U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
March 4, 1991

FHWA 02-91
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Cecilio Leonin
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FHWA REPORTS ROAD CONSTRUCTION COSTS FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1990

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced today that highway construction costs decreased 0.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 1990.

The fourth quarter results lowered the FHWA's composite bid price index (BPI) for highway construction costs to 108.5 percent of the 1987 base index (1987 average cost equal 100 percent).

Decreases in the unit prices for excavation, reinforcing steel and structural concrete resulted in the overall decrease in the index for the fourth quarter. There were increases in the unit prices for portland cement concrete, bituminous concrete and structural steel.

The three-quarter moving composite price index for the third quarter of 1990 - obtained by combining data for the last three quarters of 1990 - decreased 0.6 percent from the previous three-quarter average.

Trends in highway construction costs are measured by an index of average contract prices compiled from reports of state highway contract awards for federal-aid contracts greater than $500,000. Federal-aid Secondary and Off-Systems projects are not included.

- more -

The composite price indices during the past 2 years and the percentage changes from the preceding quarter have been as follows:

	Quarterly Price Index	Percentage Change	Three-quarter Moving Index	Percentage Change
*4th Quarter, 1988	106.6	--	108.4	--
1st Quarter, 1989	112.4	+ 5.4	107.2	- 1.1
2nd Quarter, 1989	103.4	- 8.0	108.3	+ 1.0
3rd Quarter, 1989	109.1	+ 5.5	106.2	- 1.9
4th Quarter, 1989	107.1	- 1.8	110.7	+ 4.2
1st Quarter, 1990	111.2	+ 3.8	108.4	- 2.1
2nd Quarter, 1990	106.0	- 4.7	108.5	+ 0.1
3rd Quarter, 1990	109.2	+ 3.0	107.9	- 0.6
4th Quarter, 1990	108.5	- 0.6		--

*For the three-quarter moving index, these are the middle quarters of the three-quarter periods.

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The price levels of the component items of the quarterly index in the fourth quarter of 1990, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (Fourth Quarter 1990) from:	
	Fourth Quarter 1990	Third Quarter 1990	Fourth Quarter 1989	Third Quarter 1990	Fourth Quarter 1989
Excavation	89.9	94.3	115.9	- 4.7	-22.4
Portland cement concrete	117.7	109.2	100.8	+ 7.8	+16.8
Bituminous concrete	106.3	98.1	99.3	+ 8.4	+ 7.0
Composite surfacing	110.1	101.7	99.8	+ 8.3	+10.3
Reinforcing steel	107.8	125.0	110.0	-13.8	- 2.0
Structural steel	124.1	110.5	120.1	+12.3	+ 3.3
Structural concrete	110.3	125.3	106.9	-12.0	+ 3.2
Composite structures	113.5	121.4	110.9	- 6.5	+ 2.3
Composite price index	108.5	109.2	107.1	- 0.6	+ 1.3

The price levels of the current component items of the three-quarter moving index in the second quarter of 1990, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Three Quarter Moving Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (Third Quarter 1990) from:	
	Third Quarter 1990	Second Quarter 1990	Third Quarter 1989	Second Quarter 1990	Third Quarter 1989
Excavation	96.5	110.9	98.6	-13.0	- 2.1
Portland cement concrete	109.5	106.2	101.8	+ 3.1	+ 7.6
Bituminous concrete	99.6	97.6	98.7	+ 2.0	+ 0.9
Composite surfacing	102.8	100.5	99.7	+ 2.3	+ 3.1
Reinforcing steel	116.2	123.8	121.2	- 6.1	- 4.1
Structural steel	113.8	110.5	113.3	+ 3.0	+ 0.4
Structural concrete	117.9	121.0	113.6	- 2.6	+ 3.8
Composite structures	116.6	118.7	114.8	- 1.8	+ 1.6
Composite price index	107.9	108.5	106.2	- 0.6	+ 1.6

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The U.S. average contract unit prices for the index items during the various periods shown are:

		Individual Quarters		Three Quarters	
	Unit	Third Quarter 1990	Fourth Quarter 1990	Second Quarter 1990*	Third Quarter 1989**
Excavation	Cu.Yd.	$ 2.29	$ 2.18	$ 2.45	$ 2.34
PCC surface	Sq.Yd.	16.08	17.34	15.65	16.14
Bit.conc.surf.	Ton	24.17	26.21	24.06	24.54
Reinf. steel	Lb.	0.551	0.475	0.546	0.512
Str. steel	Lb.	0.978	1.099	0.978	1.007
Str. concrete	Cu.Yd.	301.76	265.51	291.44	284.02

* Weighted average unit prices for the first three quarters of 1990.

**Weighted average unit prices for the last three quarters of 1990.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
March 11, 1991

FHWA 03-91
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DOT ISSUES RULE, GUIDELINES TO STATES FOR UNIFORM PARKING SYSTEM FOR DISABLED DRIVERS

The Department of Transportation has issued a final rule that provides guidelines to states for the establishment of a uniform parking system for drivers with disabilities that limit or impair the ability to walk. The guidelines include minimum requirements to be incorporated into state systems.

Secretary of Transportation Samuel K. Skinner said, "The department urges the states to implement these guidelines. They will enhance safety and assure fair treatment for disabled motorists, who face many problems when they travel because of the states' varied license plates and permits now in use."

The rule, required by Congress, calls for reciprocity of enforcement among all states and for the state systems to:

o Specify that the International Symbol of Access (a side view of a person in a wheelchair) shall be the only symbol used on license plates and windshield placards to identify a disabled motorist.

o Establish design, construction and designation standards for parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities.

o Provide for removable windshield placards for disabled persons in addition to the special license plate. The placard will enable a person with disabilities to park in spaces reserved for the disabled when using a rental car.

Under the DOT guidelines, placards must be hung from the windshield rearview mirror so they can be viewed from the front and rear of a car, helping enforcement personnel to easily recognize whether a vehicle is legally parked.

The department's Federal Highway Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration developed the guidelines in conjunction with an advisory committee consisting of members representing advocacy groups of persons with disabilities as well as state and local enforcement agencies.

States are not precluded from going beyond the threshold requirements specified in the DOT rule, which was published in today's Federal Register.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, March 13, 1992

FHWA 06-92
Contact: Tom Jasien
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Contact: Stan Hamilton
Tel.: (202) 366-0665

RESTRICTED COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE PROPOSED FOR FARM INDUSTRIES

The Department of Transportation proposes to give states the option of exempting certain employees of farm-related service industries from taking the knowledge and skill test for a commercial driver's license (CDL), an action which could affect an estimated 45,000 drivers.

About 1 percent of the 4.5 million drivers now required to obtain CDLs could be exempted from the specific tests, the department said. Only seasonal employees of a farm-related service industry would be eligible for the restricted license, which would be valid only while performing farm-related services.

In its proposal, the department's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) asked for public comment on whether to allow states to issue restricted CDLs to drivers of vehicles used by companies such as agri-chemical businesses, custom harvesters, livestock feeders and farm retail outlets and suppliers. Drivers with restricted licenses would not be required to take the tests.

As of April 1, operators of commercial motor vehicles must have a CDL, which can be obtained only after passing knowledge and, if applicable, driving tests meeting federal standards.

Comments on the proposal are due within 10 days of its publication in the Federal Register.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, March 15, 1991

FHWA 04-91
Contact: Stan Hamilton
Tel.: (202) 366-0665

IMMEDIATE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT ADOPTED FOR MOTOR CARRIERS

In another step to improve truck safety, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has begun a policy of bringing immediate enforcement action against motor carriers or drivers when agency inspectors find serious safety violations.

Previously, when inspectors detected a violation, they were required to make a follow-up visit to the carrier before enforcement action could begin. Under procedures announced today, FHWA will take immediate action, such as assessing a fine or taking an unsafe vehicle out of service, when it discovers a violation.

"The violations covered are those that could lead to serious personal injury or death," Federal Highway Administrator Thomas D. Larson said, "and the civil penalties are appropriate for the seriousness of those violations. Dangerous practices will be halted immediately."

Larson said that the new procedures will initially be confined to safety reviews conducted by FHWA personnel. Later, he said, discussions about the use of these procedures by persons other than federal inspectors will be held with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance and the states performing similar reviews under the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program.

The violations covered by today's procedures include using drivers who do not have proper qualifications, who have tested positive for use of prohibited drugs or who are under the influence of alcohol. Among other violations are use of vehicles that have not been repaired as required and making false or fraudulent statements or records.

Further information is available from Sam Rea of the Office of Motor Carriers at (202) 366-1795.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, May 7, 1991

FHWA 05-91
Contact: Stan Hamilton
Tel.: (202) 366-0665

THOUSANDS OF TRUCKS, BUSES TO BE IN VAST SAFETY CHECK

Simultaneous safety inspections of commercial vehicles and their drivers will take place at about 270 roadside sites throughout the U.S. and Canada in a 72-hour period from May 14-16, the Department of Transportation announced.

"Roadcheck '91 is a continuation of a joint U.S.-Canadian effort that began in 1987," the department's Federal Highway Administrator Thomas D. Larson said. "It is an annual effort designed to focus attention to the continuing roadside safety efforts of the Federal Highway Administration, Transport Canada, and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance. The alliance is an organization composed of representatives of most states and provinces that establishes common practices for commercial motor vehicle safety enforcement.

"In addition to the routine type of truck and bus safety checks state officers do every day, we are including special information gathering during these three days to determine the percentage of trucks that have radar detectors and the number of drivers who are able to adjust brakes.

"We are also taking the opportunity to distribute a brochure to the drivers reminding them to use their safety belts. Recent studies indicate that safety belt use by truck and bus drivers has increased to 50 percent, but many more lives could be saved if all drivers use the belts," Larson added.

Inspection sites will be manned by some 1,600 officers in all the states, every Canadian province and territory, and Puerto Rico. In addition, a dozen safety inspectors from the Mexican Department of Transportation will help conduct inspections in California, New Mexico and Arizona as a step that could lead to full participation by Mexico in the future.

In the three-day effort last year, more than 39,000 inspections were conducted, resulting in the removal of 12,000 vehicles and 2,900 drivers from service for serious violations of the safety regulations.

For the full fiscal year that ended last Sept. 30, approximately 1.6 million such roadside inspections were conducted under the Federal-State Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program, with 540,000 vehicles and 112,000 drivers put out of service.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, June 6, 1991

FHWA 06-91
Contact: Stan Hamilton (FHWA)
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Tel.: (202) 366-4425

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SEMINAR WILL BE CONDUCTED BY DOT

"Transportation of Hazardous Materials by Highway" is the subject of a seminar two Department of Transportation agencies will present Aug. 13-15 in Phoenix, Ariz.

The seminar will include sessions for motor carriers and shippers on new performance-oriented packaging standards, awareness-level emergency response, the commercial driver's license, industry initiatives for hazardous materials transportation, regulatory updates, safe movement of hazardous waste and substances, cargo tank regulations and how to achieve a satisfactory safety rating.

Workshop sessions will be led by specialists from DOT's Federal Highway Administration and Research and Special Programs Administration, the Hazardous Materials Advisory Council, the American Trucking Associations, the Chemical Manufacturers Association, the National Solid Waste Management Association, Transport Canada, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, the Ashland Oil Co. and state representatives.

Persons who want to attend should obtain a registration card by calling either The Pointe, the hotel where the seminar will be held (800-528-0428 or 602-997-6000), or Denise Trujillo of the Federal Highway Administration (202-366-0476 or 6121).

There is no registration fee, but attendance will be limited to the first 900 registrants.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, June 14, 1991

FHWA 07-91
CONTACT: Tom Jasien
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FHWA REPORTS ROAD CONSTRUCTION COSTS FOR FIRST QUARTER OF 1991

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced today that highway construction costs increased 5.3 percent in the first quarter of 1991.

The first quarter results raise the FHWA's composite index for highway construction costs to 114.3 percent of the 1987 base index (1987 average costs equal 100 percent).

Increases in the unit prices of common excavation, bituminous concrete, reinforcing steel, structural steel and structural concrete triggered the rise in the index. There was a decrease in the unit price for portland cement concrete.

The three-quarter moving composite price index for the fourth quarter of 1990 -- obtained by combining data for the last two quarters of 1990 with the first quarter of 1991 -- increased 2.9 percent from the previous three-quarter average.

Trends in highway construction costs are measured by an index of average contract prices compiled from reports of state highway contract awards for federal-aid contracts greater than $500,000. Federal-aid secondary system projects are not included.

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The composite price indices during the past 2 years and the percentage changes from the preceding quarter have been as follows:

	Quarterly Price Index	Percentage Change	(Three-quarter moving index) Three-quarter Moving Index	Percentage Change
*1st Quarter, 1989	112.4	--	107.2	--
2nd Quarter, 1989	103.4	- 8.0	108.3	1.0
3rd Quarter, 1989	109.1	5.5	106.2	-1.9
4th Quarter, 1989	107.1	- 1.8	110.7	4.2
1st Quarter, 1990	111.2	3.8	108.4	-2.1
2nd Quarter, 1990	106.0	- 4.7	108.5	0.1
3rd Quarter, 1990	109.2	3.0	107.9	-0.6
4th Quarter, 1990	108.5	- 0.6	111.0	2.9
1st Quarter, 1991	114.3	5.3	--	--

* For the three-quarter moving index, these are the middle quarters of the three-quarter periods.

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The price levels of the component items of the quarterly index in the first quarter of 1991, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (First Quarter 1991) from:	
	First Quarter 1991	Fourth Quarter 1990	First Quarter 1990	Fourth Quarter 1990	First Quarter 1990
Excavation	91.5	89.9	104.7	1.8	-12.6
Surfacing:					
Portland cement concrete	108.4	117.7	108.7	- 7.9	- 0.3
Bituminous concrete	110.1	106.3	99.2	3.6	11.0
Composite surfacing	109.5	110.1	102.3	- 0.5	7.0
Structures:					
Reinforcing steel	126.1	107.8	134.4	17.0	- 6.2
Structural steel	133.8	124.1	115.5	7.8	15.8
Structural concrete	123.2	110.3	120.8	11.7	2.0
Composite structures	126.5	113.5	121.8	11.5	3.9
Composite price index	114.3	108.5	111.2	5.3	2.8

The price levels of the current component items of the three-quarter moving index in the fourth quarter of 1990, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Three Quarter Moving Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (Fourth Quarter 1990) from:	
	Fourth Quarter -1990	Third Quarter 1990	Fourth Quarter -1989	Third Quarter 1990	Fourth Quarter 1989
Excavation	92.3	96.5	110.6	- 4.4	-16.5
Surfacing:					
Portland cement concrete	110.2	109.5	110.0	0.6	0.2
Bituminous concrete	105.0	99.6	100.3	5.4	4.7
Composite surfacing	106.7	102.8	103.5	3.8	3.1
Structures:					
Reinforcing steel	120.7	116.2	126.4	3.9	- 4.5
Structural steel	121.6	113.8	113.4	6.9	7.2
Structural concrete	121.4	117.9	116.5	3.0	4.2
Composite structures	121.3	116.6	117.4	4.0	3.3
Composite price index	111.0	107.9	110.7	2.9	0.3

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The U.S. average contract unit prices for the index items during the various periods shown are:

		Individual Quarters		Three Quarters	
	Unit	4th Qtr. 1990	1st Qtr. 1991	3rd Qtr. 1990*	4th Qtr.1990**
Excavation	Cu.Yd.	$ 2.18	$ 2.22	$ 2.34	$ 2.24
PCC surface	Sq.Yd.	17.34	15.96	16.14	16.24
Bit.conc.surf.	Ton	26.21	27.13	24.54	25.88
Reinf. steel	Lb.	0.475	0.556	0.512	0.532
Str. steel	Lb.	1.099	1.184	1.007	1.076
Str. concrete	Cu.Yd.	265.51	296.59	284.02	292.29

* Weighted average unit prices for the last three quarters of 1990.

** Weighted average unit prices for the last two quarters of 1990 and the first quarter of 1991.

# # #

Moving America
Into the 21st Century

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, July 18, 1991

FHWA 08-91
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Tom Jasien
Tel.: (202) 366-0660

SKINNER CALLS FOR IMPROVED
HIGHWAY TECHNOLOGY

SAN FRANCISCO -- Secretary of Transportation Samuel K. Skinner today test drove a specially-equipped car which can warn the driver of a possible collision, part of a program designed to use new technology to improve highway safety and mobility. The secretary also presented the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) with $500,000 toward development of the vehicle under its Program on Advanced Technology for the Highway, or PATH.

This joint private/public sector research effort was designed to achieve more effective use of the existing transportation system by using advanced technologies to improve vehicle operations. The partnership includes the University of California, CALTRANS, a number of private sector participants and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

"President Bush's National Transportation Policy calls for improving highway safety, protecting the environment and reducing congestion," Skinner said. "Through experiments such as PATH we can achieve these goals. For the future, we have proposed to Congress a five-year surface transportation bill that includes over $100 million for next year alone to be spent on research and technology such as PATH."

Studies have shown that 50 percent of all rear-end and intersection-related collisions, and 30 percent of collisions involving oncoming traffic, could have been avoided had the driver recognized the danger one-half second earlier and reacted correctly. The vehicle Skinner drove today, equipped by VORAD Systems, Inc. of San Diego, has the potential to provide this warning through an in-vehicle radar system designed for collision warning and automatic braking.

This type of technology is also a building block for the development of highway automation technology which could enable road vehicles to drive themselves on special freeway lanes.

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PATH also includes major research and development activities on clean vehicle propulsion technology such as the roadway-powered electric vehicle.

While in the Bay area, Skinner also test drove a vehicle equipped with a "Travel Pilot Navigation System," an on-board computer system that displays the vehicle's position and direction of travel on a map monitor. The system is being developed by ETAK Inc., a local company.

# # # #

U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 1991

FHWA 09-91
Contact: Stan Hamilton
Tel.: (202) 366-0665

HIGHWAY CARRIERS MUST BEGIN FULL RANGE OF DRUG TESTING

Interstate motor carriers will have to include random and additional post=accident drug testing in their anti-drug programs for truck and bus drivers, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

Federal Highway Administrator Thomas D. Larson said interstate carriers with 50 or more drivers subject to testing on December 1989 will have to expand their testing programs by Nov. 14. All other carriers will have to expand their programs by Jan. 1, 1992.

The post=accident testing involves any reportable accident in which a driver is issued a citation for a moving violation.

Larson said, "This action culminates legal proceedings that have held up random and some post=accident drug testing that we ordered late in 1989. Other types of testing have been in effect -- reasonable cause, before employment, periodic as part of the required biennial physical, and certain post=accident testing not blocked by the court.

"We are now able to proceed with full implementation of all five components of our testing program, one more important step to bring about greater safety on the highways."

The Federal District Court for the Northern District of California set the stage for today's action on June 28 when it dissolved its injunction prohibiting random and some post-accident testing. The suit in that case and a related one that also resulted in a recent ruling upholding the drug regulations were brought by organizations representing drivers.

All carriers operating in interstate commerce have been required to have drug=testing programs in place since Dec. 21, 1990.

The FHWA action will be published in the Aug. 16 Federal Register.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, August 15, 1991

FHWA 10-91
Contact: Stan Hamilton
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UNSATISFACTORY SAFETY RATING HALTS 'HAZ MAT' AND CERTAIN PASSENGER CARRIER OPERATIONS

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), responding to a recent law, has issued regulations to prevent commercial motor carriers from transporting passengers or large quantities of hazardous materials if they receive a safety rating of "unsatisfactory" from the agency and don't move quickly to fix problems.

The Motor Carrier Safety Act of 1990 requires that motor carriers transporting hazardous materials in quantities for which placarding is required or more than 15 passengers, including the driver, must have either a "satisfactory" or "conditional" rating indicating their compliance with federal motor carrier safety regulations. FHWA's rule, in line with the law, provides carriers 45 days to improve an "unsatisfactory" rating or else discontinue such service.

A safety rating is based on a safety review or a more in-depth compliance review at a carrier's headquarters. The review consists of a check of the carrier's accident and maintenance records and other documents.

The FHWA today spelled out the procedures that are being taken to prevent "unsatisfactory" carriers from transporting hazardous materials or passengers. If, after a review at the carrier's premises, it appears that the carrier will be rated unsatisfactory, an Office of Motor Carriers (OMC) safety specialist will explain the consequences of the safety rating to the company. If the OMC regional director finds that the carrier is likely to receive an unsatisfactory rating, a notice will be issued to the carrier spelling out the consequences for not improving the rating and the steps necessary to obtain a better one.

When OMC notifies a carrier of its unsatisfactory rating, it will also issue an order placing the carrier's passenger and hazardous materials operations out of service 45 days later if the carrier has not improved its rating by then. If the carrier upgrades its rating to to conditional or satisfactory within that time, the carrier may continue these operations. However, if the rating remains unsatisfactory on the 46th day, the out-of-service order takes effect. Severe penalties could be imposed if the OMC discovers the carrier is operating in violation of this order after 45 days without correcting the violations.

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"By our putting the carrier on notice at the time of the initial review, a responsible operator should have adequate time to take corrective action," Federal Highway Administrator Thomas D. Larson said. "If the carrier complies with the requirements, the process leading to shutdown will cease.

"The new procedures apply to motor carriers receiving unsatisfactory ratings since the beginning of 1991. All other carriers previously given, and which still have, unsatisfactory ratings are being notified of the provisions of the new law. Our safety specialists will be giving the highest priority to early reviews of the unsatisfactory-rated carriers," Larson noted.

A carrier may appeal an unsatisfactory rating to the OMC if it feels the rating was based on error or proper procedures were not followed, or if it can show it has taken corrective action and is in compliance with safety regulations.

The rule also declares motor carriers with an unsatisfactory rating to be ineligible to contract or subcontract with any federal agency to transport hazardous materials in quantities requiring placarding or more than 15 passengers. This prohibition takes place as soon as the carrier receives the rating, with no waiting period.

This rule is also being issued in anticipation of the implementation of safety permit provisions of the Hazardous Materials Transportation Uniform Safety Act of 1990, which will become effective in November 1992. Motor carriers will be prohibited from hauling certain hazardous materials unless they have a safety permit issued by DOT. Motor carriers that receive unsatisfactory ratings will be unable to obtain a safety permit authorizing them to carry hazardous materials.

The safety rating of any carrier is available by calling (703) 276-6876 or writing to Safety Rating, P.O. Box 13028, Arlington, Va. 22219.

# # # #

U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
September 10, 1991

FHWA 11-91
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FHWA REPORTS ROAD CONSTRUCTION COSTS FOR SECOND QUARTER OF 1991

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced today that highway construction costs decreased 2.2 percent in the second quarter of 1991.

The second quarter results lower the FHWA's composite index for highway construction costs to 111.8 percent of the 1987 base index (1987 average costs equal 100 percent).

Decreases in the unit prices for bituminous concrete, reinforcing steel and structural steel resulted in the overall reduction in the index for the second quarter. There were slight increases in the unit prices for common excavation, portland cement concrete surfacing and structural concrete.

The three-quarter moving composite price index for the first quarter of 1989 -- obtained by combining data for the last quarter of 1990 and the first two quarters of 1991 -- increased 0.8 percent from the previous three-quarter average.

Trends in highway construction costs are measured by an index of average contract prices compiled from reports of state highway contract awards for federal-aid contracts greater than $500,000. Federal-aid secondary and off-systems projects are not included.

-more-

The composite price indices during the past 2 years and the percentage changes from the preceding quarter have been as follows:

	Quarterly Price Index	Percentage Change	(Three-quarter moving index) Three-quarter Moving Index	Percentage Change
*2nd Quarter, 1989	103.4	--	108.3	--
3rd Quarter, 1989	109.1	5.5	106.2	-1.9
4th Quarter, 1989	107.1	- 1.8	110.7	4.2
1st Quarter, 1990	111.2	3.8	108.4	-2.1
2nd Quarter, 1990	106.0	- 4.7	108.5	0.1
3rd Quarter, 1990	109.2	3.0	107.9	-0.6
4th Quarter, 1990	108.5	- 0.6	111.0	2.9
1st Quarter, 1991	114.3	5.3	111.9	0.8
2nd Quarter, 1991	111.8	- 2.2	--	--

* For the three-quarter moving index, these are the middle quarters of the three-quarter periods.

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The price levels of the component items of the quarterly index in the second quarter of 1991, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (Second Quarter 1991) from:	
	Second Quarter 1991	First Quarter 1991	Second Quarter 1990	First Quarter 1991	Second Quarter 1990
Excavation	92.2	91.5	105.0	0.8	-12.2
Portland cement concrete	109.7	108.4	105.6	1.2	3.9
Bituminous concrete	105.8	110.1	96.2	-3.9	10.0
Composite surfacing	107.1	109.5	99.3	-2.2	7.9
Reinforcing steel	119.2	126.1	113.5	-5.5	5.0
Structural steel	124.8	133.8	106.4	-6.7	17.3
Structural concrete	123.2	123.2	115.2	0.0	6.9
Composite structures	123.0	126.5	112.6	-2.8	9.2
Composite price index	111.8	114.3	106.0	-2.2	5.5

The price levels of the current component items of the three-quarter moving index in the first quarter of 1991, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Three Quarter Moving Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (First Quarter 1991) from:	
	First Quarter 1991	Fourth Quarter 1990	First Quarter 1990	Fourth Quarter 1990	First Quarter 1990
Excavation	91.6	92.3	112.3	-0.8	-18.4
Portland cement concrete	110.5	110.2	106.8	0.3	3.5
Bituminous concrete	107.6	105.0	97.9	2.5	9.9
Composite surfacing	108.5	106.7	100.8	1.7	7.6
Reinforcing steel	118.4	120.7	116.7	-1.9	1.5
Structural steel	127.3	121.6	115.4	4.7	10.3
Structural concrete	120.4	121.4	112.8	-0.8	6.7
Composite structures	121.9	121.3	114.1	0.5	6.8
Composite price index	111.9	111.0	108.4	0.8	3.2

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The U.S. average contract unit prices for the index items during the various periods shown are:

		Individual Quarters		Three Quarters	
	Unit	1st Qtr. 1991	2nd Qtr. 1991	4th Qtr. 1990*	1st Qtr. 1991**
Excavation	CuYd.	$ 2.22	$ 2.24	$ 2.24	$ 2.22
PCC surface	Sq.Yd.	15.96	16.16	16.24	16.28
Bit.conc.surf.	Ton	27.13	26.07	25.88	26.51
Reinf. steel	Lb.	0.556	0.525	0.532	0.522
Str. steel	Lb.	1.184	1.104	1.076	1.127
Str. concrete	Cu.Yd.	296.59	296.79	292.29	289.85

* Weighted average unit prices for the last two quarters of 1990 and the first quarter of 1991.

**Weighted average unit prices for the last quarter of 1990 and the first two quarters of 1991.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, September 11, 1991

FHWA 12-91
Contact: Stan Hamilton
Tel.: (202) 366-0665

TWO CARRIERS WILL CONDUCT TRUCK DRIVER FATIGUE STUDY

Two motor carriers have agreed to participate in the first phase of a four-year study designed to measure levels of fatigue and alertness of commercial truck drivers. The study is co-sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

"Highway safety continues to be our top priority," FHWA Administrator Thomas D. Larson said. "Driver fatigue is clearly a factor in accidents and this initiative is aimed at reducing that hazard.

"The objectives are to measure fatigue indicators and the relationship of fatigue to loss of alertness. Later, alertness-enhancing methods will be tested and we may consider revisions in the regulations governing how long commercial drivers may stay behind the wheel."

The vehicles, furnished by the Yellow Freight System and Consolidated Freightways, will be equipped with portable computers, several cameras, a lane-tracking device, and a host of monitoring equipment to collect all useful data relating to fatigue.

The overall study has a projected cost of $3.7 million. The FHWA and the Trucking Research Institute of the American Trucking Associations Foundation have entered into a research partnership to collect physiological data from the participating drivers. The Essex Corp. of McLean, Va., is the prime contractor.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, October 15, 1991

FHWA 13-91
Contact: Dave Frederickson
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Tel.: (202) 366-0660

EYE IN THE SKY TO EASE TRAFFIC CONGESTION

New, high-tech methods of reducing traffic congestion will be tested in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is providing a total of $650,000 to Maryland and Virginia to monitor traffic with live video cameras mounted on state police aircraft. The FHWA is also providing $100,000 for a traveler information system in the Dulles Airport corridor.

"We continue to develop new techniques for reducing congestion," FHWA Administrator Thomas D. Larson said, "and the Washington metropolitan area, which has serious traffic congestion problems, provides an excellent test site."

The first project will use live video cameras mounted on aircraft and helicopters to monitor traffic conditions. The cameras will instantly transmit information about highway accidents and other conditions to local and state traffic managers. FHWA said this project could make it possible to respond more quickly to highway incidents and help correct recurring traffic problems. The project will complement current traffic management programs in both states.

The Dulles corridor project will enable companies and individuals to obtain information about traffic conditions through computers in their homes or offices. The primary partners include the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Dulles Area Transportation Association. Also participating are the Urban Mobility Corporation, Castle Rock Consultants, Metro Traffic Control and the town of Herndon, Va.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, November 13, 1991

FHWA 14-91
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FHWA REPORTS ROAD CONSTRUCTION COSTS FOR THIRD QUARTER OF 1991

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced today that highway construction costs decreased 4.3 percent in the third quarter of 1991.

The third quarter results lowered the FHWA's composite index for highway construction costs to 107.0 percent of the 1987 base index (1987 average costs equal 100 percent).

Decreases in the unit prices for bituminous concrete, reinforcing steel, structural steel and structural concrete resulted in the overall reduction in the index for the third quarter. There were slight increases in the unit prices for excavation and portland cement concrete.

The three-quarter moving composite price index for the second quarter of 1991 -- obtained by combining data for the first three quarters of 1991 -- decreased 1.0 percent from the previous three-quarter average.

Trends in highway construction costs are measured by an index of average contract prices compiled from reports of state highway contract awards for federal-aid contracts greater than $500,000. Federal-aid secondary and off-system projects are not included.

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The composite price indices during the past 2 years and the percentage changes from the preceding quarter have been as follows:

	Quarterly Price Index	Percentage Change	(Three-quarter moving index) Three-quarter Moving Index	Percentage Change
*3rd Quarter, 1989	109.1	--	106.2	--
4th Quarter, 1989	107.1	-1.8	110.7	4.2
1st Quarter, 1990	111.2	3.8	108.4	-2.1
2nd Quarter, 1990	106.0	-4.7	108.5	0.1
3rd Quarter, 1990	109.2	3.0	107.9	-0.6
4th Quarter, 1990	108.5	-0.6	111.0	2.9
1st Quarter, 1991	114.3	5.3	111.9	0.8
2nd Quarter, 1991	111.8	-2.2	110.8	-1.0
3rd Quarter, 1991	107.0	-4.3	--	--

* For the three-quarter moving index, these are the middle quarters of the three-quarter periods.

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The price levels of the component items of the quarterly index in the third quarter of 1991, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (Third Quarter 1991) from:	
	Third Quarter 1991	Second Quarter 1991	Third Quarter 1990	Second Quarter 1991	Third Quarter 1990
Excavation	100.8	92.2	94.3	9.3	6.9
Portland cement concrete	117.6	109.7	109.2	7.2	7.7
Bituminous concrete	97.6	105.8	98.1	- 7.8	- 0.5
Composite surfacing	104.2	107.1	101.7	- 2.7	2.5
Reinforcing steel	115.4	119.2	125.0	- 3.2	- 7.7
Structural steel	108.8	124.8	110.5	-12.8	- 1.5
Structural concrete	111.9	123.2	125.3	- 9.2	-10.7
Composite structures	111.7	123.0	121.4	- 9.2	- 8.0
Composite price index	107.0	111.8	109.2	- 4.3	- 2.0

The price levels of the current component items of the three-quarter moving index in the second quarter of 1991, the previous quarter, and the same quarter a year ago, and the corresponding percentage changes, are shown in the following table:

	Three Quarter Moving Price Index 1987=100			Percentage Change this quarter (Second Quarter 1991) from:	
	Second Quarter 1991	First Quarter 1991	Second Quarter 1990	First Quarter 1991	Second Quarter 1990
Excavation	94.7	91.6	100.9	3.4	-6.1
Portland cement concrete	111.5	110.5	106.2	0.9	5.0
Bituminous concrete	104.7	107.6	97.6	-2.7	7.3
Composite surfacing	106.9	108.5	100.5	-1.5	6.4
Reinforcing steel	120.0	118.4	123.8	1.4	-3.1
Structural steel	121.4	127.3	110.5	-4.6	9.9
Structural concrete	119.4	120.4	121.0	-0.8	-1.3
Composite structures	120.0	121.9	118.7	-1.6	1.1
Composite price index	110.8	111.9	108.5	-1.0	2.1

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The U.S. average contract unit prices for the index items during the various periods shown are:

		Individual Quarters		Three Quarters	
	Unit	2nd Qtr. 1991	3rd Qtr. 1991	1st Qtr. 1991*	2nd Qtr.1991**
Excavation	Cu.Yd.	$ 2.24	$ 2.44	$ 2.22	$ 2.30
PCC surface	Sq.Yd.	16.16	17.33	16.28	16.42
Bit.conc.surf.	Ton	26.07	24.05	26.51	25.79
Reinf. steel	Lb.	0.525	0.509	0.522	0.529
Str. steel	Lb.	1.104	0.963	1.127	1.074
Str. concrete	Cu.Yd.	296.79	269.55	289.85	287.56

* Weighted average unit prices for the last quarter of 1990 and the first two quarters of 1991.

** Weighted average unit prices for the first three quarters of 1991.

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