

Mr S. J. Hitchcock - 1

PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION
FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WASHINGTON

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM NO. 39

DATE: JUNE 30, 1943

SUBJECT: TRAFFIC VOLUME TRENDS

Preliminary summaries of automatic traffic recorder data for May 1943 indicate that decreases in traffic are nearly the same as those for February, March, and April, in each case the comparison is with traffic in the corresponding month of 1942. This uniformity in traffic decrease extending over a period of four months applies to traffic on State highways as well as to traffic on local highways.

The revised summary for April 1943, which includes nearly a hundred more stations, shows a decrease of 29.6 percent, or 0.1 percent greater than the decrease tabulated in the preliminary summary in Informational Memorandum No. 35.

It should not be inferred from the above that traffic has remained constant in volume during these four months. Actually it has increased about 24 percent in the East, and 19 percent in the remainder of the country, from February to May of this year.

Traffic by months since 1940 is shown on the attached chart with the monthly traffic of 1941 as a base. Traffic in May 1943 in the Atlantic seaboard area is 46 percent of traffic in 1941, while in the remainder of the country it is 61 percent of that in 1941.

Traffic at toll facilities (Table 3) shows considerably smaller percentages of decrease in May 1943 throughout all sections of the country than are found on rural highways of the Nation. Decreases in the area rationed in May 1942 generally are in excess of those in the remainder of the country.

Comparison between the May traffic in 1942 and 1943 in the twelve eastern States is complicated, since gasoline rationing went into effect on May 15, 1942, and the second pleasure driving ban on May 20, 1943. A shortage of gasoline was particularly severe during the latter part of May 1943.

Unusual floods in the Middle West greatly affected the traffic on the toll facilities because it was necessary to close some of them for as much as a week. This caused increased traffic on other bridges but not to the extent of the general decrease.

In the area rationed on May 15, 1942, the May 1942 commercial traffic was 18.6 percent, and the May 1943, 23.9 percent of the total traffic. For the toll facilities in the area rationed on December 1, 1942, the comparable figures for commercial traffic in May 1942 and 1943 were 13.5 percent and 15.5 percent, respectively.

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DIVISION OF INFORMATION,
PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION.

Attachments:

TABLE 1.--PRELIMINARY SUMMARY* OF AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC RECORDER DATA
FOR MAY 1943, INCLUDING 519 STATIONS IN 40 STATES²

Type of highway and State	Number of stations	Total daily traffic	Percent decreased ¹ from May 1942	Type of highway and State	Number of stations	Total daily traffic	Percent decreased ¹ from May 1942			
<i>STATE HIGHWAYS</i>				<i>STATE HIGHWAYS</i>						
Alabama	8	11,241	16.2	Virginia	1	2,325	39.7			
Arizona	5	11,309	19.9	Washington ³	9	15,319	29.0			
Arkansas	20	13,195	28.7	Wisconsin	9	17,369	35.8			
California	10	18,850	23.0	Wyoming	3	2,155	26.2			
Colorado	5	5,221	36.8	<i>TOTAL - 40 States</i>			480	713,239	29.7	
Connecticut	17	40,652	41.9	<i>LOCAL HIGHWAYS</i>						
Delaware	5	11,650	33.7	Alabama	2	708	22.2			
Georgia ⁵	7	9,953	22.2	Connecticut	2	697	19.2			
Illinois	5	5,828	32.3	Georgia	4	747	14.8			
Indiana	21	30,513	29.2	Indiana	2	623	16.2			
Iowa	26	26,277	25.3	Iowa	10	1,175	13.4			
Kansas ³	9	9,042	23.5	Maryland	1	264	18.0			
Kentucky	12	17,746	26.8	Massachusetts	1	272	33.5			
Louisiana ³	7	15,312	19.4	Michigan	2	508	44.5			
Maine	10	10,192	31.1	Missouri	2	743	16.3			
Maryland ⁴	14	29,771	27.3	Montana	2	359	8.2			
Massachusetts	9	22,929	38.9	Nebraska	1	169	2.9			
Michigan	26	61,354	34.6	North Dakota	2	328	3.5			
Mississippi	10	12,369	18.9	Ohio	3	1,264	36.6			
Missouri	25	38,065	35.9	Rhode Island	1	437	+24.1			
Montana	12	6,807	20.8	Tennessee	2	882	12.2			
Nebraska	11	10,376	18.2	Wisconsin	2	387	21.5			
New Hampshire	8	5,665	43.0	<i>TOTAL - 16 STATES</i>			39	9,563	20.5	
New Mexico ³	12	12,904	29.1	<i>ALL HIGHWAYS</i>						
New York	4	8,027	40.1	<i>40 STATES²</i>				519	722,802	29.6
North Dakota	9	3,667	30.2	<i>RATIONED MAY 1942</i>				119	177,591	35.1
Ohio	22	43,208	24.4	<i>RATIONED DEC. 1942</i>				400	545,211	27.6
Oklahoma	20	29,461	26.2							
Pennsylvania	30	40,926	40.0							
Rhode Island	3	4,673	26.4							
North Carolina	9	10,590	24.0							
South Dakota	8	5,420	19.6							
Tennessee	1	2,613	23.6							
Texas	42	77,259	18.2							
Utah	8	8,210	22.5							
Vermont	8	4,796	39.7							

* 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.

2. Includes all States except the following: Florida, Idaho, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, and West Virginia.

STATIONS NOT INCLUDED:

3. Defense activity: 1 each in Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Washington.

4. Detour: 1 in Maryland.

5. Road construction: 1 in Georgia.

TABLE 2.—REVISED SUMMARY¹ OF AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC RECORDER DATA FOR APRIL 1943.
INCLUDING 575 STATIONS AND 46 STATES

Geographic division and State	Number of stations	Percent decrease from April 1942	Geographic division and State	Number of stations	Percent decrease from April 1942
<i>NEW ENGLAND</i>	54	40.5	<i>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</i>	30	23.9
Connecticut	18	44.8	Alabama	9	24.7
Maine	9	33.2	Kentucky ⁶	11	23.3
Massachusetts	9	41.6	Mississippi	8	25.5
New Hampshire	7	44.1	Tennessee	2	19.0
Rhode Island	3	34.2	<i>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</i>	88	19.6
Vermont	8	44.8	Arkansas	22	27.3
<i>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</i>	39	37.8	Louisiana ³	7	23.1
New York	9	38.5	Oklahoma	20	20.9
Pennsylvania	30	37.5	Texas	39	19.0
<i>SOUTH ATLANTIC</i>	92	30.5	<i>MOUNTAIN</i>	65	22.7
Delaware	5	33.0	Arizona	5	27.1
Florida	19	27.8	Colorado	5	21.6
Georgia ⁵	11	31.0	Idaho	7	17.1
Maryland ⁴	15	30.5	Montana	14	22.5
North Carolina	20	30.0	Nevada ³	11	30.0
South Carolina	9	34.7	New Mexico ³	12	19.9
Virginia	2	30.9	Utah	8	17.9
West Virginia	11	28.9	Wyoming	3	30.0
<i>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</i>	85	29.2	<i>PACIFIC</i>	23	25.8
Illinois	4	25.6	California	10	21.4
Indiana	22	28.5	Oregon	4	26.3
Michigan	28	31.5	Washington ³	9	30.4
Ohio	20	25.6	<i>TOTAL - 46 States²</i>	575	29.0
Wisconsin	11	30.4	<i>STATE HIGHWAYS</i>	538	29.7
<i>WEST NORTH CENTRAL</i>	99	27.8	<i>LOCAL HIGHWAYS</i>	37	22.0
Iowa	36	24.3	<i>RATIONED MAY 1942</i>	149	36.5
Kansas ³	7	21.9	<i>RATIONED DECEMBER 1942</i>	426	25.9
Missouri	27	34.5			
Nebraska	12	17.0			
North Dakota	9	19.9			
South Dakota	8	18.1			

1. Combined State and local highways.

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

STATIONS NOT INCLUDED:

3. Defense activity: 1 each in Kansas, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, and Washington.

4. Detour: 1 in Maryland.

5. Road construction: 1 in Georgia.

6. Road closed: 1 in Kentucky.

TABLE 3.—TRAFFIC VOLUME DATA FOR MAY 1943, BY VEHICLE TYPES, COMPARED WITH SIMILAR INFORMATION FOR MAY 1942 AT TOLL FACILITIES.

Area rationed May 1942						
	May 1943			Percentage change from 1942		
	Total	Passenger cars	Trucks and busses	Total	Passenger cars	Trucks and busses
TOTAL - 24 facilities. - Maine to Florida	3,958,770	3,010,728	948,042	-22.8	-27.8	-0.9
<i>Miscellaneous locations not included above:</i>						
42 drawbridges in eastern North Carolina (not toll) ¹	34,867	28,626	6,241	+3.8	+2.3	+11.3
13 stations in Washington, D. C. (not toll) ²	253,777	---	---	-23.6	---	---
Fleetwood Viaduct, Westchester County, New York	106,998	106,998	---	-59.7	-59.7	---
Sumner Tunnel, Boston	418,249	379,463	38,786	-22.3	-23.6	-7.1
Pennsylvania Turnpike	76,763	49,426	27,337	-47.2	-57.4	-6.7
Area rationed December 1942						
4 facilities on Eastern Canadian Border	204,169	173,994	30,175	-29.3	-33.6	+12.7
2 facilities in the Great Lakes area	65,003	46,924	18,079	-25.0	-39.8	+108.5
<i>Subtotal - 6 facilities</i>	269,172	220,918	48,254	-28.3	-35.0	+36.2
10 facilities on the Ohio River	777,345	663,723	113,622	-16.1	-17.0	-9.8
13 facilities in the Ohio River area ³	195,808	151,177	44,631	-11.9	-13.3	-7.0
<i>Subtotal - 23 facilities</i>	973,153	814,900	158,253	-15.3	-16.4	-9.0
1 facility in the Florida Gulf Coast area	30,895	24,469	6,426	+10.7	+2.2	+61.7
<i>Subtotal - 1 facility</i>	30,895	24,469	6,426	+10.7	+2.2	+61.7
9 facilities on the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers, St. Louis and north	853,480	662,843	190,637	-30.2	-32.3	-21.4
<i>Subtotal - 9 facilities</i>	853,480	662,843	190,637	-30.2	-32.3	-21.4
2 facilities on the Missouri River	95,666	71,425	24,241	-5.8	-8.8	+4.0
2 facilities in the Missouri River area	3,559	2,846	713	-6.9	-12.4	-24.2
<i>Subtotal - 4 facilities</i>	99,225	74,271	24,954	-5.9	-8.9	+4.5
3 facilities in California	1,792,059	1,595,646	196,413	-14.5	-15.8	-1.5
5 facilities in the Washington-Oregon area	211,615	182,415	29,200	-13.1	-15.5	+5.2
<i>Subtotal - 8 facilities</i>	2,003,674	1,778,061	225,613	-14.3	-15.8	-0.7
TOTAL - 51 facilities in area rationed December 1942	4,229,599	3,575,462	654,137	-18.9	-20.7	-7.5
6 facilities reporting only total traffic	430,091	---	---	+8.2	---	---

1. Total of two 8-hour counts, one Saturday and one weekday, at 42 bridges.
2. Based on weekday traffic.
3. One facility in West Virginia and 12 in Kentucky.

TRAFFIC VOLUME AT AUTOMATIC TRAFFIC RECORDERS, 1940-1943.

