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PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION  
FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM NO. 48

DATE: OCTOBER 4, 1943

SUBJECT: TRAFFIC VOLUME TRENDS

Data for July 1943 from 23 automatic traffic recorders in addition to those shown in Informational Memorandum No. 45, indicate small changes in the traffic decreases tabulated in that memorandum. The revised summary for July 1943, with data from 595 automatic traffic recorders located in 45 States, is given in table 2. Decreases in the area rationed May 1942, (the eastern area), are 1.7 percent less than shown in last month's bulletin.

The average traffic decrease in August 1943, as compared with August 1942, table 1, is but 22 percent. On State highways the decrease is 21.9 percent; on local highways 14.3 percent. Two States, North Carolina and South Carolina, show traffic volumes greater than those of a year ago on State highways; and two States, Nebraska and Kentucky, show increases on local highways, although each of the latter States reports local road data from one station only.

When we turn to the monthly record of traffic since January 1940, given in the attached chart, it may be seen that traffic in both the eastern and western areas in August 1943 relative to August 1941, is greater than the comparable ratio in July 1943. It is possible that these relative increases resulted from the saving of gasoline during July for use in August, since July was relatively the lowest since these data have been compiled. On July 15 the Office of Price Administration issued an order permitting motorists to use gasoline for vacation trips, and it is probable that the August increases reflect, in part at least, this relaxation. In this connection it may be of interest to note that traffic increased from January to August for the country as a whole: in 1941, 54 percent; in 1942, 12 percent; in 1943 (preliminary data), 46 percent. Conclusions drawn from this last statement should be tempered by the fact that the traffic volume in January 1943 was but 58 percent of the January 1942 volume.

At the toll facilities, (table 3), traffic in August 1943 on 19 facilities from Maine to Florida decreased 44 percent in comparison with traffic in August 1941. It is evident that traffic on these facilities has held up better than upon the rural highways over the whole period, both in the East and in the West.

#### CITY TRAFFIC

Traffic recorded at three automatic recorders located in the city of Detroit, Michigan, is included in these bulletins for the first time. The decrease in traffic for 28 days in August 1943 from August 1942 amounted to 18.7 percent and ranged from approximately 17 percent on Six-mile Road at Conner to about 21 percent on Fourteenth Street at Edison. The decrease on Joy Road amounted to about the same percentage as the average for all three locations. The decrease of 18.7 percent in Detroit may be compared with that of 34.9 percent found on rural roads in Michigan at 28 locations. Weekday traffic on 3 routes in Washington, D. C., for August of the same years decreased 2.3 percent. Gasoline was rationed in this city in 1942 while it was not rationed in Detroit until December 1942. The decrease from 1941 was 29.6 percent in Washington. Figures for 1941 are not available in Detroit. The Saturday traffic in August 1943 was 33.3 percent less and the Sunday traffic 44.9 percent less than in August 1941 in Washington, D. C. Traffic using the Sumner Tunnel in Boston in August 1943 was 2.2 percent less than in August 1942, and 29.6 percent less than August 1941. These cities have been greatly affected by the influx of war workers and the above figures are not necessarily representative of city traffic decreases as a whole.

Nevertheless these data from city areas and from the toll facilities, the largest of which are located within or adjacent to cities, indicate that city traffic generally is higher than rural traffic in relation to the traffic of prior years.

H. S. FAIRBANK, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER,  
PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION.

Attachments:

TABLE 1.--PRELIMINARY SUMMARY\* OF AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC RECORDER DATA.  
FOR AUGUST 1943, INCLUDING 556 STATIONS IN 40 STATES.

Type of highway and State	Number of stations	Total daily traffic	Percent decrease <sup>1</sup> August 1942	Type of highway and State	Number of stations	Total daily traffic	Percent decrease <sup>1</sup> August 1942
<i>STATE HIGHWAYS.</i>				<i>STATE HIGHWAYS.</i>			
Alabama	7	10,677	10.5	Washington	9	17,855	20.9
Arizona	5	12,113	19.1	West Virginia	11	16,400	15.7
Arkansas	21	14,930	23.6	Wisconsin	9	20,776	34.7
California	10	23,434	11.5	Wyoming	3	2,378	25.2
Colorado	4	5,848	38.9	<i>Total - 40 States.</i>	<i>522</i>	<i>838,548</i>	<i>21.9</i>
Connecticut	18	51,623	19.7	<i>LOCAL HIGHWAYS</i>			
Delaware	4	11,064	11.3	Alabama	2	772	10.9
Idaho	7	10,419	20.9	Connecticut	2	701	16.0
Iowa	26	27,291	28.7	Iowa	10	1,256	14.6
Kentucky	12	18,113	34.6	Kentucky	1	246	+0.8
Louisiana <sup>3</sup>	6	11,932	14.3	Maryland	1	353	6.4
Maine	11	13,235	10.0	Massachusetts	1	246	22.6
Maryland	16	40,655	7.0	Michigan	2	714	24.8
Massachusetts	9	29,141	13.4	Missouri	2	812	5.9
Michigan	26	72,692	35.0	Montana	2	417	16.1
Mississippi	10	13,882	6.9	Nebraska	1	201	+5.2
Missouri	25	42,518	28.7	North Dakota	2	524	4.7
Montana	12	7,701	28.5	Ohio	3	1,560	21.1
Nevada	12	11,132	39.5	Oregon	1	234	6.4
Nebraska	11	10,359	24.9	Tennessee	2	909	12.8
New Hampshire	18	18,539	14.9	Wisconsin	2	422	13.5
New Mexico	12	17,372	13.0	<i>Total - 15 States.</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>9,567</i>	<i>14.3</i>
North Carolina	19	28,632	+0.3	<i>ALL HIGHWAYS</i>			
North Dakota	9	3,664	16.7	<i>40 States<sup>2</sup></i>			
Ohio	27	50,474	25.9	<i>RATIONED AREA</i>			
Oklahoma	20	30,911	21.4	<i>MAY 1942</i>	<i>136</i>	<i>247,829</i>	<i>13.5</i>
Oregon	3	4,597	23.8	<i>RATIONED AREA</i>			
Pennsylvania	28	44,736	31.2	<i>DECEMBER 1942</i>	<i>420</i>	<i>600,086</i>	<i>24.9</i>
Rhode Island	3	5,158	11.8				
South Carolina	6	6,384	+9.9				
South Dakota	9	6,701	24.2				
Tennessee	2	3,845	22.3				
Texas	64	94,033	14.8				
Utah	7	8,507	21.5				
Vermont	5	3,237	21.7				
Virginia	6	15,289	20.0				

\* Data from some States cover only a portion of the month, or have not been adjusted for the difference in numbers of Saturdays and Sundays between this year and last.

1. Plus sign before percentage indicates increase.

Includes all States except the following: Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York.

STATIONS NOT INCLUDED:

3. Defense activity - 2 in Louisiana.



TABLE 2.—REVISED SUMMARY<sup>1</sup> OF AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC RECORDER DATA FOR JULY 1943,  
INCLUDING 595 STATIONS AND 45 STATES

Geographic division and State	Number of stations	Percent decrease from July 1942	Geographic division and State	Number of stations	Percent decrease from July 1942
<i>NEW ENGLAND</i>	68	40.8	<i>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</i>	33	24.0
Connecticut	19	44.2	Alabama	8	10.0
Maine	11	34.1	Kentucky	11	36.3
Massachusetts	10	36.7	Mississippi	10	11.5
New Hampshire	18	46.8	Tennessee	4	20.7
Rhode Island	4	26.1	<i>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</i>	103	16.0
Vermont	6	38.9	Arkansas	20	24.1
<i>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</i>	40	44.2	Louisiana <sup>3</sup>	5	6.6
New York	11	48.8	Oklahoma	20	17.0
Pennsylvania	29	41.3	Texas	58	15.1
<i>SOUTH ATLANTIC</i>	80	22.5	<i>MOUNTAIN</i>	62	25.4
Delaware	4	36.7	Arizona	5	18.4
Florida	19	0.3	Colorado	5	36.4
Maryland	17	28.1	Idaho	6	22.7
North Carolina <sup>3</sup>	18	20.1	Montana	14	29.7
South Carolina	8	10.1	Nevada <sup>3</sup>	11	32.4
Virginia	3	42.9	New Mexico	12	19.5
West Virginia	11	21.3	Utah	6	26.7
<i>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</i>	82	32.5	Wyoming	3	31.8
Illinois	2	35.3	<i>PACIFIC</i>	24	19.0
Indiana	23	28.0	California	10	14.9
Michigan	28	35.2	Oregon	5	22.5
Ohio	18	26.6	Washington	9	22.9
Wisconsin	11	37.4	<i>TOTAL - 45 States<sup>2</sup></i>	595	28.8
<i>WEST NORTH CENTRAL</i>	103	26.7	<i>STATE HIGHWAYS</i>	561	28.9
Iowa	36	26.1	<i>LOCAL HIGHWAYS</i>	34	13.9
Kansas <sup>3</sup>	8	26.2	<i>RATIONED MAY 1942</i>	161	34.7
Missouri	27	28.8	<i>RATIONED DEC. 1942</i>	434	26.1
Nebraska	11	21.9			
North Dakota	12	24.9			
South Dakota	9	22.6			

1. Combined State and local highways.

2. Includes all States except the following: Georgia, Minnesota, and New Jersey.

*STATIONS NOT INCLUDED:*

3. Defense activity - 1 each in Kansas and Nevada; 2 each in Louisiana and North Carolina.



TABLE 3. TRAFFIC VOLUME DATA. AUGUST, 1943, VEHICLE TYPES, COMPARED WITH SIMILAR INFORMATION FOR AUGUST 1942 AT TOLL FACILITIES. WHERE AVAILABLE, COMPARISONS ARE SHOWN FOR 1941.

Area rationed May, 1942.

	August 1943			Percent change from 1942			Percent change from 1941		
	Total	Passenger cars	Trucks and busses	Total	Passenger cars	Trucks and busses	Total	Passenger cars	Trucks and busses
19 facilities. Maine to Florida <sup>1</sup>	3,614,474	2,753,002	861,472	-11.2	-14.9	+2.9	-44.1	-50.8	-1.0
TOTAL - 23 facilities. Maine to Florida.	4,169,779	3,220,928	948,851	-12.8	-16.2	+1.3			
Miscellaneous locations not included above:									
42 drawbridges in eastern North Carolina (not toll) <sup>2</sup>	22,824	16,376	6,448	+16.3	+20.7	+6.5	-26.9	-32.5	-7.1
Summer Traffic Tunnel - Boston	480,411	441,584	38,827	-2.2	-1.0	-14.1	-29.3	-30.4	-13.3
8 stations in Washington D.C.									

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