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2020 – 2021 FORECASTED AND ACTIVE WINTER WEATHER MESSAGING

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide statewide Dynamic Message Sign (CMS) guidance for winter weather operations. This document is to be used to supplement the CMS Guidelines, dated 2013, and is intended for use by all Traffic Management Center (TMC) personnel statewide.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the importance of providing accurate, clear and consistent information to the public on winter weather road conditions, CMS messages posted for all winter road conditions shall be standardized statewide. To provide the best guidance for motorists during adverse weather, TMCs throughout the Commonwealth may utilize CMS to convey cautionary messages about potentially hazardous driving conditions, due to inclement winter weather, that meet the criteria outlined below.

The primary purpose of the following road weather communications is to provide both preemptive and reactive warnings regarding current or near-term adverse conditions that will require motorists to make safe & effective decisions while driving in addition to providing accurate and timely information about forecasted and real-time weather conditions.

It is recommended that TMCs statewide utilize the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) guidance for all alerts (e.g. advisory, warning, watch). This information can be attained at www.noaa.gov.

To maintain the attention and safety of motorists, TMCs are encouraged to utilize the following CMS message types for inclement winter weather: *(Reference Pages 2 & 3 – Pre-Event, Active Event, and Advisory Speed and Vehicle restriction messages for further information and guidance)*

PRE-EVENT MESSAGES

Pre-Event Messages are intended to provide situational awareness to the traveling public regarding forecasted inclement weather and the hazardous roadway and driving conditions expected throughout the imminent significant winter weather event.

The intent of these messages is to encourage motorists to modify future travel plans or, in some cases, avoid travel all together, in an attempt to improve roadway mobility and most importantly, enhance the safety of the traveling public throughout the Commonwealth.

Pre-event messages may be used **24-hours prior** to the expected arrival of imminent winter weather. Pre-event messages should be utilized only when a National Weather Service alert is in effect for the county, district, and/or region. *TMC personnel (Auxiliary/Regional) may need to coordinate Pre-event messaging with neighboring states, other Auxiliary/Regional TMCs, the Statewide Traffic Management Center (STMC), PennDOT Area Command and/or other transportation agencies and stakeholders.*

A final judgement call will be made by PennDOT Leadership and/or TMC Management as to whether the CMS Pre-event messages will be approved and posted.

It is important to note that forecasted pre-event messages on CMS are not intended to be used as “weather reports” for traveling motorists. The purpose of preemptive messaging is to provide timely and accurate information in addition to situational awareness regarding the forecasted winter weather and the inclement driving conditions to be expected.

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGES

Active Event Messages are intended to provide *real-time* situational awareness to the traveling public regarding inclement weather and the hazardous roadway and driving conditions throughout the entire significant winter weather event.

The intent of these messages is to encourage motorists to make safe & effective decisions while traveling in addition to providing accurate and timely information about real-time weather conditions throughout the Commonwealth. These Active Event Messages are to be used to warn the traveling public of actual and potentially unexpected road/weather conditions along their traveled routes (e.g. Drifting/blowing snow, icy conditions, reduced visibility, etc.). Active event messages may be used throughout the inclement winter weather event in its entirety.

It is important to note that when posting active event CMS messages regarding winter weather road conditions, it is imperative that TMC personnel maintain a high-level of situational awareness throughout the entire significant weather event. This will ensure the appropriate messages are displayed, updated, and/or removed as conditions change. *This high-level of situational awareness may require enhanced communication between all TMC personnel (Auxiliary/Regional), the Statewide Traffic Management Center (STMC) and PennDOT Area Command.*

ADVISORY SPEED AND VEHICLE RESTRICTION MESSAGES

******Advisory Speed with Commercial Vehicles Right Lane only* and Vehicle Restriction Messages shall only be utilized at the direction and approval of PennDOT Area Command******

Implementing temporary speed limit reductions* and vehicle restrictions involves multifaceted coordinated efforts with multiple state agency stakeholders such as: the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), PennDOT Field personnel, TMCs (Auxiliary/Regional), the STMC, as well as PennDOT Area Command.

Advisory speed messages* and vehicle restrictions may but are not limited to any adjustments made in “boundaries” and/or “areas of impact” (AIO) found necessary to properly reflect and adjust to changing weather and/or road conditions throughout the entirety of the significant winter weather event.

Advisory speed* and vehicle restriction messages will only be posted, modified, and/or removed when directed by PennDOT Area Command.

PRE-EVENT MESSAGING

Forecasted Winter Weather Road Conditions

Single Panel - No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|---|--|
| 10 – Future Events/Weather/Restrictions | PREPARE FOR WINTER WEATHER (DAY) AM/PM |

| Priority | Alternate Panel 1 |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 10 – Future Events/Weather/Restrictions | WINTER WEATHER FORECAST (DAY) AM/PM |

HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|---|--|---------------------------------|
| 10 – Future Events/Weather/Restrictions | PREPARE FOR WINTER WEATHER (DAY) AM/PM | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFORMATION |

Single Panel - No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|---|--|
| 10 – Future Events/Weather/Restrictions | PREPARE FOR WINTER WEATHER (DAY) AM/PM |

| Priority | Alternate Panel 1 |
|---|--|
| 10 – Future Events/Weather/Restrictions | PREPARE FOR WINTER WEATHER (DAY) AM/PM |

Preemptive Vehicle Restriction – to be utilized “same day” of event only

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 10 – Future Events/Weather/Restrictions | WINTER WEATHER FORECAST (DAY) AM/PM | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLE TRAILERS AFTER (TIME) AM/PM |

Forecasted Winter Weather Road Conditions


Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|
| 10 – Future Events/Weather/Restrictions | WINTER WEATHER FORECAST | (DAY) AM/PM |


ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING

Winter Weather Road Conditions


Single Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions |  |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions |  |  |


Slippery Road Conditions – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions |  |

Slippery Road Conditions – w/ Plow Truck Safety Alert

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions |  |  |

Freezing Rain – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions |  |

Freezing Rain – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions |  |  |

Whiteout Conditions – Low Visibility

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WINTER WEATHER CONDITIONS USE CAUTION | WHITEOUT CONDITIONS POSSIBLE |

Plow Truck Safety

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WINTER WEATHER CONDITIONS REDUCE SPEED | BE ALERT FOR PLOW TRUCKS |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING

Winter Weather Road Conditions

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WINTER WEATHER CONDITION | USE CAUTION |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WINTER WEATHER CONDITION | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Slippery Road Conditions – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WINTER WEATHER CONDITION | ROADS MAY BE SLIPPERY |

Slippery Road Conditions – w/ Plow Truck Safety Alert

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | ROADS MAY BE SLIPPERY | WATCH 4 PLOW TRUCKS |

Whiteout Conditions – Low Visibility

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WHITEOUT COND POSSIBLE | BE ALERT |

Plow Truck Safety

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WATCH 4 PLOW TRUCKS | USE CAUTION |

Plow Truck Safety – with Active 45 MPH Speed Restriction

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 7 – Active Weather/Road Conditions | WATCH 4 PLOW TRUCKS | 45 MPH CMU RIGHT LANE ONLY |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – 45 MPH SPEED RESTRICTION

Interstate 45 MPH Speed Restriction with Commercial Vehicles Right Lane Only

Single Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|--|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFORMATION |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route” – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | REDUCED SPEED LIMIT 45 MPH I-81 AND I-84 | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route” – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | REDUCED SPEED LIMIT 45 MPH I-81 AND I-84 | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY TUNE TO 1670 AM |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – 45 MPH SPEED RESTRICTION

Interstate 45 MPH Speed Restriction with Commercial Vehicles Right Lane Only

Dual Panel

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | CMU RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | 45 MPH CMU RIGHT LANE ONLY | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route” – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | 45 MPH ON I-81 | CMU RIGHT LANE ONLY |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 1

Interstate Vehicle Ban – No Empty CMV Ban w/ 45 MPH Speed Restriction / CMV Right Lane Only

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | EMPTY COMMERCIAL VEHICLE BAN | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | EMPTY COMMERCIAL VEHICLE BAN REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY TUNE TO 1670 AM |

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | EMPTY COMMERCIAL VEHICLE BAN REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route” – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | EMPTY COMMERCIAL VEHICLE BAN I-81 AND I-84 | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route” – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | EMPTY CMV BAN I-81 AND I-84 REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY TUNE TO 1670 AM |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 1

Interstate Vehicle Ban – No Empty CMV Ban w/ 45 MPH Speed Restriction / CMV Right Lane Only

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---------------|----------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | EMPTY CMV BAN | 45 MPH CMV RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---------------|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | EMPTY CMV BAN | 45 MPH CMV RIGHT LANE ONLY OR TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Due to the amount of Winter Weather Travel Restrictions, all roadways with sequential CMS (e.g. small boards) may need to alternate the second phase message(s) to provide all pertinent restriction information

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 2

Interstate Vehicle Ban – No Empty or Double Trailers w/ 45 MPH Speed Restriction / CMV Right Lane Only

Single Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|--|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLES REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH CMV RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLE TRAILERS REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY TUNE TO 1670 AM |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route” – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLES I-81 AND I-84 REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route” – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLES I-81 AND I-84 REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY TUNE TO 1670 AM |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 2

Interstate Vehicle Ban – No Empty or Double Trailers w/ 45 MPH Speed Restriction / CMV Right Lane Only

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLE TRAILERS | 45 MPH CMV RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLE TRAILERS | 45 MPH CMV RIGHT LANE ONLY OR TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Due to the amount of Winter Weather Travel Restrictions, all roadways with sequential CMS (e.g. small boards) may need to alternate the second phase message(s) to provide all pertinent restriction information

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 3

Interstate Vehicle Ban – 45 MPH Speed Restriction / CMV Right Lane Only *except for* Loaded CMVs with Tire Chains Onboard

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLES CMV CHAINS ONBOARD REQUIRED | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | NO EMPTY OR DOUBLES CMV CHAINS ONBOARD REQUIRED | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH CMV RIGHT LANE ONLY TUNE TO 1670 AM |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Route”

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | CMV BAN ON I-81 NO EMPTY OR DOUBLES CHAINS ONBOARD REQ. | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH COMMERCIAL VEHICLES RIGHT LANE ONLY |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 3

Interstate Vehicle Ban – 45 MPH Speed Restriction / CMV Right Lane Only *except for* Loaded CMVs with Tire Chains Onboard

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | CMV BAN ON I-83 45 MPH | CHAINS ON-BOARD REQUIRED |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|------------------------------|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | CMV BAN ON I-83 45 MPH | CHAINS ON-BOARD REQUIRED OR TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Routes”

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|------------------------------|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | CMV BAN ON I-83 45 MPH | CHAINS ON-BOARD REQUIRED OR TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Due to the amount of Winter Weather Travel Restrictions, all roadways with sequential CMS (e.g. small boards) may need to alternate the second phase message(s) to provide all pertinent restriction information.

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 4

Interstate Vehicle Ban – Full Commercial Vehicle Ban / 45 MPH Speed Restriction only

Single Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|--|--|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL COMMERCIAL VEHICLES BANNED REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL COMMERCIAL VEHICLES BANNED REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFORMATION |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific “Feeder Routes” – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL COMMERCIAL VEHICLES BANNED I-81 AND I-84 | REDUCED SPEED LIMIT 45 MPH TUNE TO 1670 AM |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 4

Interstate Vehicle Ban – Full Commercial Vehicle Ban / 45 MPH Speed Restriction only

Dual Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | COMM VEHICLES BANNED | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | CMU BAN I-83 45 MPH | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific – “Feeder Routes”

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | CMU BANNED I-83 | REDUCED SPEED 45 MPH |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 5

Interstate Vehicle Ban – All Vehicles Banned

Single Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|--|---|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL VEHICLES BANNED EXIT IMMEDIATELY |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL VEHICLES BANNED EXIT IMMEDIATELY | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFORMATION |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific "Feeder Routes"

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL VEHICLES BANNED I-81 AND I-84 | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFORMATION |

ACTIVE EVENT MESSAGING – TIER 5

Interstate Vehicle Ban – All Vehicles Banned

Single Panel – No HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 |
|--|---------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL VEHICLES BANNED |

Dual Panel – HAR Available

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | ALL VEHICLES BANNED | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |

Dual Panel – Interstate Specific "Feeder Routes"

| Priority | Panel 1 | Panel 2 |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 5 – Active Emergency Guidance/Restrictions | VEHICLES BANNED I-81 | TUNE TO 1670 AM FOR INFO |