



INFORMATION RELEASE

Office of the Director

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND
P. O. Box 2261 – Little Rock, Arkansas
Telephone (501) 569-2227

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
ArkansasHighways.com
Twitter: @AHTD

Contact:
Danny Straessle

NR 17-255
June 27, 2017

Damage Assessment Continues on State Highway 1-B Overpass

JONESBORO, ARK. (6-27) – Structural engineers have spent the afternoon assessing damage to the State Highway 1-B overpass on Interstate 555 in Craighead County, according to Arkansas State Highway and Transportation (AHTD) Officials.

This morning shortly after 9:00 a.m. a tractor-trailer impacted the easternmost column of the northern bent supporting the five-lane State Highway, known locally as Harrisburg Road (Exit 44). The row of columns helps support the bridge over the northbound lanes of I-555.

Southbound I-555 traffic was allowed to resume under the structure after a fire resulting from the accident was extinguished. The northbound traffic will remain detoured at the Exit 44 off-ramp and cross over to the on-ramp to continue north.

All four columns supporting the bridge at this location were impacted. The first (easternmost) column is totally destroyed (see attached photos) and about 25 feet of the cap (the horizontal part of the bent) has been pulled out from under three of the steel beams it supported.

The second and third columns also sustained heavy damage. The fourth column was the least impacted but showed signs of significant spall due to the intense fire.

Three of the 10 beams supporting the bridge deck have no support underneath and have begun to sag under the weight of the bridge deck. This has caused the deck to crack in the immediate area. **Regardless, AHTD structural engineers have determined the bridge is stable and not in danger of collapse.**

At this time, crews cannot install temporary shoring until all of the truck debris has been removed.

-more-

AHTD Heavy Bridge engineers are on-scene and will determine the best approach for repairing the structure. One of the first goals is to install shoring that will enable traffic to resume on northbound I-555. At this time AHTD expects that to be by the end of the week.

The State Highway 1-B overpass will remain closed indefinitely. The repair process will take several months.

Follow us on Twitter @AHTD for late breaking details as they become available.

-30-



