

2. DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES

Toll bridges in the United States can truthfully be described as encompassing every size and description. They vary from the Oldtown Bridge between Maryland and West Virginia built at a cost of a little over \$12,000 to such giants as the George Washington and Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in New York, the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, and the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel project between Cape Charles and Norfolk, Va.

From a standpoint of construction and design, the largest bridges are suspension type structures, others are steel truss, some are steel or concrete trestle bridges, some are bascule bridges and others are steel and concrete arch structures and some are various combinations of types. In traffic-carrying capacity, they vary from a simple 2-lane bridge to the 14 lanes of traffic accommodated by the George Washington Bridge on 2 levels.

The basic function of a toll bridge or tunnel is, of course, to provide an expeditious, safe, and direct crossing of a body of water or other geographical barrier along a route desired by vehicular traffic.

In order to perform this function, the bridge or tunnel must be constructed at a point where established traffic desires can be served and to such design standards that it will assure good direct traffic service so that it may discharge the financial obligation incurred in its construction plus cost of operation and maintenance.

In 1965, the International Bridge, Tunnel, & Turnpike Association received reports showing that a grand total of 676,467,519 vehicles utilized 90 bridge and tunnel facilities during the year.

Ownership

Exclusive of the few bridges and one tunnel in private ownership toll bridges and tunnels in the United States are owned and operated either by a special public service authority or by a State or local government. In some cases, these authorities or commissions were created by States, others by cities and/or counties under State enabling legislation. In a number of cases, such authorities are bistate in nature and were organized under enabling legislation of two States with concurring legislation adopted by Congress. Among these are the Port of New York Authority (New York and New Jersey), the Delaware River & Bay Authority (Delaware and New Jersey), the Delaware River Port Authority (Pennsylvania and New Jersey). In cases where bridges or tunnels cross international boundaries, special approval is required not only from the State or Province in which they are to be located, but by international compact or other agreement between cooperating countries to authorize the construction and operation of the facility.

B. OPERATING COSTS AND USER CHARGES

1. OPERATING COSTS

For purposes of this report, operating costs are considered to include administrative costs, operating expenses, maintenance costs and overhead costs which are basic and essential to the operation of toll facilities.