorded when traveling in the same condition and in the same direction during the current 2-week period, the vehicle was permitted to pass. Otherwise it was run on the scales and weighed first with all wheels on the platform. It was then moved ahead by stages until, first the forward axle, and then each successive axle was off the platform, determining after each movement the weight carried on the axles remaining on the platform. At the same time the over-all length, height, width, and wheel base were determined; the manufacturer's marker and registration data were inspected for make of vehicle and manufacturer's rated capacity; and the license number was noted.

As the field reports came into the office the information contained in and derived from them was tabulated on large ruled master sheets, and these were used in segregating and analyzing the data. Where the data permitted, pay loads were determined by subtracting the measured empty weights of vehicles from their gross weights as measured on loaded trips. The determination was facilitated by preparing, for each vehicle initially observed, a file card, bearing the license number, on which was entered after each observation of the same vehicle a reference to the pertinent field data sheet.

Before proceeding to the remainder of this report, the reader should have in mind the size and weight restrictions of Maryland laws because of their influence upon the data. From the beginning of the study in June until the middle of October no attention was paid to violations of these laws nor were penalties of any kind imposed. This was done intentionally to encourage unrestricted operation. The number of observed weight violations was small—less than one percent. After the middle of October, at the insistence of State authorities, the laws were enforced and nine arrests were made for overweight, 1,500 weighings being recorded during the corresponding period.

The Maryland laws may be briefly summarized as follows:

*Maximum dimensions*

Width.....	96 inches.
Length.....	Unrestricted.
Height.....	Unrestricted.

*Maximum gross weights*

On solid tires.....	650 pounds per inch of tire width.
On pneumatic tires:	
Single unit, 4 wheels, 2 axles.....	25,000 pounds.
Single unit, 6 wheels, 3 axles.....	40,000 pounds.
Combination of 2 vehicles (tractor and semitrailer or tractor and full trailer) combined weight.....	40,000 pounds. <sup>1</sup>

**GROSS WEIGHTS NOT IN PROPORTION TO RATED CAPACITIES**

Reference will be made in this report to the term "manufacturer's rated capacity" as applied to both vehicles and tires. Applied to single vehicles and tires, the term as used means the carried load which the manufacturer recommends as safe and economical for the vehicle or tire in question. Applied to tractor-semitrailer combinations, it refers to the carried load of the semitrailer only.

<sup>1</sup> There is nothing in the Maryland law to prevent adding to these combinations of 2 vehicles an indefinite number of units weighing as much as 40,000 pounds each.

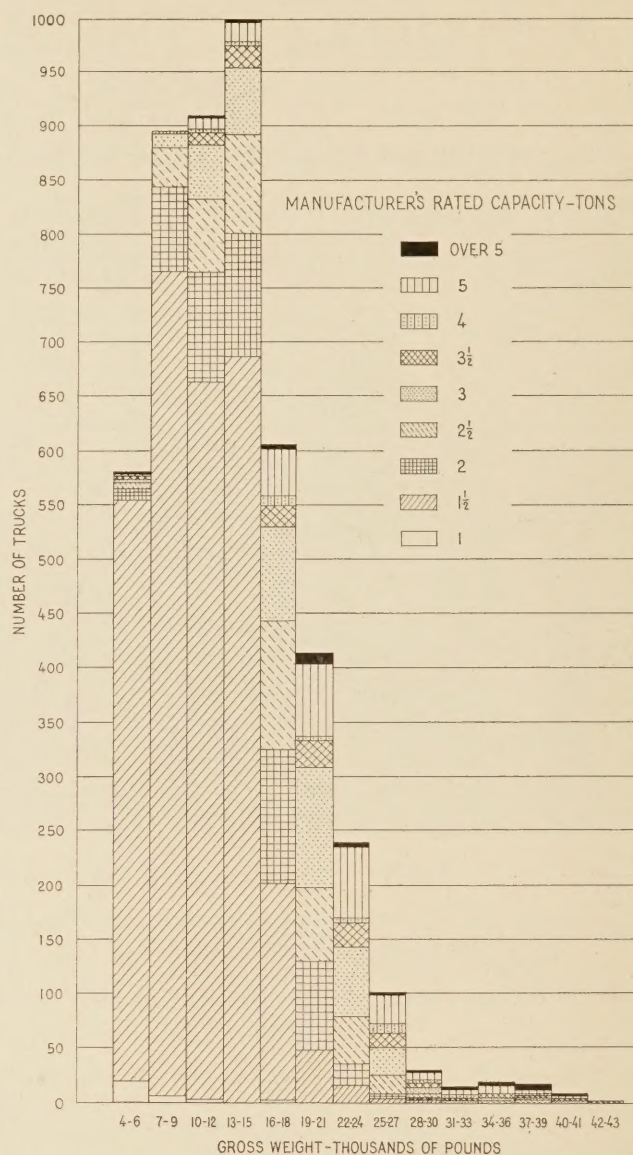


FIGURE 1.—FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY GROSS WEIGHTS OF LOADED SINGLE VEHICLES.

Figure 1 and table 1 show the frequency distribution by the gross weights of loaded single vehicles, expressed in terms of numbers of vehicles and the percentages of the total number of loaded vehicles of each capacity class having gross weights falling within various class limits, defined to the nearest thousand pounds. In tables 2 and 3 these data are segregated respectively into 4-wheel and 6-wheel classes. As stated above, 4-wheel single vehicles may legally carry 25,000 pounds and 6-wheelers 40,000 pounds.

It is immediately evident that the gross loads of vehicles of small capacity are much greater in proportion to the rated capacity than are those of large capacity trucks. Comparing the 1½- and 5-ton classes in table 1, for example, the ratio of rated capacities is 3.33. If gross weight were proportional to capacity, 5-ton trucks would have an average gross weight of 3.33 by 10,500 equals 35,000 pounds; actually they average 21,600 pounds.

TABLE 1.—Frequency distribution of gross weights of all loaded single vehicles, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average gross weight	Gross weight, 1,000 pounds														Total observations
		4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27	28-30	31-33	34-36	37-39	40-42	43-45	
	Pounds	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
1 ton	6,400	70.0	20.0	6.7	3.3											30
1½ tons	10,500	18.4	26.1	22.6	23.7	6.9	1.7	0.4	0.1	0.1						2,920
2 tons	14,400	1.9	14.5	19.3	21.1	23.1	15.4	3.8	.7	.2						533
2½ tons	16,300	1.3	7.9	14.6	20.1	26.0	14.6	9.6	4.2	1.1			0.2	0.4		458
3 tons	18,100	.2	3.3	11.7	15.0	20.4	26.2	14.8	5.6	1.2	0.7		.2	.5	0.2	427
3½ tons	20,600	2.3		7.6	15.3	14.5	19.0	17.6	11.4	3.1	1.5	5.3		.8	0.8	131
4 tons	21,600		2.9	8.6	8.6	22.8	5.6	8.6	22.8	8.6	8.6		2.9			35
5 tons	21,600	.4		4.2	6.9	16.8	25.6	25.6	9.5	3.1	1.5	3.0	2.3		1.1	262
Over 5 tons	25,400	2.3		4.7	4.7	11.6	23.2	9.3	9.3	2.3	4.7	4.7	13.9	9.3		43

TABLE 2.—Frequency distribution of gross weights of loaded 4-wheel single vehicles, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average gross weight	Gross weight, 1,000 pounds														Total observations
		4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27	28-30	31-33	34-36	37-39	40-42	43-45	
	Pounds	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
1 ton	6,400	70.0	20.0	6.7	3.3											30
1½ tons	10,100	19.8	26.9	23.5	23.5	5.6	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1						2,695
2 tons	14,300	2.0	14.2	20.1	21.7	22.9	14.8	3.6	.7							511
2½ tons	16,000	1.4	8.4	15.2	20.5	25.6	14.9	9.8	4.0	.2						429
3 tons	17,800	.3	3.3	11.4	15.7	20.4	27.6	15.4	5.3							395
3½ tons	18,600	2.8		9.4	17.0	17.9	20.8	18.9	12.3	.9	0.3					106
4 tons	18,800			17.6	5.9	35.2	5.9	11.8	23.6							17
5 tons	20,100	.5		5.1	7.9	18.1	28.1	28.2	10.7	.9	.5					216
Over 5 tons	19,200	4.3		8.7	8.7	17.4	34.9	4.3	17.4		4.3					23

TABLE 3.—Frequency distribution of gross weights of loaded 6-wheel single vehicles, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average gross weight	Gross weight, 1,000 pounds														Total observations
		4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27	28-30	31-33	34-36	37-39	40-42	43-45	
	Pounds	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
1 ton																0
1½ tons	14,900	2.2	12.9	12.9	25.7	23.1	17.8	4.9	0.5							225
2 tons	17,300		13.7	4.5	9.1	27.3	31.8	9.1		4.5						22
2½ tons	21,200			6.9	13.8	31.0	10.3	6.9	6.9	13.8		3.5	6.9			29
3 tons	22,100		3.1	15.6	6.3	18.8	9.4	6.3	9.4	12.3	6.3	3.1	6.3	3.1		32
3½ tons	29,100				8.0		12.0	12.0	8.0	12.0	8.0	28.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	25
4 tons	24,300		5.6		11.1	11.1	5.6	5.6	22.0	16.7	16.7		5.6			18
5 tons	28,500				2.2	10.9	13.0	13.0	4.3	13.0	6.6	17.4	13.0	6.6		46
Over 5 tons	32,500					5.0	10.0	15.0		5.0	5.0	10.0	30.0	20.0		20

In tables 4, 5, and 6 vehicles of the heavier gross weights are analyzed according to rated capacity. Table 4 is a classification of all single vehicles of gross weights exceeding 21,000 pounds. Table 5 is a similar classification of the 4-wheel vehicles only, and table 6 deals similarly with 6-wheel vehicles only.

Table 4 shows that of 4,839 single vehicles observed 427 or 8.9 percent had gross weights in excess of 21,000 pounds. It is a common belief that such gross weights are associated mainly with vehicles of 5- and over-5-ton rated capacity. Actually, as shown by table 4, only 144 or a trifle over one-third of the 427 vehicles of gross weight exceeding 21,000 pounds were of these two largest rated-capacity classes. Over a fourth of the total number—112 out of 427—were vehicles of 2½ tons rated capacity or smaller, and 16 were trucks of 1½ tons rated capacity, sizes generally well within the common conception of medium vehicles.

Referring again to table 4, it will be seen that only 190 (4.0 percent) of all loaded vehicles were found to have gross weights in excess of 24,000 pounds, and that

the number of these that were of the 5- and over-5-ton capacity classes was only 73 (38.4 percent). Again vehicles rated at 2½ tons capacity and less were found to constitute a very considerable percentage (18.4 percent) of the total, and still a few 1½-ton trucks were included.

As shown by table 1, it is not until gross weight rises in excess of 30,000 pounds that the last of the 1½- and 2-ton trucks disappear; but the 61 trucks, shown by table 4 to be in excess of that weight, include representatives of all rated-capacity classes from 2½ tons upward. In fact, not far from half of the number were rated at less than 5 tons capacity.

The final columns of table 4 show that 10 or about 0.2 percent of all observed loaded single vehicles weighed above 40,000 pounds. All of these were rated at 3-ton capacity or more and 7 of the 10 were of the 5- and over-5-ton classes. By comparison with table 6 it will be seen that all of these trucks were 6-wheel vehicles, and all were violators of the Maryland law which sets the limit for such trucks at 40,000 pounds;

TABLE 4.—Classification of all heavy-loaded single vehicles according to manufacturer's rated capacity and gross weight

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Loaded vehicles having gross weights exceeding—							
		21,000 pounds		24,000 pounds		30,000 pounds		40,000 pounds	
		No.	Fct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1 ton	30								
1½ tons	2,920	16	3.8	3	1.6				
2 tons	533	25	5.9	5	2.6				
2½ tons	458	71	16.6	27	14.2	3	4.9		
3 tons	427	99	23.2	36	19.0	7	11.5	1	10.0
3½ tons	131	54	12.6	31	16.3	12	19.7	2	20.0
4 tons	35	18	4.2	15	7.9	4	6.6		
5 tons	262	121	28.3	54	28.4	21	34.4	3	30.0
Over 5 tons	43	23	5.4	19	10.0	14	22.9	4	40.0
Total	4,839	427	100.0	190	100.0	61	100.0	10	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles	100	8.9		4.0		1.2		0.2	

TABLE 5.—Classification of heavy-loaded 4-wheel single vehicles according to manufacturer's rated capacity and gross weight

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded 4-wheel vehicles	Loaded 4-wheel vehicles having gross weights exceeding—							
		21,000 pounds		24,000 pounds		30,000 pounds			
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
1 ton	30								
1½ tons	2,695	4	1.3	5	2.1				
2 tons	511	22	7.3	4	4.2				
2½ tons	429	60	19.8	18	18.7				
3 tons	395	84	27.7	23	23.9	1		33.3	
3½ tons	106	34	11.2	14	14.6				
4 tons	17	6	2.0	4	4.2				
5 tons	216	87	28.8	26	27.1	1		33.3	
Over 5 tons	23	6	2.0	5	5.2	1		33.4	
Total	4,422	303	100.0	96	100.0	3		100.0	
Percentage of total loaded 4-wheel vehicles	100	6.9		2.2		0.1			

TABLE 6.—Classification of heavy-loaded 6-wheel single vehicles according to manufacturer's rated capacity and gross weight

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded 6-wheel vehicles	Loaded 6-wheel vehicles having gross weights exceeding—							
		21,000 pounds		24,000 pounds		30,000 pounds		40,000 pounds	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1 ton									
1½ tons	225	12	9.7	1	1.0				
2 tons	22	3	2.4	1	1.1				
2½ tons	29	11	8.9	9	9.6	3	5.2		
3 tons	32	15	12.1	13	13.8	6	10.3	1	10.0
3½ tons	25	20	16.1	17	18.1	12	20.7	2	20.0
4 tons	18	12	9.7	11	11.7	4	6.9		
5 tons	46	34	27.4	28	29.8	20	34.5	3	30.0
Over 5 tons	20	17	13.7	14	14.9	13	22.4	4	40.0
Total	417	124	100.0	94	100.0	58	100.0	10	100.0
Percentage of total loaded 6-wheel vehicles	100	29.8		22.6		13.9		2.4	

yet in view of the fact that their heavier loads were carried on six wheels, many of these vehicles unquestionably made less demand upon the strength of the road than the heavier 4-wheel vehicles of gross weights between 21,000 and 24,000 pounds.

By comparing tables 4, 5, and 6, it will be seen that 58 of the 61 vehicles observed to have gross loads over 30,000 pounds were 6-wheelers. The three 4-wheel vehicles all weighed less than 40,000 pounds, and, as shown by table 5, represented the 3-, 5-, and over-5-ton rated-capacity classes.

In the larger groups of vehicles of gross weights exceeding 24,000 and 21,000 pounds the numbers of 4-wheel vehicles are relatively higher, made so by the preponderance of the lighter gross loads carried on 4 wheels.

VEHICLES OF ALL RATED CAPACITIES FOUND TO CARRY HEAVY LOADS

Table 7 and figure 2 show the gross-weight-frequency distribution for tractor-semitrailer combinations. The tendency to heavier loading of the smaller units in relation to capacity is again evident. If gross weights were proportional to semitrailer capacities, the 5-ton class would average 3.33 by 20,800 equals 69,200 pounds, whereas it actually averages 27,100 pounds.

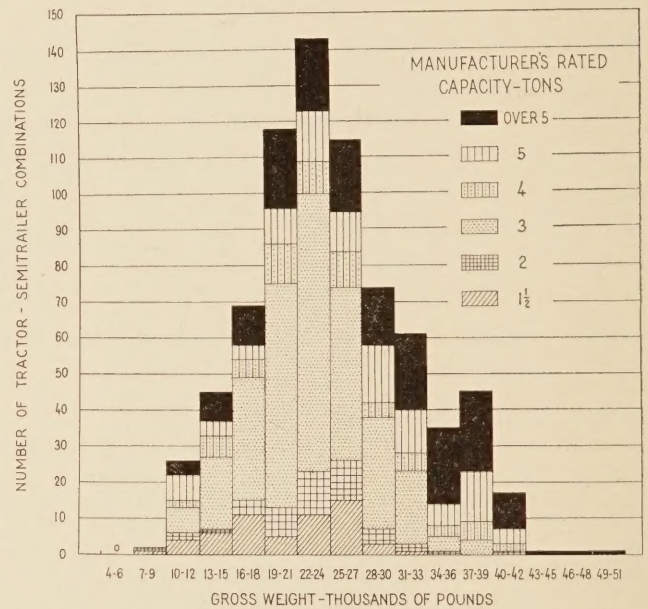


FIGURE 2.—FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY GROSS WEIGHTS OF LOADED TRACTOR-SEMITRAILER COMBINATIONS.

Three cases of overloading, producing gross weights of over 42,000 pounds, are chargeable to the over-5-ton class. The group of gross weights between 40,000 and 42,000 pounds, which with the tolerance permitted by the State roads commission includes only legally loaded vehicles, shows a rated-capacity range of from 2 to over 5 tons.

In table 8 the heavier tractor-semitrailer combinations are shown in groups exceeding each of several gross-weight limits corresponding to those shown for single vehicles in tables 4, 5, and 6. These data show that the numbers of combinations exceeding the limits shown constitute a much larger percentage of the total number of such vehicles than in the case of either 4- or 6-wheel single vehicles. Nearly two-thirds of all semitrailer combinations observed exceed 21,000 pounds gross weight, and almost half weigh more than 24,000 pounds gross. While about one-fifth of the total number exceed 30,000 pounds, only 2.7 percent weigh more than 40,000 pounds. Here again it is apparent that the heavier gross loads are not by any means carried exclusively on vehicles of the larger rated-capacity classes. On the contrary the smaller rated-





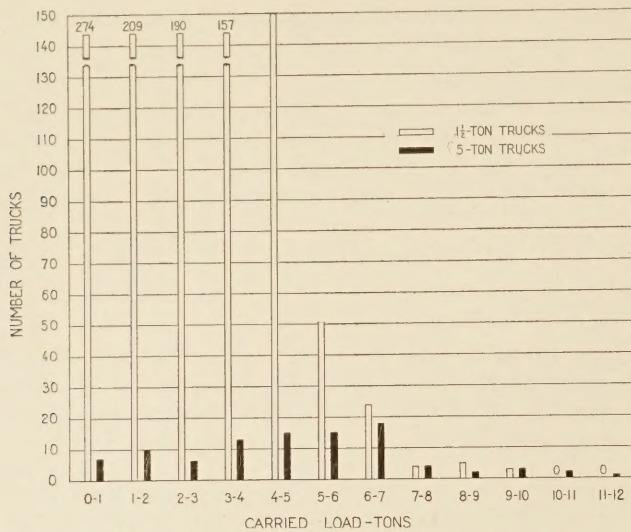


FIGURE 3.—TRUCKS OF 1 1/2-TON AND 5-TON RATED CAPACITY CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO LOADS CARRIED.

mended load; the 1 1/2-ton trailers were loaded even more heavily in excess of the rated capacity than the single vehicles of the same rating.

AXLE DISTRIBUTION OF GROSS WEIGHTS OF LOADED VEHICLES DISCUSSED

Tables 12, 13, and 14 show the frequency distribution of the percentage of gross weight of loaded vehicles carried by the rear axles of single trucks, tractors, and semitrailers. From them it may be concluded that, in the case of single vehicles, the weight carried on the rear axle averages approximately three-fourths of the gross load. Vehicles having gross loads less than 10,000 pounds carried an average of only 68 percent on the rear axle. The gross weight groups above 10,000 pounds all had an average of close to 75 percent for weight on the rear axle. Included among these vehicles were many partially loaded trucks, and the low average percentage of load on the rear axle is doubtless due to greater proportionate effect of the engine and the tendency to carry partial loading in the forward part of the truck body. There is a striking spread in the percentages for all gross-weight classes ranging from about 45 to 95 percent.

In the case of tractor-semitrailer combinations, it may be seen that about 45 percent of the entire gross weight of the combination is carried on the rear ends of both tractor and semitrailer, leaving about 10 percent for the front wheels of the tractor.

TABLE 11.—Frequency distribution of capacity use of loaded tractor-semitrailer combinations, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average ratio	Ratio of carried load to capacity																								Total observations		
		0-0.25	0.25-0.50	0.50-0.75	0.75-1.00	1.00-1.25	1.25-1.50	1.50-1.75	1.75-2.00	2.00-2.25	2.25-2.50	2.50-2.75	2.75-3.00	3.00-3.25	3.25-3.50	3.50-3.75	3.75-4.00	4.00-4.25	4.25-4.50	4.50-4.75	4.75-5.00	5.00-5.25	5.25-5.50	5.50-5.75	5.75-6.00		6.00-6.25	6.25-6.50
1 1/2 tons	3.96																											18
3 tons	1.94	3.1	5.5	4.7	2.4	9.5	11.8	4.7	7.1	11.0	8.7	11.8	7.1	0.8	6.3	3.1	0.8	1.6	5.6	5.6	10.9	5.6		16.3	5.6	5.6	127	
5 tons	1.36	4.8	14.2	4.8		23.8	9.5	9.5	23.8																			21
Over 5 tons	.98	7.5	17.0	11.3	15.1	18.9	18.9	5.6	3.8																			53

TABLE 12.—Frequency distribution of percentage of gross weight<sup>1</sup> of loaded single vehicles carried on rear axle, percentage of total observations in each gross-weight class

Gross weight	Average	Percentage carried on rear axle—														Total observations
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95			
Under 10,000 pounds	68.0	0.2	0.2	0.7	4.5	15.3	26.7	28.0	16.2	7.3	1.4	0.3	0.2	1,737		
10, under 20,000	75.3	.1	.1	.5	.7	4.3	9.8	16.4	21.4	32.4	12.5	1.6	.2	2,816		
20, under 30,000	74.2		.2	.4	.4	2.7	8.1	25.1	35.6	18.8	7.0	1.5	.2	669		
30, under 40,000	76.7	1.3	1.3					11.5	35.9	38.4	10.3	1.3		78		

<sup>1</sup> In the case of 3-axle, 6-wheel trucks the "gross weight carried on rear axle" is actually carried on 2 axles and 4 wheels.

TABLE 13.—Frequency distribution of percentage of gross weight of loaded tractor-semitrailer combinations carried on tractor rear axles, percentage of total observations in each gross-weight class

Gross weight	Average	Percentage carried on rear axle—											Total observations
		25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	
10, under 20,000 pounds	45.2		1.0	5.0	25.8	40.0	18.9	6.2	1.7	0.7	0.7		403
20, under 30,000	44.3	0.1	.9	7.4	24.9	44.8	16.3	4.1	.9	.4		0.1	772
30, under 40,000	44.5	.3	.5	3.8	25.1	48.9	17.1	3.8	.5				398
Over 40,000	43.6			9.3	25.6	51.2	11.	2.3					43

TABLE 14.—Frequency distribution of percentage of gross weight of loaded tractor-semitrailer combinations carried on semitrailer rear axle,<sup>1</sup> percentage of total observations in each gross-weight class

Gross weight	Average	Percentage carried on rear axle—											Total observations	
		20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70		
10, under 20.....1,000 pounds..	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
20, under 30.....do.....	39.7	0.7	2.9	14.2	21.0	23.7	23.9	10.2	2.5	0.7	0.2	0.1	419	
30, under 40.....do.....	44.2	.3	1.0	4.2	9.6	20.2	33.6	24.0	5.1	1.4	.5	0.1	771	
Over 40.....do.....	42.5		.8	1.8	7.8	39.9	36.8	11.1	1.8				396	
Over 40.....do.....	43.2				7.3	39.0	41.5	7.3	4.9				41	

<sup>1</sup> In the case of semitrailers with 2 rear axles, 4 wheels, the "percentage of gross weight carried on rear axle" is actually carried on 2 axles and 4 wheels.

TABLE 15.—Frequency distribution of rear-wheel loads of loaded single vehicles, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average wheel load	Rear wheel load, 1,000 pounds															Total observations
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
1 ton.....	Pounds	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
1½ tons.....	2,220	14.6	63.5	12.2	7.3		2.4										41
2 tons.....	3,760	5.3	22.0	21.0	17.5	15.8	14.7	3.2	0.3	0.1	0.1						2,841
2½ tons.....	5,230	.8	7.2	12.6	17.1	16.9	18.8	12.6	10.7	2.7	.6						515
3 tons.....	5,760		3.9	10.6	15.9	16.5	17.4	15.0	9.1	8.5	2.0	0.9	0.2				460
3½ tons.....	6,310	.2	1.5	7.9	11.2	13.9	15.4	20.4	16.4	8.7	3.7	.5			0.2		403
4 tons.....	6,550	.8		7.7	10.0	12.4	17.8	16.3	16.3	11.6	4.7	1.6	.8				129
4½ tons.....	6,050		2.7	10.8	5.4	16.2	29.8	13.5	8.1	10.8		2.7					37
5 tons.....	6,910		.8	4.1	7.8	9.0	16.1	20.6	19.4	17.3	3.7	1.2					243
Over 5 tons.....	6,050		5.6	8.3	11.1	8.3	27.8	5.5	27.8	2.8	2.8						36

TABLE 16.—Frequency distribution of the rear-wheel loads of loaded tractors, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity <sup>1</sup>	Average wheel load	Rear wheel load, 1,000 pounds											Total observations	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
1½ tons.....	Pounds	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
2 tons.....	4,690	0.1	3.0	13.8	29.3	25.6	22.3	4.4	1.4	0.1				726
2½ tons.....	5,510		2.1	5.6	17.8	25.8	23.3	16.0	8.0	1.0		0.4		287
3 tons.....	6,400		1.0	2.4	12.9	19.1	17.2	16.7	16.3	12.9		1.0	0.5	209
3½ tons.....	6,740			6.0	7.8	9.5	17.2	22.4	19.8	13.8		3.5		116
4 tons.....	7,000				7.8	13.7	13.7	17.7	27.4	17.7		2.0		51
4½ tons.....	7,000				11.1	16.7	5.6	22.2	27.7	5.6		11.1		18
5 tons.....	7,600				2.6	9.2	11.8	17.1	30.3	21.1		7.9		76
Over 5 tons.....	9,300						12.5		12.5			37.5		8

<sup>1</sup> Refers to capacity of the semitrailer.

TABLE 17.—Frequency distribution of rear-wheel loads of loaded semitrailers, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average wheel load	Rear wheel load, 1,000 pounds													Total observations
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1½ tons.....	Pounds	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
2 tons.....	4,680		14.6	10.9	18.2	23.6	20.0	7.3	3.6	1.8					55
2½ tons.....	5,130	2.2	4.5	6.7	22.2	24.4	17.8	15.5	4.5	1.1	1.1				45
3 tons.....	5,010	.3	5.3	9.6	20.9	24.2	24.8	10.9	3.7	.3					302
4 tons.....	5,460		6.5	6.5	16.1	17.7	24.2	17.7	9.7	1.6					62
4½ tons.....	5,570	.9	10.0	7.3	10.0	15.4	22.7	16.4	10.0	6.4	.9				110
Over 5 tons.....	5,960		4.2	11.3	14.3	13.7	13.1	17.2	14.9	8.3	1.8	0.6		0.6	168

Similar distribution data were also prepared for single vehicles and combinations without segregation into gross weight classes. These are not presented here as they have the same general characteristics as the data given in tables 12, 13, and 14. They show the following averages: For single trucks 72.8 percent; for tractors 44.6 percent; and for semitrailers 42.5 percent.

DATA ON WHEEL LOADS ANALYZED

Tables 15, 16, and 17, and figures 4, 5, and 6, show frequency distributions of rear-wheel loads of single vehicles, tractors, and semitrailers of various rated capacities. Average rear-wheel loads of single vehicles

are shown to range from a minimum of 2,220 pounds for trucks of 1-ton rated capacity to a maximum of 6,910 pounds for 5-ton trucks. Again it is found that the loads of the larger vehicles are not as great in relation to those of smaller vehicles as differences in rated capacity would suggest. The average of 6,910 pounds for 5-ton trucks, for example, is only 1.84 times the 3,760-pound average for 1½-ton trucks instead of 3.33 times as it would be if wheel loads were proportional to rated capacity. It is also apparent, particularly in relation to single vehicles (table 15), that the greatest wheel loads are not always found on vehicles of the largest capacity.

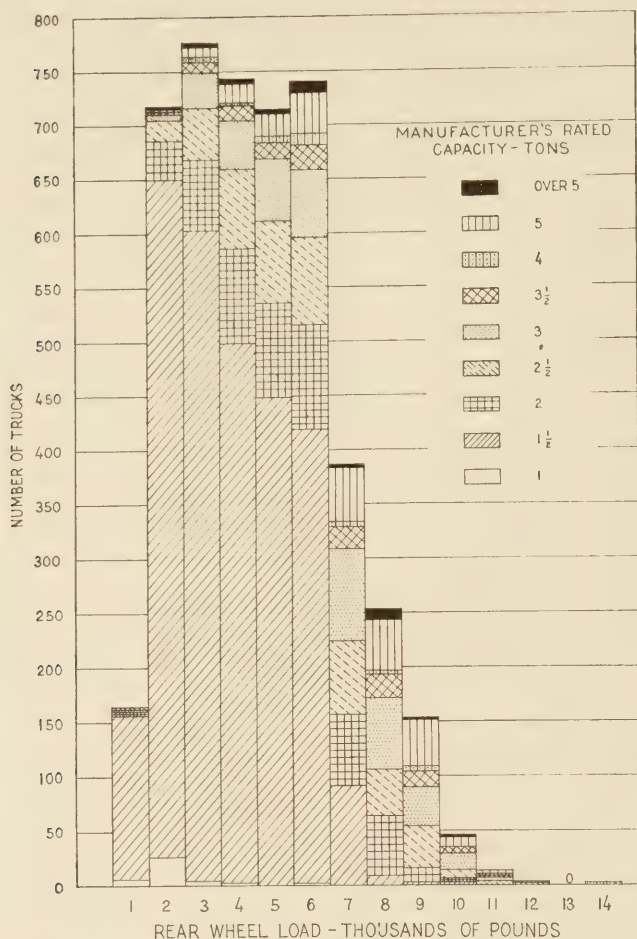


FIGURE 4.—FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF REAR-WHEEL LOADS FOR LOADED SINGLE VEHICLES.

TABLE 18.—Classification of all loaded single vehicles with heavy wheel loads according to manufacturer's rated capacity and rear-wheel loads

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Rear-wheel loads exceeding—							
		7,000 pounds		8,000 pounds		9,000 pounds		10,000 pounds	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1 ton	41								
1½ tons	2,841	13	2.8	4	1.9	2	3.3		
2 tons	515	72	15.5	17	8.0	3	5.0		
2½ tons	460	95	20.4	53	25.0	14	23.3	5	33.3
3 tons	403	119	25.6	53	25.0	18	30.0	3	20.0
3½ tons	129	45	9.7	24	11.3	9	15.0	3	20.0
4 tons	37	8	1.7	5	2.4	1	1.7	1	6.7
5 tons	243	101	21.7	54	25.5	12	20.0	3	20.0
Over 5 tons	36	12	2.6	2	.9	1	1.7		
Total	4,705	465	100.0	212	100.0	60	100.0	15	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles	100.0	9.9		4.5		1.3		0.3	

In table 18 rear-wheel loads exceeding certain limits are classified according to the rated capacity of the vehicles on which they were observed. The limits chosen were 7,000, 8,000, 9,000, and 10,000 pounds. It is shown that of 4,705 loaded vehicles observed, only 465—less than 10 percent—had rear-wheel loads in excess of 7,000 pounds. Of these 465 vehicles only 113 or less than 25 percent were of 5 tons rated capac-

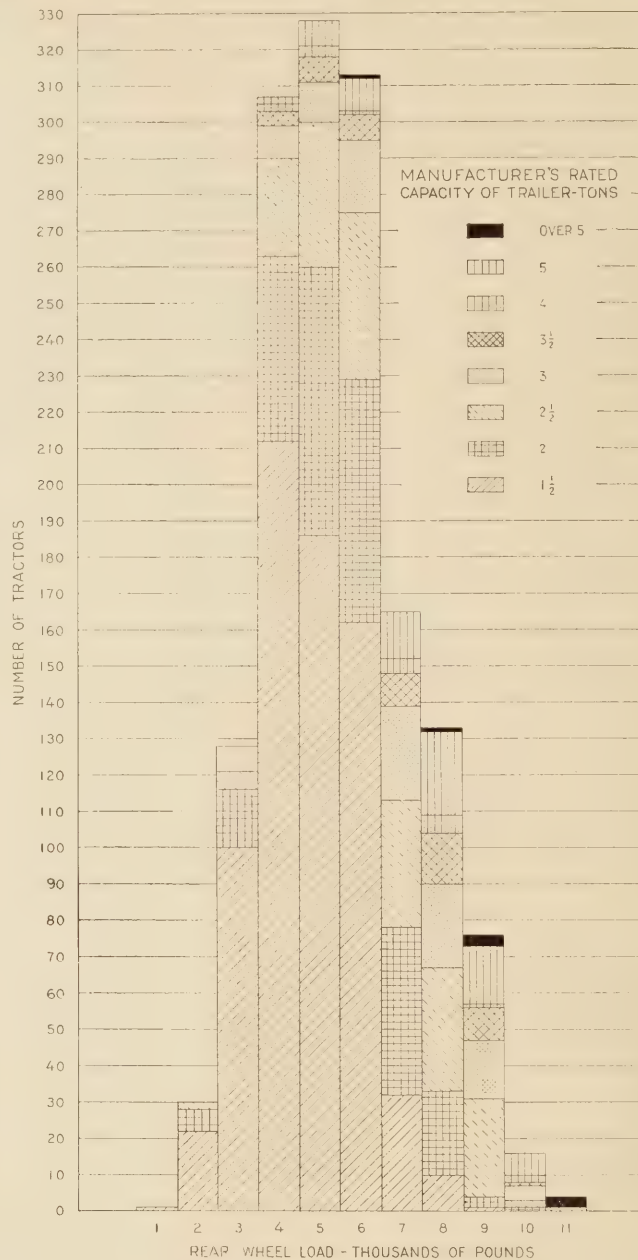


FIGURE 5.—FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF REAR-WHEEL LOADS OF LOADED TRACTORS.

ity or larger, and 180 or nearly 39 percent were of 2½ tons capacity or smaller.

Vehicles with wheel loads exceeding 8,000 pounds numbered only 212 or 4.5 percent of the total of 4,705 vehicles observed and again the number of vehicles rated at 5 tons or more was less than the number of 2½-ton and smaller vehicles. Sixty or 1.3 percent of the total number of vehicles had wheel loads exceeding 9,000 pounds, and only 15 or about 0.3 percent had wheel loads greater than 10,000 pounds. In these two groups, as in the larger groups with wheel loads above 7,000 and 8,000 pounds, vehicles of the larger capacities were not the most numerous but were, on the contrary, exceeded in number by vehicles of 2½-ton capacity and smaller.

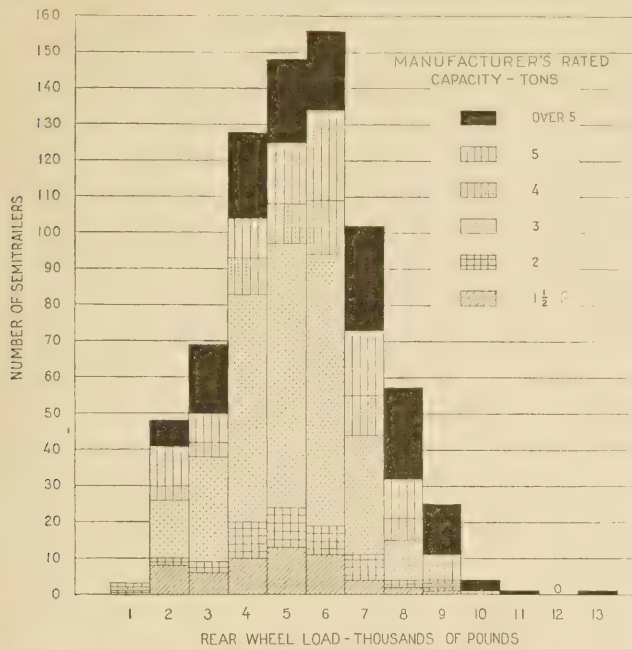


FIGURE 6.—FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF REAR-WHEEL LOADS OF LOADED SEMITRAILERS.

TABLE 19.—Classification of all loaded tractors with heavy wheel loads according to manufacturer's rated capacity and rear-wheel loads

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Rear-wheel loads exceeding—							
		7,000 pounds		8,000 pounds		9,000 pounds		10,000 pounds	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1½ tons.....	726	11	4.8	1	1.0				
2 tons.....	287	27	11.8	4	4.2	1	5.0		
2½ tons.....	209	64	27.9	30	31.3	3	15.0	1	25.0
3 tons.....	116	43	18.8	20	20.8	4	20.0		
3½ tons.....	51	24	10.5	10	10.4	1	5.0		
4 tons.....	18	8	3.5	3	3.1	2	10.0		
5 tons.....	76	45	19.6	22	22.9	6	30.0		
Over 5 tons.....	8	7	3.1	6	6.3	3	15.0	3	75.0
Total.....	1,491	229	100.0	96	100.0	20	100.0	4	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles.....	100.0	15.4		6.4		1.3		0.3	

In tables 19 and 20, the numbers of loaded tractors and semitrailers, respectively, with rear-wheel loads exceeding the several limits are shown to be approximately as numerous in relation to the totals of such vehicles as were the single vehicles similarly loaded. The tables show, however, that the heavier wheel loads on tractors and semitrailers are more frequently found on combinations of the larger capacities.

**TIRE CAPACITY NOT EXCEEDED TO SAME EXTENT AS VEHICLE CAPACITY**

In table 21 is shown the frequency distribution of the ratio of actual tire loads to the manufacturer's rated carrying capacity of the tires. Again the tendency for the smaller vehicles to carry loads out of proportion to their capacity is evident in the more frequent overloading of the smaller sizes of tires commonly found on such vehicles. It is to be remarked, however, that the tires are not as greatly overloaded as the vehicles, a fact that is doubtless due to the use of oversized tires on many of the smaller vehicles. Whereas, in extreme

TABLE 20.—Classification of all loaded semitrailers with heavy wheel loads according to manufacturer's rated capacity and rear-wheel load

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Rear-wheel loads exceeding—							
		7,000 pounds		8,000 pounds		9,000 pounds		10,000 pounds	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1½ tons.....	55	3	3.4	1	3.2				
2 tons.....	45	3	3.4	1	3.2				
3 tons.....	302	12	13.6	1	3.2				
4 tons.....	62	7	8.0	1	3.2				
5 tons.....	110	19	21.6	8	25.8	1	16.7		
Over 5 tons.....	168	44	50.0	19	61.4	5	83.3	2	100.0
Total.....	742	88	100.0	31	100.0	6	100.0	2	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles.....	100.0	11.9		4.2		0.8		0.3	

cases, 1½-ton trucks were found to carry loads up to six times their rated capacity and more, the extreme overloading of the smallest class of tires did not exceed 2.75 times the rated load of the tires. In the case of the largest tires—those rated at more than 4,000 pounds—the extreme overload observed was only 1.5 times rated capacity, and the number of loads in excess of rated capacity was only about 6 percent of the total.

The data presented in table 21 relate to both high-pressure and low-pressure tires indiscriminately. Similar distributions were made for the two classes separately, but as they were very similar to the distribution of the combined groups they are not included in this report.

**VALUE OF C IN GROSS-WEIGHT FORMULA DISCUSSED**

For the purpose of limiting the gross weight of vehicles and combinations of vehicles the American Association of State Highway Officials has recommended use of the formula,  $W=C(L+40)$ , in which  $W$  is the gross weight,  $C$  a coefficient, and  $L$  the length in feet between the centers of the extreme forward and rear axles of the vehicle or combination. The association recommended a value of 700 as the lowest value of  $C$  to be adopted as a limit in any State.

It has been definitely determined that limitation of gross weight is not needed as a measure of pavement or road surface protection. Tests have shown that the stress in rigid pavements caused by vehicular loads is a function of the wheel load rather than the gross load. If axles are spaced no closer than 3 feet between centers, it has been determined that the maximum stress caused by the combined wheel loads does not exceed that caused by each wheel load separately. As spacing closer than 3 feet is impracticable, the maximum wheel load of vehicles is the critical factor in design of pavements; and it is wheel load rather than gross load that must be limited for pavement protection.

On bridges the effects of loading are different. All wheel loads of a vehicle or combination of vehicles that can come upon the structure at one time are effective in producing stress, and the stress produced increases with the sum of the loads applied within a given length. For bridge protection, therefore, limitation of wheel load is not sufficient; limitation of gross load is also required. But the form of limitation to be adopted should give proper recognition to the length over which the load is applied. The formula recommended by the American Association of State Highway Officials is of that character; and the value of  $C=700$ , recommended as the

TABLE 21.—Frequency distribution of capacity use of tires on loaded vehicles, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

[High-pressure and low-pressure tires combined]

Manufacturer's rated capacity of tires	Average ratio	Ratio of total load on tire to tire capacity											Total observations
		0.25	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number
1-2 ..... 1,000 pounds..	1.09	0.4	10.3	20.4	23.4	22.8	15.2	4.4	2.2	0.7	0.1	0.1	2,023
2-3 ..... do.....	1.07	1.0	10.1	17.6	25.2	25.5	16.8	2.1	.5	.1	.1	4,169	
3-4 ..... do.....	.93	1.6	13.1	23.9	38.2	20.0	2.7	.4	.1			1,867	
Over 4 ..... do.....	.81	3.6	19.0	35.6	35.6	4.4	1.8					225	

lowest limit to be adopted, has been found to give, for vehicles and combinations commonly employed, values of the gross load,  $W$ , that do not unduly overstress bridges designed for the association's standard  $H-15$  loading.

Heretofore, determinations of the value of  $C$  corresponding to various types and combinations of vehicles have been based upon assumptions of probable or maximum permissible wheel loads. In this study values of  $C$  have been determined for vehicles of various types and sizes, as actually loaded, and frequency distributions of these values for single vehicles and for tractor-semitrailer combinations are given in table 22.

To understand the significance of the values of  $C$  in table 22, it is necessary to keep in mind that the gross-load limit derived from the formula is an upper limit normally associated with fully loaded or overloaded vehicles of the high-capacity classes. The large percentage of small values of  $C$  shown in the table is due to the inclusion of low-capacity vehicles and vehicles partly loaded, and these would rarely be affected by a gross-load limitation. Also, it is intended that the gross-load limit given by the formula be used in conjunction with an axle-load or wheel-load limit. In nearly all cases of 4-wheel trucks, the limit on axle or wheel load, not the gross-load formula, will control the gross load.

TABLE 22.—Frequency distribution of values of  $C$  in the gross-load formula, percentage of total observations

[Loaded vehicles only]

Group	Total observations	Value of $C$								
		Under 100	100 to 200	200 to 300	300 to 400	400 to 500	500 to 600	600 to 700	Over 700	
	Number	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	
Single vehicles.....	4,956	5.9	33.6	36.1	17.1	5.5	1.1	0.5	0.2	
Tractor - semitrailer combinations.....	1,551	.1	5.2	23.1	35.4	23.6	11.4	1.1	.1	

In view of these circumstances it is interesting to observe that only 0.2 percent of all observed single vehicles and 0.1 percent of all semitrailer combinations had gross weights corresponding to values of  $C$  above 700. For single vehicles the highest value was 770; but, discarding the 50 highest values (1 percent of the total observed number) the maximum is reduced to 550. For semitrailer combinations the highest observed value was 750, a maximum that would be lowered to 560 by elimination of the highest 1 percent of observed values.

Of the 4,956 single vehicles observed only 10 had gross weights and wheel-base lengths corresponding to values of  $C$  in excess of 700, the value recommended by the American Association of State Highway Officials as the lowest to be adopted as a limit in any State. Of these

10 trucks, 8 were definitely allocable to manufacturer's rated capacity classes, 2 to the 5-ton class, and 6 to the over-5-ton class. All of these vehicles were 6-wheel vehicles and were the property of a single owner. For trucks of large rated capacity, they had very short wheel bases, ranging from 14 to 15 feet. All were used in the local delivery of crushed stone from a nearby quarry. As they were all 6-wheel vehicles and their wheel loads did not in any case exceed 9,000 pounds they would not have been excluded by wheel-load limitations such as have been recommended by the American Association of State Highway Officials.

Twenty-five of the single vehicles had gross weights and lengths of wheel base resulting in values of  $C$  over 600 and not more than 700. Of these, 17 could be definitely allocated to rated-capacity classes, as follows: 2½-ton capacity, 2; 3-ton capacity, 1; 3½-ton capacity, 3; 4-ton capacity, 1; 5-ton capacity, 7; over 5-ton capacity, 3.

Of the 1,551 tractor-semitrailer combinations observed only one had gross weight and length resulting in a value of  $C$  over 700. This was the heaviest combination observed during the study. Its gross weight was 51,500 pounds and the distance,  $L$ , between its foremost and rearmost axles was 28.9 feet.

Values of  $C$  between 600 and 700 were found to correspond to 17 semitrailer combinations of which only 5 were classifiable by capacity, one in the 5-ton and the other 4 in the over-5-ton group.

#### WEIGHTS OF EMPTY VEHICLES AND RATED CAPACITY COMPARED

It is sometimes necessary to know average and extreme weights of empty vehicles of the several capacity classes. It is difficult to obtain this information from manufacturer's records because the weight of the assembled empty vehicle depends upon the type of body used. The manufacturer of the vehicle generally lists the chassis weights only. It has been a common assumption that there is an approximate equality between the weight of single empty vehicles and their rated carrying capacity. The average and distributed weights of empty vehicles of the several classes as observed in this investigation, given in table 23, will show how far from correct this assumption is. Similar data for semitrailer combinations are given in table 24.

#### CAPACITY OF TRUCK NO INDICATION OF OVER-ALL WIDTH

In the absence of precise information the assertion has been made that motor trucks of the larger capacity classes are commonly wider than those of smaller capacity and consequently require a greater width of pavement for their accommodation. Factors other than the width of the vehicles themselves bear upon the question of pavement width required, including the speed of the vehicles and the driving habits of their operators.

TABLE 23.—Frequency distribution of the weights of empty single vehicles, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average empty weight	Weight empty, 1,000 pounds														Total observations
		2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26		
1½ tons	Pounds 5,690	Percent 1.8	Percent 23.8	Percent 65.3	Percent 7.6	Percent 1.1	Percent 0.4	Percent 2.3	Percent 0.3	Percent 1.9	Percent 1.6	Percent 0.8	Percent	Percent	Percent	Number 1,642
2 tons	7,690		.6	34.1	48.7	14.0	2.3									3
2½ tons	10,010			8.2	27.3	36.9	17.1	6.2	1.9	1.6	0.8					257
3 tons	10,720			2.6	19.8	39.4	25.5	5.7	4.4	2.2	.4					228
3½ tons	12,060			3.0	4.5	17.9	46.2	19.4	7.5	1.5						67
5 tons	14,150			1.0	3.8	7.7	33.6	21.1	11.5	10.6	5.8	2.9	1.0	1.0		104

TABLE 24.—Frequency distribution of the weights of empty tractor-semitrailer combinations, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average empty weight	Weight empty, 1,000 pounds											Total observations
		6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	
3 tons	Pounds 10,890	Percent 0.8	Percent 25.4	Percent 37.3	Percent 31.4	Percent 4.0	Percent 5.5	Percent 4.0	Percent 4.0	Percent 1.6	Percent	Percent	Number 126
5 tons	13,270		15.1	39.4	9.1	3.0	9.1	9.1	6.1	3.0			33
Over 5 tons	14,320		2.6	15.8	19.7	17.1	22.4	14.5	7.9				76

TABLE 25.—Frequency distribution of the over-all widths of loaded single vehicles, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average width	Over-all width in feet																			Total observations		
		5.0	5.2	5.4	5.6	5.8	6.0	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.8	7.0	7.2	7.4	7.6	7.8	8.0	8.2	8.4	8.6		8.8	9.0
1½ tons	Feet 7.0	Pct. 0.1	Pct. 0.3	Pct. 0.7	Pct. 2.2	Pct. 2.6	Pct. 2.7	Pct. 3.6	Pct. 4.4	Pct. 7.6	Pct. 12.6	Pct. 12.1	Pct. 12.5	Pct. 17.0	Pct. 10.8	Pct. 5.7	Pct. 3.6	Pct. 0.7	Pct. 0.4	Pct. 0.3	Pct. 0.1	Pct.	Number 2,992
2 tons	7.4				.8	.8	1.1	.9	3.0	6.9	11.4	15.4	12.0	20.6	14.4	8.3	2.4	.6	.6	.6	.6	.2	533
2½ tons	7.5				.2	.2	.4	.6	1.1	2.1	4.3	7.9	14.1	12.9	15.8	16.9	15.6	4.5	2.1	.9	.4		468
3 tons	7.7						.2	.2	.5	.7	2.9	4.3	11.2	24.5	21.4	23.0	7.7	1.5	1.2	.5	.2		413
3½ tons	7.7							.7	.7	1.5	1.5	5.2	12.0	20.9	20.1	25.4	9.0	3.7					134
5 tons	7.9						.4			.4	.4	2.4	3.2	12.1	23.0	36.3	10.9	7.7	1.6	1.2	.4		248

TABLE 26.—Frequency distribution of the over-all widths of loaded tractor-semitrailer combinations, percentage of total observations in each capacity class

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Average width	Over-all width in feet											Total observations	
		6.4	6.6	6.8	7.0	7.2	7.4	7.6	7.8	8.0	8.2	8.4		8.6
1½ tons	Feet 7.5	Percent	Percent	Percent 1.8	Percent 3.6	Percent 12.8	Percent 23.7	Percent 30.8	Percent 20.0	Percent 7.3	Percent	Percent	Number 55	
2 tons	7.7					4.7	20.9	27.9	25.6	16.3		2.3	43	
3 tons	7.7	0.3	0.6	1.6	2.9	4.2	16.1	31.4	19.7	14.2	6.8	1.9	0.3	310
4 tons	7.7				4.8	6.5	11.3	27.4	14.5	21.0	12.9	1.6		62
5 tons	7.8			1.0	1.0	1.0	7.8	18.4	26.2	34.9	7.8	1.9		103
Over 5 tons	7.9	.6	.6	.6	2.2	2.2	5.1	11.8	21.3	45.4	10.7	1.1	.6	178

To the extent that width of the vehicle and its load influence the decision, some light is thrown upon the question by the classifications of over-all widths of observed single vehicles and combinations given in tables 25 and 26, respectively. Figures 7 and 8 are presented to sharpen the comparison between the 1½-ton and 5-ton classes. In the former it will be seen that the 1½-ton trucks were more numerous than the 5-ton vehicles in each width class up to and including the legal limit, 8 feet. Among the law-violating single vehicles the 5-ton trucks are slightly more numerous, and a single 5-ton truck 9 feet wide exceeds the 8.8-foot width of the widest 1½-ton truck.

Among semitrailers there is greater difference between the widths of vehicles of the two capacity classes, as shown in figure 7. No 1½-ton semitrailer combination was observed with over-all width in excess of 8 feet; and the widest 5-ton combination observed was only 8.4 feet wide.

Tables 27 and 28 show for single vehicles and semitrailer combinations, respectively, the number of units observed in excess of certain widths. Table 27 shows that 64.5 percent of all single vehicles observed had over-all widths in excess of 7 feet and nearly 50 percent of the wider vehicles were 1½-ton trucks. Only 4.6 percent of the total number of vehicles were over 8 feet in width and nearly a fourth of this group were of 5-ton capacity, but a greater number were of the 1½- and 2-ton capacities. Less than 1 percent of all the vehicles were more than 8½ feet in width and among them all capacity classes were represented with little difference in number, those of the 1½-ton class still exceeding the 5-ton trucks.

Table 28, similarly reviewing the width data for semitrailer combinations, shows that 96.3 percent of all combinations were more than 7 feet wide; 9.5 percent were more than 8 feet; and only 0.3 percent were wider than 8½ feet. Among these wide vehicles the 1½-ton

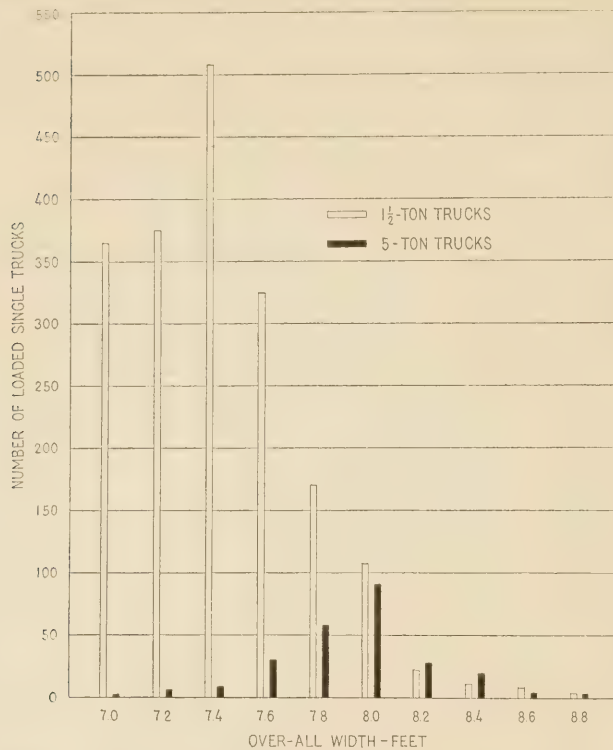


FIGURE 7.—COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF LOADED 1½-TON AND 5-TON TRUCKS (RATED CAPACITY) OF VARIOUS OVER-ALL WIDTHS.

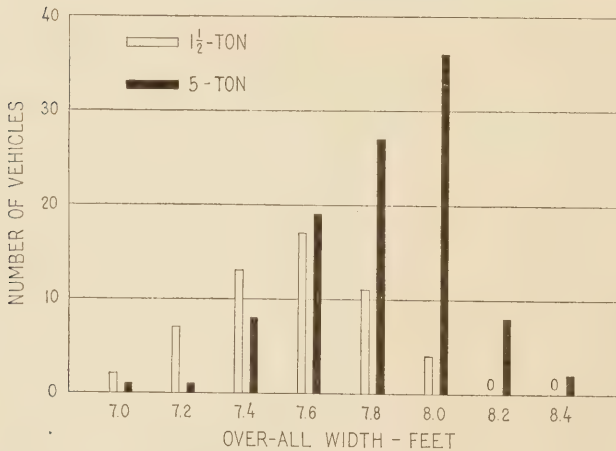


FIGURE 8.—COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF LOADED 1½-TON AND 5-TON TRACTOR-SEMITRAILER COMBINATIONS (RATED CAPACITY OF SEMITRAILER) OF VARIOUS OVER-ALL WIDTHS.

size was not so strongly represented as among the single vehicles, but the several classes from 3-ton to over 5-ton capacity were represented with little distinction.

DATA ON HEIGHTS OF LOADED VEHICLES DISCUSSED

Tables 29, 30, 31, and 32 show the distribution of loaded vehicles according to over-all height in a manner corresponding to the previous analysis of width. The average height of the 1½-ton class is shown to be about one foot less than the average height of all trucks of other capacity classes. This is due to the presence in the smaller capacity group of large numbers of low trucks and not to the absence in that group of high vehicles. As shown by table 31, over 56 percent of all single trucks higher than 11 feet were of 1½-ton capacity

TABLE 27.—Classification of all wide single vehicles according to manufacturer's rated capacity and over-all width

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Loaded vehicles having over-all widths exceeding—					
		7 feet		8 feet		8½ feet	
	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1½ tons	2,992	1,528	49.5	44	19.9	11	27.5
2 tons	533	400	13.0	23	10.4	7	17.5
2½ tons	468	389	12.6	37	16.8	6	15.0
3 tons	413	394	12.8	46	20.8	8	20.0
3½ tons	134	129	4.2	17	7.7	—	—
5 tons	248	245	7.9	54	24.4	8	20.0
Total	4,788	3,085	100.0	221	100.0	40	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles	100.0	64.5	—	4.6	—	0.8	—

TABLE 28.—Classification of all wide tractor-semitrailer vehicle combinations according to manufacturer's rated capacity and over-all width

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Loaded vehicles having over-all widths exceeding—					
		7 feet		8 feet		8½ feet	
	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1½ tons	55	52	7.2	—	—	—	—
2 tons	43	43	5.9	2	2.8	—	—
3 tons	310	293	40.5	28	39.4	1	50.0
4 tons	62	59	8.2	9	12.7	—	—
5 tons	103	101	14.0	10	14.1	—	—
Over 5 tons	178	175	24.2	22	31.0	1	50.0
Total	751	723	100.0	71	100.0	2	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles	100.0	96.3	—	9.5	—	0.3	—

ity and so likewise were 63 percent of all trucks over 12 feet in height. The observations included only 3 trucks over 12½ feet high and 2 of these were of 1½-ton capacity.

Comparison of tables 31 and 32 shows that the number of semitrailer combinations of the greater heights was a larger proportion of the total than in the case of single vehicles; and again, as in the matter of width, the small-capacity semitrailer is less numerously represented than the small-capacity truck among the extremely high vehicles.

Figures 9 and 10 show graphically the composition by capacity classes of the numbers of trucks and semitrailer combinations of several of the greater-height groups.

OVER-ALL LENGTHS OF VEHICLES REPORTED

Tables 33, 34, 35, and 36 contain analyses of the over-all lengths of single vehicles and semitrailer combinations similar to those previously presented with regard to other characteristics of the vehicles.

The largest single vehicle observed, the capacity of which could be definitely determined, was 35 feet long. Four larger vehicles were measured, the largest 38 feet long, but these were of indeterminate rated capacity. Of the single vehicles of determinable capacity only 8 exceeded 33 feet in over-all length and 121, or 2.6 percent of the total number observed, exceeded 30 feet. In this connection it is desirable to emphasize that the length recorded was the over-all length of vehicle and load. It included the bumpers and projections of the load if any existed.

The longest semitrailer combination of determinable capacity was 52 feet long. Three that could not be classified by capacity were longer, the longest being 59 feet in length. Only 1 of the 728 semitrailer combi-





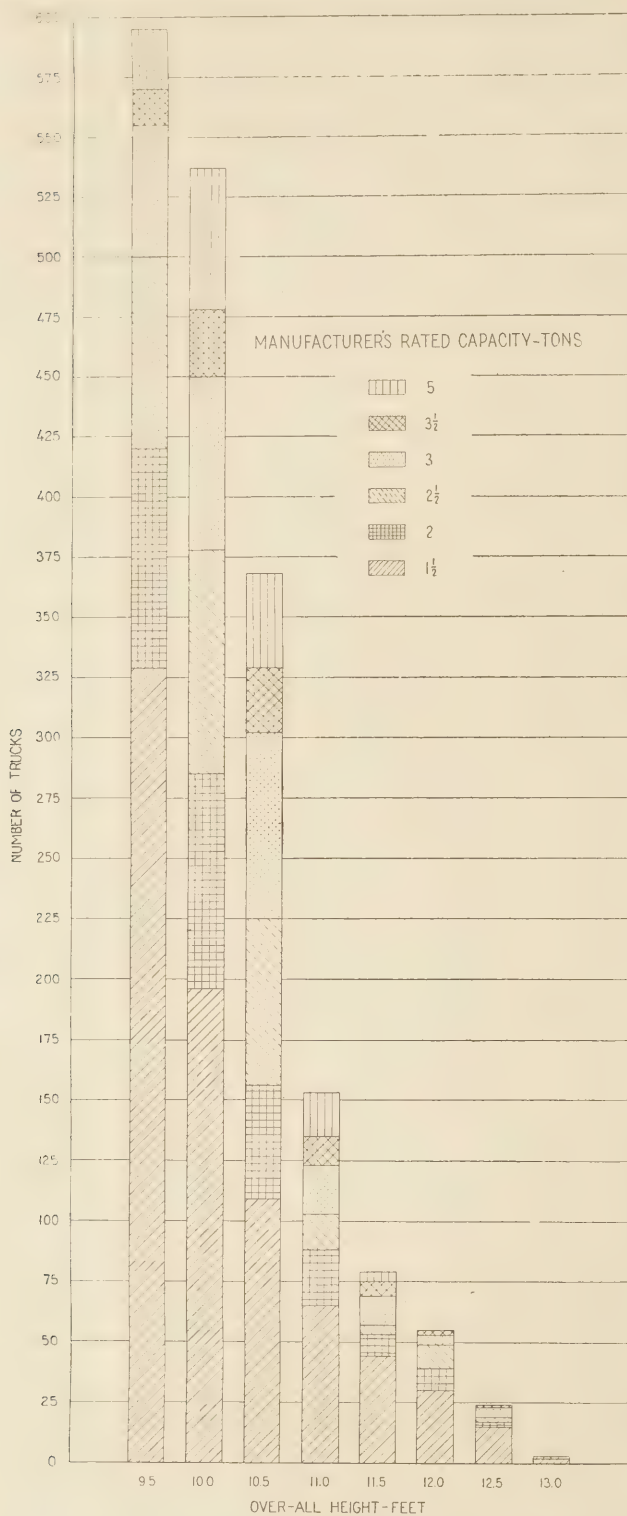


FIGURE 9.—LOADED TRUCKS IN HEIGHT CLASSIFICATION FROM 9½ TO 13 FEET GROUPED ACCORDING TO RATED CAPACITY.

nations that could be classified by capacity was more than 50 feet in length. Eighteen, or 2.5 percent of the total, were over 45 feet long; and 63, or 8.7 percent, were over 40 feet in length. More than one-third—253 of the 728 loaded semitrailer combinations classifiable by capacity—were more than 35 feet long over-all.

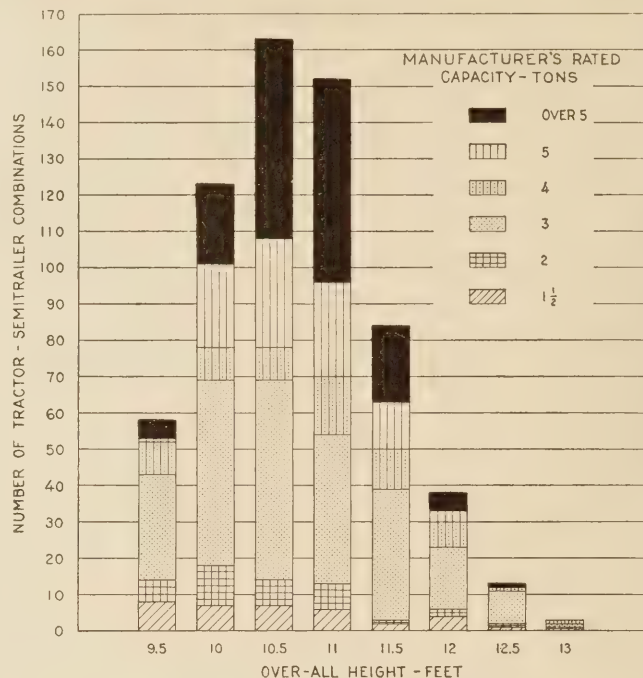


FIGURE 10.—LOADED TRACTOR-SEMITRAILER COMBINATIONS IN HEIGHT CLASSIFICATIONS FROM 9½ TO 13 FEET GROUPED ACCORDING TO RATED CAPACITY.

TABLE 35.—Classification of all long, loaded, single vehicles according to manufacturer's rated capacity and over-all length

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Loaded vehicles having over-all lengths exceeding—					
		25 feet		30 feet		33 feet	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1½ tons	2,953	135	17.4	15	12.4		
2 tons	536	95	12.3	8	6.6		
2½ tons	463	139	18.0	12	9.9		
3 tons	407	222	28.7	38	31.4	1	12.5
3½ tons	127	74	9.6	22	18.2	3	37.5
5 tons	253	108	14.0	26	21.5	4	50.0
Total	4,739	773	100.0	121	100.0	8	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles	100.0	16.3		2.6		0.2	

TABLE 36.—Classification of all long, loaded, tractor-semitrailer vehicle combinations according to manufacturer's rated capacity and over-all length

Manufacturer's rated capacity	Total all loaded vehicles	Loaded vehicles having over-all lengths exceeding—									
		30 feet		35 feet		40 feet		45 feet		50 feet	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1½ tons	62	46	8.7	16	6.3	2	3.2				
2 tons	44	28	5.3	14	5.5	5	7.9				
3 tons	291	191	36.0	88	34.8	26	41.3	7	38.9		
4 tons	63	52	9.8	39	15.4	14	22.2	5	27.8		
5 tons	97	66	12.4	42	16.6	6	9.5	2	11.1	1	100.0
Over 5 tons	171	148	27.8	54	21.4	10	15.9	4	22.2		
Total	728	531	100.0	253	100.0	63	100.0	18	100.0	1	100.0
Percentage of total loaded vehicles	100.0	72.9		34.8		8.7		2.5			

As shown by tables 33 and 34, the longest vehicles and combinations were of large and intermediate capacity classes. The largest single vehicles of the 1½-, 2-, and 2½-ton classes were 32 feet long; the longest 1½- and 2-ton semitrailer combinations were 44 feet long.

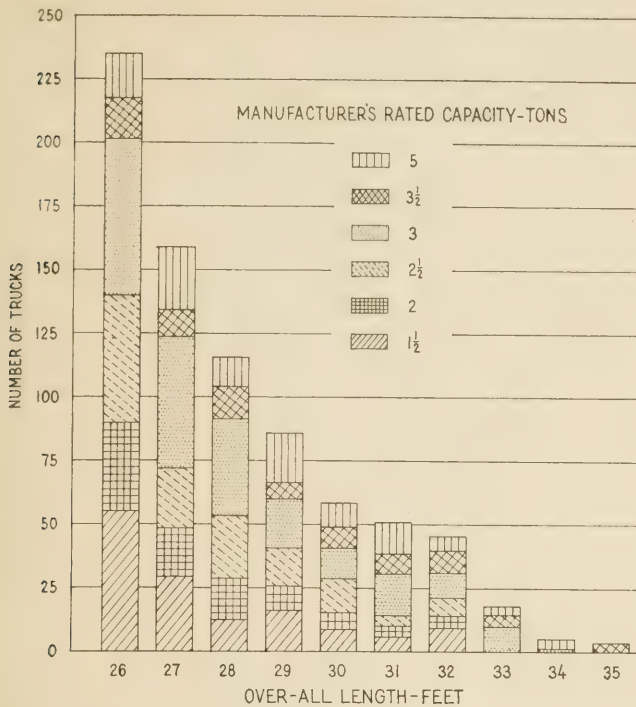


FIGURE 11.—Loaded Single Vehicles Grouped According to Over-All Length and Within Groups According to Rated Capacity.

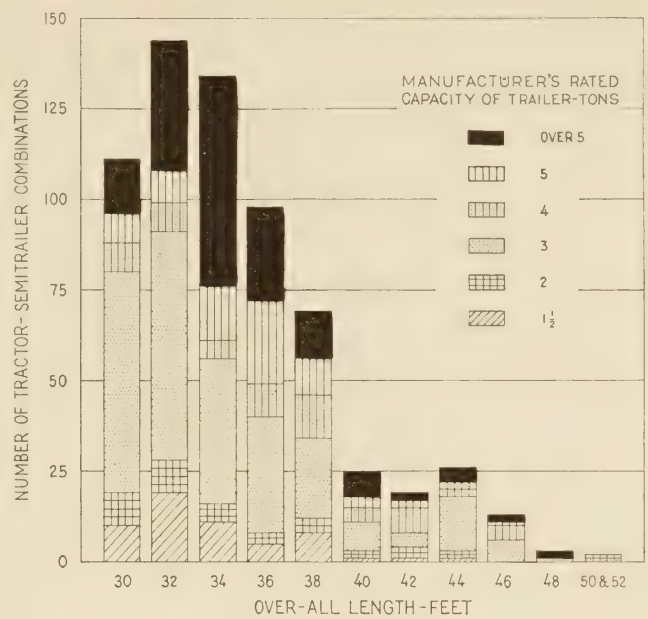


FIGURE 12.—Loaded Tractor-Semitrailer Combinations Grouped According to Over-All Length and Within Groups According to Rated Capacity.

TABLE 37.—Weights and dimensions of combinations that included full trailers

Combination no.	Type of combination	Manufacturer's rated capacity	Gross weight of combination		Percentage of gross weight carried on—					Tire arrangement <sup>1</sup>	Rear-wheel load	Ratio of tire load to tire capacity	Over-all height	Over-all width	Over-all length	Over-all wheel base	Ratio of over-all wheel base to over-all length	Value of "C" in formula W=C(L+40)	Character of load	Origin and destination	
			Gross weight	Rear axle load	Truck rear axle	Tractor rear axle	Semi-trailer axle	Full trailer													
			Lbs.	Lbs.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.												
1	Truck	Tons	77,080	38,520	32,140	42					6 D	8,035	101	9.5	7.8	58.7	49.7	1.18	860	Gasoline	{Maryland to Delaware.
	Full trailer			38,560	25,760				17	33	6 D	6,440	80								
2	Tractor		31,400	15,700	9,240		29				4 D	4,620	59								Do.
	Semitrailer				8,000						2 D	4,000	40	11.0	7.7	53.0	47.0	1.13	360		
	Full trailer	5		7,700	3,800						4 D	1,900	37								
3	Truck	3	39,800	24,425	18,770			47			4 D	2,385	130	9.4	7.1	42.7	38.1	1.12	500	Paper	{Maryland to District of Columbia.
	Full trailer			15,375	7,330						4 D	3,065	83								
4	Truck	1 1/2	11,700	9,200	7,150			41			4 D	3,575		10.0	6.4	37.6	34.0	1.11	160	Furniture	{New York to Florida.
	Full trailer			2,500	1,275						4 D	638									
5	Truck	2 1/2	36,800	18,500	14,740			40			4 D	7,370	145								{North Carolina to New York.
	Full trailer			18,300	9,000						4 S	4,500	125	11.8	7.7	42.4	37.4	1.13	490	Agricultural products	
6	Truck	3 1/2	39,375	25,200	16,450			42			4 D	8,225	105								{North Carolina to Maryland.
	Full trailer			14,175	6,600						4 DD	3,300	100	11.8	7.7	48.8	44.3	1.21	470	Produce	
7	Truck	1 1/2	25,540	15,180	12,370			48			4 D	6,185	149								{Florida to Pennsylvania.
	Full trailer			10,360	5,300						4 S	2,150		8.0	7.0	37.8	33.0	1.15	350	Fruit	
	Tractor	3 1/2	30,600	12,700	8,100			26		20	4 D	4,050	51								Do.
	Semitrailer				6,200						2 D	3,100	48	11.0	8.0	53.6	48.8	1.10	340	Freight	
	Full trailer	5		11,700	5,300						4 D	2,650	34								
9	Truck	2 1/2	58,700	38,100	30,300			52			6 D	7,575	97	10.5	7.8	53.5	48.4	1.10	660	Soy beans	Do.
	Full trailer	5		20,600	10,300						4 DD	5,150	79								
10	Truck	3	39,300	24,000	18,300			47			4 D	9,150	127	9.5	7.2	42.6	38.0	1.12	500	Paper	{District of Columbia to Maryland.
	Full trailer			15,300	7,500						4 DD	3,750	85								

<sup>1</sup> The number designates the number of wheels on each unit. The letter indicates arrangement of tires on wheels carried by rear axle. D indicates dual tires and S indicates single tires. On full trailers DD means that wheels on both front and rear axles carry dual tires.

Figures 11 and 12 show graphically the relative numbers of single vehicles and semitrailer combinations of the several capacity classes in each of the larger length groups. It will be observed that single vehicles of low rated capacity were an important part of each length group up to 32 feet—the greatest length observed for such vehicles. In the case of semitrailer combinations, those of the lower rated capacities are an unimportant part of the total above the length of 38 feet.

**WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF FULL-TRAILER COMBINATIONS  
GIVEN**

Only 10 combinations having full trailers were observed during the course of the survey. The weights,

dimensions, and other characteristics of these vehicles are given in table 37. In general their characteristics are similar to those of the tractor-semitrailer combinations which have been discussed in detail, but one should be noted particularly as the longest and heaviest combination observed during the period. This combination, with a gross load of 77,000 pounds and a length of 58.7 feet, had a value of  $C$  in the gross-load formula recommended by the American Association of State Highway Officials of 860. This is the largest value noted in the period of observation and exceeds the next largest value observed by nearly 100. This combination consisted of a tank truck and a tank trailer and was used to transport gasoline.

**REPORT ON TAXATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES IN  
1932 AVAILABLE**

The full report on the study of motor vehicle taxation in 1932 by the United States Bureau of Public Roads is now available. The survey was begun in 1933 and completed in 1934 and is the broadest in scope yet attempted. The report includes not only State taxes but also Federal excise taxes, county and municipal taxes, personal-property taxes on motor vehicles imposed by State, county, and municipal jurisdictions,

and public bridge tolls. The data are analyzed so that the numbers and contributions of various classes of vehicles may be determined.

A digest of the report was published in *Public Roads*, October 1934. The full report, entitled "The Taxation of Motor Vehicles in 1932", consists of 270 pages and is for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., for 35 cents. There is no supply for general free distribution. Orders should be sent direct to the Superintendent of Documents at the above address.

CURRENT STATUS OF UNITED STATES PUBLIC WORKS ROAD CONSTRUCTION

AS PROVIDED BY SECTION 204 OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (1934 FUNDS) AND BY THE ACT OF JUNE 18, 1934 (1935 FUNDS)

CLASS I.—PROJECTS ON THE FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY SYSTEM OUTSIDE OF MUNICIPALITIES

AS OF APRIL 30, 1935

Table with columns: STATE, APPORTIONMENTS, COMPLETED, UNDER CONSTRUCTION, APPROVED FOR CONSTRUCTION, BALANCE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR NEW PROJECTS. Rows list various states and their road construction statistics for 1934 and 1935.

CURRENT STATUS OF UNITED STATES PUBLIC WORKS ROAD CONSTRUCTION AS PROVIDED BY SECTION 204 OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (1934 FUNDS) AND BY THE ACT OF JUNE 18, 1934 (1935 FUNDS)

CLASS 2.—PROJECTS ON EXTENSIONS OF THE FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY SYSTEM INTO AND THROUGH MUNICIPALITIES

AS OF APRIL 30, 1935

Table with columns: STATE, APPOINTMENTS, COMPLETED, UNDER CONSTRUCTION, APPROVED FOR CONSTRUCTION, BALANCE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR NEW PROJECTS. Rows list states from Alabama to Hawaii, plus a TOTALS row.







# *PUBLICATIONS of the BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS*

---

Any of the following publications may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. As his office is not connected with the Department and as the Department does not sell publications, please send no remittance to the United States Department of Agriculture.

## *ANNUAL REPORTS*

- Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1924. 5 cents.  
Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1927. 5 cents.  
Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1928. 5 cents.  
Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1929. 10 cents.  
Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1931. 10 cents.  
Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1932. 10 cents.  
Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1933.  
Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, 1934.

## *DEPARTMENT BULLETINS*

- No. 136D . . Highway Bonds. 20 cents.  
No. 347D . . Methods for the Determination of the Physical Properties of Road-Building Rock. 10 cents.  
No. 583D . . Reports on Experimental Convict Road Camp, Fulton County, Ga. 25 cents.  
No. 1279D . . Rural Highway Mileage, Income, and Expenditures, 1921 and 1922.

## *TECHNICAL BULLETINS*

- No. 55T . . Highway Bridge Surveys. 20 cents.  
No. 265T . . Electrical Equipment on Movable Bridges. 35 cents.

## *MISCELLANEOUS CIRCULARS*

- No. 62MC . . Standards Governing Plans, Specifications, Contract Forms, and Estimates for Federal-Aid Highway Projects. 5 cents.

## *MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS*

- No. 76MP . . The results of Physical Tests of Road-Building Rock. 25 cents.  
Federal Legislation and Regulations Relating to Highway Construction. 10 cents.  
Supplement No. 1 to Federal Legislation and Regulations Relating to Highway Construction.  
No. 191 . . . Roadside Improvement. 10 cents.  
The Taxation of Motor Vehicles in 1932. 35 cents.

## *REPRINT FROM PUBLIC ROADS*

- Reports on Subgrade Soil Studies. 40 cents.
- 

Single copies of the following publications may be obtained from the Bureau of Public Roads upon request. They cannot be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents.

## *SEPARATE REPRINT FROM THE YEARBOOK*

- No. 1036Y . . Road Work on Farm Outlets Needs Skill and Right Equipment.

## *TRANSPORTATION SURVEY REPORTS*

- Report of a Survey of Transportation on the State Highway System of Ohio (1927).  
Report of a Survey of Transportation on the State Highways of Vermont (1927).  
Report of a Survey of Transportation on the State Highways of New Hampshire (1927).  
Report of a Plan of Highway Improvement in the Regional Area of Cleveland, Ohio (1928).  
Report of a Survey of Transportation on the State Highways of Pennsylvania (1928).  
Report of a Survey of Traffic on the Federal-Aid Highway Systems of Eleven Western States (1930).
- 

A complete list of the publications of the Bureau of Public Roads, classified according to subject and including the more important articles in PUBLIC ROADS, may be obtained upon request addressed to the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, Willard Building, Washington, D. C.

---





