

"Measured and weighed: control over truck drivers in Russia has been strengthened

The President signed amendments to the Charter of Automobile Transport and Urban Ground Electric Transport, which introduce the obligation for drivers to undergo weight and dimension control. This will help avoid situations where truckers avoid weighing by various tricks, experts believe. However, it will be difficult to solve the problem of overloading on the roads with these measures alone, experts note. Details in the Izvestia article

Eliminate the gap

The head of state signed amendments to the Charter of Automobile Transport and Urban Ground Electric Transport. The document was published on the official Internet portal of legal information. The changes establish the obligation of drivers to undergo weight and size inspection of vehicles.

" Controlled persons, whose vehicles are subject to constant raids within the framework of state control (supervision) in automobile transport are obliged, at the request of the official conducting the raid, to ensure that their vehicles undergo weight and size control, " the text of the document states. The new requirements come into force on September 1, 2025.

These changes eliminate a gap in the legislation that unscrupulous carriers use to drive with overloads, experts and lawyers note. The fact is that the law did not clearly establish the obligation of drivers to undergo an overload check, they note. Often, truckers resort to various tricks to avoid going onto the scales, Vladimir Matyagin, president of the association of freight road transport "Gruzavtotrans", told Izvestia.

— Most often, this concerns automatic weight and dimension control points (AWDC). When passing through them, drivers often covered the numbers with a rag or covered them with some other objects, drove through these points at a snail's pace or close to each other, thereby knocking down the scales. I personally saw how dump trucks made a separate exit for themselves, on which they drove around the AWDC, — he said.

Drivers also cheat on the approaches to weighing points where Rostransnadzor employees are on duty, noted Taras Koval, president of the Association of Transport Experts and Specialists. Often, trucks that supposedly broke down can be seen in front of them, he recalled.

But even if a truck driver with an overloaded truck passes through such a checkpoint, he simply ignores the requirement of the Rostransnadzor inspector to stop and undergo an inspection on the scales. In this case, according to Part 2 of Article 12.25 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation, he faces a fine of 500-800 rubles, noted the lawyer of the Freedom of Choice movement Sergei Radko. This is much less than the fines for overloading, which reach 400 thousand rubles, he emphasized.

"The adopted amendments specify the driver's responsibilities in terms of passing weight and size checks, separating the concepts of 'failure to stop when required' and 'evading checks'," the lawyer explained.

Truckers are refusing to be weighed on a massive scale, and the number of "evaders" is only growing. According to the Federal Service for Supervision of Transport, if in 2019 approximately 15.5 thousand such cases were recorded, then by 2022 their number increased to 21.4 thousand.

Penalty for refusal

Along with the legally established obligation for truck drivers to undergo weight and dimension checks, the authorities intend to establish fairly serious liability for attempts to evade inspection procedures. In mid-September, the State Duma adopted in the first reading

amendments to the Code of Administrative Offenses. providing for a fine of 10 thousand rubies and deprivation of a driver's license for up to six months. And for the owner of the car for this violation. the fine is expected to be 100 thousand rubles.

"Since there are still almost 10 months before the amendments establishing the obligation to undergo weight and dimensions checks come into force, I think that the deputies will have time to adopt changes to the legislation concerning the introduction of liability for refusing such checks before September 1 of next year," believes Sergei Radko.

Save the roads

Overloaded trucks are a serious problem for highways, emphasized Igor Morzharetto, a member of the presidium of the public council under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation. Introducing the obligation to undergo control with simultaneous tightening of responsibility for evading it will ensure the safety of highways, he believes.

— We have significant amounts of funds in the budget allocated specifically for the maintenance and operation of highways. If we do not control trucks traveling on the highway with overloads, and do not punish both for the fact of overloading and for evading inspection, very soon there will be nothing left of the roads.

Taras Koval, President of the Association of Transport Experts and Specialists, also believes that the introduction of the obligation to pass weight and size parameters in legislation is "rather a blessing". However, he emphasizes that along with the establishment of such an obligation and liability for its failure to comply, it is necessary to ensure the adequate and correct functioning of both the APVGK and the weighing points where Rostransnadzor employees are on duty.

"Unfortunately, there are many examples when the APVGKs do not work correctly and give unreliable results. Since it is difficult to challenge a fine for this violation, drivers do not like weight control posts and try to avoid them," he told Izvestia.

Punishment for customers

Vladimir Matyagin, President of the Association of Freight Automobile Transport "Gruzavtotrans 't, explains that the incorrect slope of the section of the road where the weight control point is installed, the track and other defects of the road surface can distort the weighing results. At the same time, the expert believes that fines for overloading for customers of transportation along with drivers and the carriers themselves are fair.

Of course, both drivers and transport companies should be held responsible for overloading a truck. But the same responsibility should be borne by customers — consignors or consignees. After all, it is their desire to save money and transport cargo that would fit in three trucks without violations, in two, but with an overload, that is the very first link in the chain of violations of weight and size parameters. By removing it, it will be possible to significantly reduce the number of cases when a truck is driving on the road loaded beyond all measure, — he told Izvestia."