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**COMMISSION APPROVES SCUDDER FALLS BRIDGE TOLL SCHEDULE,
TOLL ADJUSTMENT FOR RVs TOWING TRAILERS OR CARS**
Reject Proposed Classification/Rating Change for Dually Pickup Trucks

NEW HOPE, PA - The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) today approved a full schedule of tolls to be charged – in the southbound direction only – at the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge (I-95) when the first span of the new bridge opens to traffic in 2019.

The Commission also approved a clarification in the cash toll rates the agency currently charges for recreational vehicles (RVs) whenever they have a trailer or passenger vehicle in tow. This change – expected to take effect on or before March 1, 2017 – will ensure that future cash toll transactions for recreational vehicles with a trailer or passenger vehicle in tow will be charged at the same rate -- \$4 per axle -- as is currently being charged in E-ZPass transactions involving the same vehicle combinations.

However, the Commissioners discarded a third toll adjustment proposal that would have reclassified a dual-wheel rear-axle pickup truck below eight feet high (dually) as a Class 2/light truck instead of the current Class 1/passenger vehicle designation, a change that would have increased the toll from \$1 to \$6.50. Commissioners said they were persuaded to bypass the proposed dually/dualie change based on public input they received during a toll hearing/public comment process conducted during the past three months.

Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge Toll Rates

The primary toll adjustment consideration for Commissioners today was the establishment of a toll schedule to be charged at the new bridge that is slated to replace the current functionally obsolete Scudder Falls Bridge linking Ewing, NJ and Lower Makefield, PA. Tolls at the new bridge will be collected via an all-electronic tolling (AET) system of E-ZPass tag readers and high-resolution cameras. Cash will not be collected at the new facility through a conventional toll booth plaza.

The base toll for an E-ZPass-equipped passenger vehicle crossing the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge will be \$1.25. Frequent commuters who make 16 tolled crossings in a respective month across Commission toll bridges will qualify for an automatic 40-percent discount -- 75 cents per tolled trip -- provided the transactions are recorded on the same DRJTBC-affiliated E-ZPass transponder.

(A DRJTBC-affiliated E-ZPass is any transponder issued by the New Jersey E-ZPass Group, which provides customer service and violations processing for the DRJTBC, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority [NJTA], the Delaware River Port Authority [DRPA], the Delaware River & Bay Authority [DRBA], the South Jersey Transportation Authority [SJTA] and the Burlington County Bridge Commission [BCBC]).

Passenger vehicles without E-ZPass will have images of their license plates captured by one of the high-speed cameras mounted to the AET tolling gantry that is planned to be constructed in the southbound direction on the Pennsylvania side of the replacement bridge. The registered owner of the vehicle will receive an invoice for all trips made through the Scudder Falls tolling point in a given billing period. The passenger vehicle Toll-by-Plate toll will be \$2.60 per trip. The higher toll is applied to cover the additional costs of processing non-E-ZPass transactions.

Two different per-axle base rates will be charged for trucks and other non-passenger vehicles. The base E-ZPass rate for light trucks – two-axle vehicles eight feet or above in height – will be \$3.50 per axle. For heavy trucks – vehicles with three or more axles – the base E-ZPass rate will be \$4.25.

The Toll-by-Plate toll for two-axle trucks eight feet or above in height will be \$8.35. The Toll-by-Plate rate for heavy trucks will be \$4.75 per axle.

As is the case at the Commission's seven existing toll bridge, a 10-percent discount will be applied for trucks paying tolls with a commercial E-ZPass tag during off-peak hours (9:01 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.).

The current Scudder Falls Bridge is a non-tolled/toll-supported crossing. The Commission in December 2009 announced that the new bridge will be operated as a tolled crossing. That decision subsequently has been upheld on three occasions by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The full toll schedule that was approved for the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge may be accessed directly at www.drjtbc.org/scuddertolls. The toll schedule was posted on the Commission's website on July 8 and has remained available ever since in accordance with the Commission's 2013 Toll Adjustment Public Hearing and Comment Policy (R:2327-07-13 FIN-0207-13).

Effective Date of Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge Toll Schedule

Under the approved toll schedule, tolls at the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge will be charged once the new bridge's upstream span opens to traffic and its corresponding AET collection system has been successfully implemented, tested, and made operational. That start date is currently projected for some time in early 2019.

Although the major construction contract still needs to be awarded, the multi-faceted regional transportation project currently is on a track to break ground sometime during the first half of 2017. The total program cost for the entire project is currently estimated at \$439 million.

More project information is available at www.scudderfallsbridge.com. A video can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iq_8BEokUrw.

Approved Change to Existing Toll Structure – RVs with a Trailer or Vehicle in Tow

Under the toll adjustment resolution approved today, the Commission also clarified what the cash toll rate should be when an RV with a trailer or vehicle in tow crosses one of the Commission’s seven current toll bridges: Trenton-Morrisville (Route 1), New Hope-Lambertville (Route 202), I-78, Easton-Phillipsburg (Route 22), Portland-Columbia, Delaware Water Gap (I-80), and Milford-Montague (Route 206).

The Commission’s toll structure is based primarily on rolling axles and vehicle size. This has resulted in disparate rates between cash and E-ZPass transactions for instances when an RV has either a trailer or vehicle in tow.

The accompanying toll table is to be applied regardless of whether payment is made electronically through E-ZPass or manually in cash through a toll attendant at one of the Commission’s seven existing toll bridges. The rates in the table are what the Commission currently charges in E-ZPass transactions for the identified vehicular tandems.

Example	Classification	Per-Axle Rate	Toll
Two-Axle RV with single rolling axle trailer or vehicle in tow with one axle down	Class 3 (3 rolling axles)	\$4.00	\$12
Two-Axle RV with dual rolling axle trailer or vehicle in tow with two axles down	Class 4 (4 rolling axles)	\$4.00	\$16
Three-Axle RV with single rolling axle trailer or vehicle in tow with one axle down	Class 4 (4 rolling axles)	\$4.00	\$16
Three-Axle RV with dual rolling axle trailer or vehicle in tow with two axles down	Class 5 (5 rolling axles)	\$4.00	\$20

Note: In any subsequent larger configurations of RVs and trailers/vehicles in tow, a toll rate of \$4 per axle is to be charged.

This cash transaction clarification conforms with prevailing tolling industry practices and brings the Commission's vehicle classifications for tolling purposes in step with the region's other toll systems - the PA and NJ Turnpikes, DRPA, and SJTA, among others.

The approved adjustment for recreational vehicles with cars or trailers in tow may be accessed at www.drjtbc.org/2016adjustments.

Proposed Dually Toll Adjustment Rejected

In the course of approving the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge toll schedule and the toll adjustment for cash transactions involving RVs with trailers or vehicles in tow, the Commission rejected an additional proposal to reclassify a dual-wheel rear-axle pickup truck below eight feet high as a Class 2/light truck instead of the current Class 1/passenger vehicle classification.

Like cash transactions for RVs with a trailer or vehicle in tow, this adjustment would have applied to the current toll schedule for the Commission seven existing toll bridges. Under the proposal, the toll on a dually truck would have risen to \$6.50 from the current \$1 toll.

The Commissioners decision to forgo the dually classification change was based largely on public comments the agency received as part of a public hearing/comment process the Commission conducted in recent months on the proposed toll adjustments. The process was conducted in accordance with the Commission's 2013 Toll Adjustment Public Hearing and Comment Policy (R:2327-07-13 FIN-0207-13).

Members of the public urged the Commissioners to keep a dually at the Class 1/passenger vehicle rate of \$1. Among the comments the public relayed to Commissioners were: some people use the vehicles for commuting/personal purposes, the additional charge for two additional wheels on the same axle was unjustified, and the 550-percent rate increase was excessive.

As a result of this outcome, the Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge toll schedule was changed accordingly as well.

Additional Background on Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project

The Scudder Falls Bridge Replacement Project involves a heavily commuted 4.4-mile portion of I-95 extending from the Route 332/Yardley-Newtown Road exit in Bucks County, PA and the Bear Tavern Road/Route 579 exit in Mercer County, NJ. The congestion-prone highway segment is a choke point for job-commuter traffic between Bucks County and Central Jersey. The segment, especially in the area of the bridge and its flanking interchanges, has a high accident rate; more than 100 accidents a year and some have been fatal.

The existing bridge was designed and constructed in the late 1950s and was not intended to carry today's traffic volumes. The bridge's opening did not occur until June 1961 due to a delay in the construction of approach roadways. The bridge carried 1,583,595 vehicles during its first full year of service in 1962; in 2015, it carried 21,594,797 vehicles, or a daily average of 59,200 crossings – the second highest volume among the Commission's 18 vehicular bridges.

Its structural design is of the same non-redundant, pin-and-hanger-connected two-girder type as the I-95/Mianus River Bridge that collapsed in Connecticut in 1983. The Commission took steps in the early 1990s to prevent a Mianus-type collapse, but the redundancy measures did not - and could not - add life to the bridge's deck or address its many operational and design deficiencies.

Due to the inadequate number of lanes on the bridge, the absence of shoulders on the structure and poor roadway geometry at the bridge's adjoining interchanges, even minor accidents and emergencies at the bridge and its interchanges have been known to cause extended periods of regional gridlock. For these reasons, the nearly 55-year-old bridge and nearby ramps are classified as functionally obsolete.

To address recurring traffic safety and capacity problems at the bridge, its adjoining interchanges and I-95 approaches, the Commission has pursued a comprehensive project for the highway segment since entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Departments of Transportation in January 2003. The Commission unanimously approved a measure to make the replacement bridge a tolled structure in December 2009. This has been affirmed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on three subsequent occasions. A nearly 10-year environmental documentation process ended with the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) from the FHWA in June 2012.

“This project involves a lot more than a new bridge,” said Resta. “It’s a comprehensive undertaking. A project of this size and duration could not be attempted without some measure of tolling to cover the substantial costs of planning, design and construction.”

Project elements include:

- Replace the existing four-lane Scudder Falls Bridge with a twin-span structure carrying six lanes of through traffic (three in each direction), and three auxiliary lanes (two northbound, one southbound) for traffic merging on and off the bridge.
- Overhaul the accident-prone Route 29/175 interchange on the New Jersey side.
- Reconfigure the Taylorsville Road interchange in Lower Makefield, PA to improve the safety and efficiency of the interchange.
- Make drainage upgrades and other improvements along the approach highway between the Route 29/175 interchange and Bear Tavern Road in New Jersey.
- Inside widening of the Pennsylvania I-95 approach between the Route 332 exit and the bridge by adding an additional lane and full shoulders in each direction.
- Provide a bicycle/pedestrian walkway alongside the main river bridge connecting the recreational canal paths on both sides of the river.
- Construct full inside and outside shoulders on both replacement bridge spans, a current highway standard requirement. (The bridge's inside shoulders will be sized to allow for future bus rapid transit service.)
- Install an all-electronic toll (AET) gantry and related infrastructure in the southbound direction consisting of highway-speed E-ZPass tag readers and high-speed video cameras for license-plate billing.
- Construct noise-abatement walls along warranted sections of the approach roadways leading to and from the bridge.

The project’s final design process has been completed. The main construction contract has gone out to bid. Construction is currently projected to begin in the first half of 2017 and take three to four years to complete. More precise start and end dates will be established after a construction contract is awarded.

About the Commission

The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission was formed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of New Jersey in 1934. It operates seven toll bridges and 13 toll-supported bridges, two of which are pedestrian-only spans. The Commission is a self-supporting public-service agency that receives neither federal nor state tax dollars to finance its projects or operations. Funding for the operations, maintenance and upkeep of its bridges and related transportation facilities is solely derived from revenues collected at its toll bridges. The Commission's jurisdiction extends along the Delaware River from the Philadelphia-Bucks County line north to the New Jersey/New York border. The bridges carried more than 141.7 million cars and trucks in 2015. For more information about the Commission and its various initiatives to deliver safer and more convenient travel for its customers, please see: www.drjtbc.org.