

MEMORANDUM

To: Traffic Incident Management Group and Interested Parties

From: Tom Reinauer, Transportation Director

Date: November 10, 2008

RE: Meeting Notes from Traffic Incident Management Group on November 7th, 2008

Those in attendance included: Scott Carr – New Hampshire State Police, Troop A; Stephen DuBois – Portsmouth Police Department; Gary Eaton – Kittery Police Department; Ruth Farnsworth – Wells Police Department; Tim Hamilton – Gray Dispatch Center; Mark Kirouac, NHDOT – Bureau of Highway Maintenance; R.J. Leger, Sanford PD; Denis Markow – NHDOT, Traffic Management Center; Anna Price – Federal Highway Administration; Tom Reinauer – Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission; Greg Stone, Maine Turnpike Authority.

The meeting was held at the York Public Library.

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Updates

Maine Turnpike Updates: Greg Stone mentioned that the Turnpike has two new weather stations up and running.

New Hampshire DOT Updates: Mark Kirouac explained that the U.S.S. New Hampshire was commissioned at the Naval Shipyard, and traffic plans worked well. The Seabrook Station was also testing their alert sirens as well that day, which seemed to go well despite the bad timing. NHDOT continues to work on the Unified Response Manual, and the next meeting of the planning group is on November 18th.

Denise Markow mentioned that the I-95 variable message signs, and also the signs on the Spaulding Turnpike have been working well. The TMC has received a couple of requests to post messages from other agencies, and they have the capability to do that remotely from the TMC. They are also considering the possibility of using the signs to display winter weather advisories.

Denise also updated the group on the Spaulding Turnpike ITS Plan. The consultants are developing a conceptual layout of a communications plan. They have also been meeting with communities regarding detour plans, and will share the latest information with SMRPC to coordinate with current plans in Maine.

There have been no major issues regarding the temporary closure of the Sarah Mildred Long bridge. The detour system seems to be working.

There was a brief discussion regarding the public meeting for the Memorial Bridge rehabilitation project. Bids for the work came back much higher than expected. MaineDOT is concerned about rehabilitating only a portion of the bridge, which is a recommendation from NHDOT. It appears that any work, and subsequently any bridge closure, will be delayed until at least 2010.

Routing Maps: The group discussed this under previous updates.

Call Tree: Julia Dawson from SMRPC is planning on conducting another test of the system in the next month. Tim Hamilton mentioned that he will be working on a brief protocol document explaining the process for those who are involved.

Communications: Covered under item #3.

Maine Statewide TIM Group: Gregg Stone gave a brief update on the group's meeting on October 31st. The Statewide group discussed creating a better information source or database regarding the capabilities of towing companies, and improving response times. Another item is the development of "Quick Clearance" laws to allow more efficient clearing of traffic incidents. This issue is going to be discussed further at the traffic safety conference in the spring of 2009.

3. PSIC Communication Grant Award and Implementation

Tom briefly reviewed the grant award and its purpose. SMRPC is working with York County EMA to plan CONOPS training sessions. The idea so far is to have 4 sessions – 2 in the Kittery area and 2 in the Sanford area. They would also be offered in both the morning and afternoon, so that there are a couple of options each day. More detailed information will be sent out at a later date.

Tom also said that the programming of CONOPS frequencies will be taking place over the next few months. One question that remains is if there should be a priority order in terms of which frequencies are programmed. Some departments may not have enough room to program all of them, and some may already have some of the frequencies programmed. There is also the frequency that York County EMA has made available. R.J. Legere mentioned that Sanford had used the EMA frequency during an incident involving several agencies, and it worked very well. One advantage is that it is both VHF and UHF.

Some discussion followed regarding the possibilities. One concern was whether the CONOPS frequencies are repeated, allowing better geographic coverage. Tom said he would review this item again and get back in touch with the group with a recommendation. The tentative order would be as follows:

1st - York County EMA frequency

2nd - Statewide Car-to-Car (CONOPS)

3rd - Statewide Fire (CONOPS)

4th - Nationwide Car-to-Car (CONOPS)

4. Other Business

5. Next Meeting

The group decided not to schedule another meeting until after the holiday season. Staff will get back in touch on a meeting date/time for January.