

MEMORANDUM

To: Traffic Incident Management Group and Interested Parties

From: Josh Mack, Transportation Planner

Date: October 29, 2007

RE: Meeting Notes from Traffic Incident Management Group on October 26, 2007

Those in attendance included: Bob Bohlman, York County Emergency Management Agency; Jim Colburn, NH DOT; Lt. Gerald Congdon, Wells Police; Tim Cusick, Maine DOT Scarborough; Gary Eaton, Kittery Police; Robert Gardner, Maine Emergency Management Agency; Cathy Goodwin, Greater York Chamber of Commerce; Gil Emery, Portsmouth Police; Pam L'Heureux, York County EMA/Communications; Steve Katy, Maine DOT Scarborough; Josh Mack, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC); Lt. Arthur Murdock, Maine State Police; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC; Greg Stone, Maine Turnpike Authority; Lt. Charlie Szeniawski, York Police. The meeting was held at the York Maintenance Facility.

1. Committee Updates

SMRPC Updates:

Maine Beaches Association Meeting: Tom Reinauer explained to the group that he presented information about the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Group process to the Maine Beaches Association, a coalition of Chambers of Commerce representing the business community from Kittery to Old Orchard Beach. Tom explained how the TIM Group is attempting to meet the needs of the business community, based on experiences with previous incidents. For example, the Chambers have been incorporated into the TIM call list that is under development. Tom said that he would also be more than happy to provide outreach to other community groups such as rotaries in the future.

- Cathy Goodwin asked if it would be ok to write about the TIM Group in her upcoming newsletter for the Greater York Chamber of Commerce. The group said they would welcome increasing their visibility in the area.

National Association of Development Organization Award: Tom explained that SMRPC entered the TIM Action Plan as a candidate for 2007 "Excellence in Regional Transportation" Award with the National Association of Development Organizations, <http://www.nado.org/>. SMRPC is proud to announce that TIM won the award.

- The Committee requested that SMRPC promote the award. Tom said that he would look at ways to promote the TIM process such as doing a press release.

Quick Clearance Workshops: The I-95 Corridor Coalition and MaineDOT recently held “responder” and “executive sessions” on the Quick Clearance practices and laws. Quick clearance policies generally focus on the timely and prudent clearance of incidents involving commercial vehicles. These policies are tempered by such considerations as the potential for hazards associated with the load and the availability of appropriate towing and recovery equipment and personnel. This is different than “Move It Over” legislation, which allows minor crashes move on to the shoulder if there is property damage and no injuries. Maine currently has “Move It Over” legislation.

- Lt. Murdock said that Maine currently practices many of the Quick Clearance principles discussed at the orientation with the exception of very large commercial vehicles.
- Jim Colburn mentioned that NH has trainings on towing services in the State on an annual basis, which are helpful to law, fire and rescue in understanding that process.
- Lt Szienewski said that responders will probably need to digest a lot of the information and the manual handed out at the responder section, but it was very positive and having a forum for everyone to meet and discuss the process is helpful.
- Lt. Murdock said that one of the results of the meeting is that people began talking about the inconsistencies between Maine Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Standards rules and what is being promoted by the Quick Clearance advocates. The major difference between the two practices are the positioning of law enforcement, fire and rescue vehicles. Lt. Murdock said the ME Department of Labor rules are recommended practices but are often treated as gospel. These practices appear to have some flaws, one of which is that they require closing off more lanes than is necessary during a traffic incident. Lt. Murdock is meeting with several communities on this issue as well as the Bureau.

Routing: Josh Mack met with South Berwick and Eliot on Routing procedures by the two towns. Based on the meeting Josh recommended meeting with NH Towns Dover and Somerworth. Many of the trips diverted by South Berwick and Eliot would go into those communities.

Call List: Josh received telephone numbers for all the agencies on the Maine side of the call tree. New Hampshire has almost completed its side of the call list. In a draft tree given to SMRPC recently, there were many changes to the NH side. Contact information and a final review by NH is needed. Josh noted two next steps needed for the process. First step is to work with all the communities to determine who is responsible for the call list—is it someone different than a duty officer? How will fire and rescue and law enforcement communicate? Also, the TIM group will need to coordinate a dispatcher training program.

Maine Turnpike Updates: Greg Stone announced that Maine Turnpike is currently in the process of upgrading its AM Stations to report conditions impacting the Turnpike. The system will be run by a computer text-voice messaging simultaneously up and down the corridor. Greg also announced that he has uncovered Peggy Truworthy’s old files, which has information about the group preceding the TIM Group.

MaineDOT Updates: Cliff Curtis announced that MaineDOT is working on a “Really Simple Syndication” RSS system, which is currently set up for statewide use, but will hopefully be transformed to county informational system. The RSS system would be an upgrade to the

existing SWIMS system. The RSS system is available to the public. To access the system and download the RSS reader, users will need to do the following:

1. Go to <http://www.maine.gov/>
2. Click on “RSS Feeds” on the upper righthand corner of the page
3. Click on “Citizen Alert” system or other RSS feeds that you might be interested in.
There is also a link that explains what RSS is.

Cliff also said that MaineDOT is working on a public works CAD system project.

New Hampshire DOT Updates: Jim Colburn announced that the New Hampshire Transportation Management Center (TMC) went online in September. The recent incident on the I-95 High Level Bridge was a good test case for the management center in working out protocols on information sharing. The TMC was able to watch many of the action on the bridge with remote cameras. However, NH is currently having a privacy issue with using cameras for traffic information.

- Gil Emery requested access to the State’s cameras on the High Level Bridge. He explained that they had been trying to get access for years with no response. Jim said that there is currently a draft camera policy in the works which will hopefully shed light on how cameras can be shared and with whom.

Jim also noted that NH DOT is still working on negotiations with Transcore regarding New Hampshire’s ITS deployment plan.

2. Review of Post Incident Analysis Initiative

Tom Reinauer explained that to develop the draft Post Incident Analysis documents, he looked into what other state’s are currently doing. There was a wide range of how state’s practice post incident analyses. Tom took elements from all examples they reviewed, and worked to create something simple and easy to implement. The basic elements of the post incident analysis are to have a meeting with all parties involved in an incident, facilitated by a neutral party. All parties involved in the incident are asked to fill out forms indicating how the process unfolded, including the Incident commander prior to the meeting. All parties review the process at the meeting and then the facilitator writes a report describing the incident, as well as the management process of the incident including what worked and what didn’t.

Tom offered the services of SMRPC to do facilitation of the post incident analysis. He noted that other groups could be used to facilitate the process however. The group agreed that they would use SMRPC, and if a more complicated incident came along, maybe retain the services of a private consultant. SMRPC would handle logistics of setting up meeting, keeping notes, facilitating and writing the report. Tom said the current process would have the TIM Group would be responsible for reviewing and acting on the post incident assessment. Tom asked for questions and comments.

- Bob Bohlman said that the report should contain a corrective action plan. There should be some concrete actions that should be taken by parties involved in an incident if corrective action is required.

- Pam L'Heureux asked for more detail on the question asked to responders: "Were the communications effective or do they need to improve?" Tom answered that responders should answer on any piece of communications relating to the incident under discussion.
- Gil Emery asked that more space be provided for responders to write their answers. The backs of the forms and additional pages can be added to the response if needed.
- Cathy Goodwin asked what a Public Information Officer is? The group answered that there is usually a public relations spokesperson for a department or agency in charge of working with the media. This allows the officer or other person in command to do his job without distractions from the media.

Tom said that he received several calls from various sources on doing the post incident assessment for the recent incident on the I-95 High Level Bridge. The bridge was closed recently when the NH bomb squad brought a mysterious backpack up onto the bridge deck for inspection. Traffic was stopped for about 20-30 minutes in both directions.

- Lt. Murdock noted that most of the incident was handled mostly by NH authorities.
- Robert Gardner said despite the short duration of the incident, there is a lot of value to determine how notification worked during the event.
- Josh noted that it would be helpful to see if Kittery/Portsmouth routing procedures were used.
- Gil Emery noted that Portsmouth used information from routing maps for the incident. Gil noted that Lou Ensel should be invited.
- Jim Colburn recommended that SMRPC connect with Chris Pope—the Homeland Security contact in New Hampshire as he would have interest in the process.

The group agreed to have its first post incident assessment meeting shortly. It was agreed that people that had no direct involvement in the incident could also come to critique and see how the process worked.

Tom said he would work on a list of people that should be involved in the post incident assessment. He will work with Lt. Murdock on a complete list.

Other Business:

- Bob Bohlman requested that SMRPC work more closely with GPCOG on their evacuation process. It appears that at some point the two initiatives should be coordinating. Much of the Cumberland County traffic would be heading towards York County.
- Greg Stone announced that the I-95 Corridor Coalition will be holding an Evacuation Meeting on November 8th in Baltimore, MD. For more information go to http://www.i95coalition.org/meeting_cim.html
- The next meeting was scheduled for January 11th most likely at the York Maintenance Facility.