

# 7

## Trans Freight Stations

### 7.1 Section –I Importance and Functions of the Trans Freight Stations

7.1.1 Trucks on long haul journeys require to stop regularly, for the driver to take rest and the vehicle to refuel and undergo routine maintenance. Countries with a well developed and regulated trucking industry provide designated trucking stops and parking areas that serves this purpose. Specifically, equipped stopping points also enable combining and attending to routine transactions during the rest. For example road tax payments, fitness testing and certification, etc. can be undertaken at such stop and rest points. In countries that recognize driver fatigue and high standards of safety, and strictly regulate these aspects by enforcing laws that require truck drivers to break journey and rest after a specified number of driving hours, the trucking stops are an important aspect of road safety. Further, in countries that regulate traffic density

at peak times such as weekends, and require trucks to stop plying on major arteries (highways, freeways and autobahns) at a specified time before the weekend traffic rush, the stopping points have adequate facilities for trucks and drivers to stop and park for longer durations.

7.1.2 The Trucking Policy aims to highlight the inadequate parking and resting facilities for trucks and drivers in Pakistan and in this context suggest setting up of modern facilities proposed as “**Trans Freight Stations**” (TFS); as dedicated points outside the main cities of the country and at regular intervals on the trucking routes, with priority on the major network of highways and roads that constitute the National Trade Corridor.

### 7.2 Section –II The Current Scenario & Problems

7.2.1 In Pakistan there are no specified in-transit parking and waiting areas for trucks. As a result, the periphery of all major cities are cluttered and choked with a growing expanse of disorganized parking and waiting areas. As the truck population grows to cope with increased economic activity, movement of goods between ports and industrial

hubs and overall infrastructure development, the scenario is worsening. Long stretches of roads leading into cities, or circular roads around cities, have been converted to truck queuing and waiting areas. At the same places, a slum-like emergence of unlicensed workshops, service facilities and spare parts outlets takes place. The situation

appears worse because this uncontrolled and continuously evolving expanse of truck waiting areas and workshops emerges and grows in the shape of parallel ribbon developments, i.e. along the roads and highways.

7.2.2 The above scenario combines with a lack of metropolitan regulations or enforcement of specified timings for trucks to load, unload and move inside metropolitan limits. The result, as can be expected, is increased mayhem and choking of access and inner city roads,

traffic jams and breakdowns, high rate of accidents and engine emission of trucks that add to pollution levels that have reached a level of serious health hazard in all cities of the country.

7.2.3 In the context of the National Trade Corridor Improvement Programme (NTCIP) and the Modernisation of the Trucking Industry, the current scenario does not present an attractive operating and business environment for investment by modern and large fleet operators.

### **7.3 Section -III The Requirements**

7.3.1 Given the above scenario, the objectives of introducing dedicated and multi-purpose parking and resting facilities for trucks and drivers, referred to as Trans-Freight Stations (TFS), at locations envisaged to be outside metropolitan limits are as follows:

- a) The TFS would be the waiting point for trucks, from where onward movement into the metropolitan limits takes place during specified hours of the day and night, to load or unload.
- b) In the envisaged longer term scenario of imposing upper limits on the size of trucks that are permitted to enter into metropolitan limits, the TFS would be the point for load breakdown, enabling smaller vehicles to ferry the load to destinations inside the city. Conversely, smaller loads ferried out from originating points inside the city would be consolidated at the TFS facilities for onward transportation on larger trucks.
- c) TFS is also envisaged as the point around which a service support infrastructure of registered and

authorized truck workshops, service stations, spare part outlets, etc. would be concentrated. This would relieve metropolitan limits from accommodating the same services in the current disorganized and dispersed scenario. It would also vacate costly metropolitan real estate, the value of which in any case is depleted and unattractive for other urban and commercial development because of the presence of unsightly workshops, service stations and trucking parks.

- d) The TFS would be the logical point or hub for improving "single-point" facilitation for truck operators, by locating access to certain facilities within or adjoining the TFS. Some of these facilities are very relevant in the context of "Modernizing the Trucking Sector of Pakistan". Examples are a Facilitation Centre of the MRA, that would enable Vehicle Registration related and Road Tax Fee related transacting facilities, or Vehicle Fitness Testing & Motor Vehicle Examiner (MVE) Certification facilities, etc.

- e) The establishment of a pilot and model TFS would constitute an important step to demonstrate potential for investors in the truck and fleet operations sector. It would be a substantive step of assurance to those that have expressed interest in introducing their fleets on the National Trade Corridor - that “Modernizing the Trucking Sector of Pakistan” is being taken up seriously and with a holistic approach by the country’s policy makers and implementers.

#### **7.4. Section –IV Recommendations and Policy Interventions**

7.4.1 The TFS is envisaged as an estate, purposely dedicated and developed, similar to an industrial estate. Some of the major composite infrastructure requirements and facilities for TFS would consist of:

- i) Hard standing truck parking areas, that caters to the needs of both large fleet operators and small (owner driver) operators.
- ii) Adjoining the parking areas, office buildings, consisting of space to be occupied by large fleet operators that require their dedicated space and also containing smaller units and facilities that can be shared by smaller operators.
- iii) Purpose designed buildings for addressing support requirements, of lodging, resting, eating, recreational and medical services for drivers and support staff.
- iv) Storage Facilities, consisting of covered and secure sheds and godowns, providing temporary storage and specialized handling facilities for large goods break-down and transfer to smaller vehicles, goods consolidation and transfer to larger vehicles, computerized and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) based tracking and management facilities, etc.
- v) An Authorized, Dedicated, Accredited, Certified and Licensed Vehicle Fitness Testing Stations

(VFTS), for addressing the envisaged requirement, would be available at TFS.

- vi) An Excise & Taxation Department (E&TD) facilitation centre, operating as a branch of the local MRA District Office, providing on-location - at TFS - facilities relating to vehicle registration and road tax/fee payment transactions. With the current pace of computerization of the Vehicle Registration Systems by the Provinces, the branch outlet would be an extension of the local District E&TD computerized facilities.
- vii) A peripheral and purposely designated demarcated area, developed as an infrastructure, (within the TFS estate parameters or within close proximity of the main TFS estate), for locating the supporting “value-chain” service providers, such as workshops, service stations, fuel stations, spare parts shops etc.

7.4.2 Essentially, the TFS is envisaged as a dedicated estate where trucks, drivers and operators not only park and wait between loading, unloading and journey breaks but also have “at-hand-access” to necessary services and facilities. It would constitute a major step towards facilitating the truck operators and would be in line with envisaged concepts of a modernized trucking environment in the larger framework of the NTCIP.

7.4.3 A conceptual layout of the TFS – for enabling further detailed visualizations and developing the details, is placed at *Annexure-X*.

7.4.4 The major initial investment in the TFS would consist of land provided by Federal Government in case TFS are developed on Federal Roads. Land would be provided by the Provincial Governments in case TFS are built on the Provincial Roads. Design and management of the construction of civil works infrastructure and utilities would possibly fall under NHA’s domain. Constructing and setting up specific support services could involve the private sector, such as Licensed Workshops, Service Stations, Fuel Stations, Vehicle Fitness Testing Stations, Excise & Taxation Facilitation Centres, etc. Some of these facilities would involve investment being recovered from the business revenues derived from operators (typically workshops, service stations, fuel stations, etc.) while some of the facilities operated on behalf of government would entail investment being recovered under Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) and Build-Own-Operate (BOO) models (typically

Vehicle Fitness Testing Stations, E&TD facilitation centres, etc.). The Fleet Operators would utilize parking and related operations space for their trucks, crew and administration requirements, on rent or on “charge-for-use” basis.

7.4.5 The Federal or Provincial Governments would recover the cost of land and the recurring cost of maintaining the basic infrastructure (civil works and utilities) through leasehold sale / rent of space to the Fleet Operators and from rent charged to the investors establishing the TFS service and support facilities.

#### **7.4.6 Implementations**

The TFS Projects would be established by National Industrial Parks Management and Development Company (NIPS) and managed through Public-Private-Partnership. These may be established by the Federal Government on Federal Roads only. The Provincial Governments may also consider developing TFS on Provincial Roads as per their requirement. In order for the overall concept to remain intact and to be achieved in totality, MoIP&SI would play the role of focal point.