
MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

**DELAWARE VALLEY
GOODS MOVEMENT TASK FORCE
Wednesday, April 14, 1999****[1] Call to order**

Co-chair John Coscia of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) called the meeting to order; co-chair Liz Voras of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) arrived subsequently. Meeting attendees introduced themselves. The January 13, 1999 meeting notes were approved.

[2] New Jersey Truck Issues

Dennis Keck, Senior Executive with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJ DOT), discussed the growth of goods movement as a transportation planning issue. The public, particularly in central and western New Jersey, has become concerned about the proliferation of large trucks and related safety issues. More trucks are found on two lane, undivided highways (i.e., roads that have traditionally provided local land access). The public has little understanding of trucking operations and logistics trends. They wonder why all trucks do not use the New Jersey Turnpike, and the banning of trucks from some highways is urged.

NJ DOT has been actively investigating trucking issues. For example, it has performed two comprehensive truck origin and destination surveys. While popular perception holds that every truck on local highways is long distance in nature, the surveys have shown that only 25% of the surveyed trucks have both origins and destinations outside of New Jersey. Three quarters have business in New Jersey and, of that total, many have business within the local, surveyed areas.

There are many reasons for increased truck traffic in the surveyed areas. Among these are the completion of I-287 improvements, increased economic growth in the central and western counties and the nearby Allentown-Bethlehem, Pa. area, and changes in the retail industry (e.g., just-in-time deliveries). In general, truck traffic is an excellent barometer of the economy. Data indicate that New Jersey and the DVRPC region contain relatively high concentrations of freight intensive industries and freight volumes.

The New Jersey Turnpike has instituted many truck-friendly initiatives, and has witnessed recent increases in truck traffic. These programs include diesel fuel discounts and toll discount packages. Other initiatives likely to affect and influence truck travel in New Jersey are electronic tolls, new truck inspection and rest facilities, and the proposed Pennsylvania Turnpike/I-95 interchange in Bucks County.

One possible role for MPOs (metropolitan planning organizations) like DVRPC to play is to prepare public information materials on trucks, goods movement, intermodalism, and mode selection. Few elected officials and concerned citizens, while involved in planning efforts, comprehend the relevant forces and trends. The American Trucking Associations (ATA) has forecasted large increases in trucks and truck VMT (vehicle miles of travel) in the next seven years, thus making general awareness about trucking vitally important.

John Coscia (DVRPC) invited Mr. Keck to participate in DVRPC's Central New Jersey Transportation Forum meeting on April 16. Trucking operations are a major aspect of this study.

Dennis Tiley (PennDOT) discussed a safety blitz on I-95 undertaken by the Philadelphia Highway Patrol. The blitz has initially targeted trucks, and will be expanded to other locations. Quarterly oversight meetings of the safety program are planned. Also, recent highway accidents have highlighted that motor vehicles are often at fault in vehicular-truck incidents.

Tom Collard (Southern Railroad of New Jersey) noted the national trend to heavier rail cars, and the strain this places on some railroad infrastructure. Jeff Sutch (SMS/Penn-Jersey Rail Lines) noted the potential impact of the new Norfolk Southern intermodal terminal in Bethlehem, Pa., which may induce additional truck traffic in New Jersey. Carol Thomas (Burlington County) noted the failure to previously construct the portion of I-95 through central New Jersey, and the potential for increased train traffic through that region.

[3] Landside Access to Petty's Island Maritime Complex

Ted Dahlburg provided an overview of DVRPC's Petty's Island landside access study. The study has its foundations in the freight-related TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) planning factors, and the NHS (National Highway System) connectors advanced by ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act). The study is being overseen by the Delaware Valley Goods Movement Task Force's (DVGMTF) Long Range Plan Subcommittee which, for this effort, has been augmented with facility representatives and local officials. Access problems will be identified and a capital improvement program devised.

Petty's Island, located in the Delaware River, is part of Pennsauken Township, Camden County. There are three facility operators on the island: Citgo, Koch Materials, and Crowley American Transport (the most truck-intensive). Crowley's roll-on/roll-off (i.e., ro-ro) operation generates one weekly barge sailing to Puerto Rico. Trucks serving the island include 45', 48', and 53' trailers, containers on chassis, new car carriers, and cranes and concrete mixers. Total annual gate moves for all three operators is approximately 59,000. All highway access to the island is via 36th Street.

Among the identified access problems are the facility's relatively long distance from major highways, residential and commercial land uses along some of the approach routes trucks use, and the inadequacy of the local street network to accommodate large trucks (even on the designated truck routes). The latter is indicated by inadequate turning radii, lack of signs, and poor pavement conditions.

An access improvement program is now being developed. It will emphasize northern highway approaches to the island, and a new access route via 37th Street. Railroad initiatives will also be examined. The program will be presented to the DVGMTF Long Range Plan Subcommittee at its next meeting, and then final recommendations will be forwarded to DVRPC's RTC (Regional Transportation Committee) and RCC (Regional Citizens Committee).

[4] Operation Lifesaver and Railroad Trespasser Programs

Don Thomas, Grade Crossing and Trespasser Programs Manager with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), presented educational and safety materials on railroad grade crossings and trespassing. Trains have highly specialized operating characteristics, such as an inability to swerve, deceptively high speeds, heavy weight (4,000 times heavier than a car), three foot overhangs, and lengthy stopping distances (5,280 feet at 55 mph). In 1997, nationwide, 533 fatalities occurred as a result of railroad trespasser incidents, and 461 fatalities were attributed to highway-rail crossing incidents.

Key practices for car drivers at grade crossings are to not pass, stop, or shift gears on train tracks, to get out of a stopped car stuck within a crossing and to run away from it at a 45 degree angle, and to wait for a train to pass at least 250 feet away from a crossing because another train may be approaching the crossing from the opposite direction and may be difficult to see. One of the FRA's crossing safety slogans is: *Look. Listen. Live.*

Mr. Thomas also displayed a video which included dramatizations of actual railroad incidents and fatalities. He noted that he is available to make similar railroad safety presentations to other groups (phone: 610.521.8212).

Fred Winkler (Winchester and Western Railroad) furnished a handout to committee members describing new legislation which has been introduced in New Jersey which would lower to age 14 (from age 18) the age at which a person could recover for injuries sustained while coming onto railroad property. Tom Collard reported an increase in the number of incidents where cars actually strike trains. He also noted that, in New Jersey, grade crossings are subject to local rule. Kelvin MacKavanagh (CSX) noted that some train incidents are caused by queued cars being struck from behind by other cars and pushed into the track area. Liz Voras (PennDOT) reported that PennDOT is forming a multi-partner grade crossing subcommittee to foster new ideas on safety strategies.

[5] Two-minute Reports

Liz Voras provided updates on the \$8.5 million Rail Freight Assistance Program, the Annual Rail Freight Seminar from April 27-29 featuring Y2K and Conrail partition panels, and the nearing completion of the short and regional rail line industrial properties directory. She also referenced recent rail freight mock check ceremonies, an initiative to assign more freight responsibilities to PennDOT district IMS (Intermodal Management System) coordinators, Penn State's performance of a study examining the impacts of the use of heavier rail cars on the state's rail infrastructure, the July 28 meeting of the Rail Freight Advisory Committee, and John Brown's (PennDOT) May 19, 1999 speaking engagement with the Philadelphia Traffic Club.

John Coscia cited two studies DVRPC is performing which have significant goods movement and commercial vehicle considerations: PA 41 in Chester County and the Central New Jersey Transportation Forum. A new Pennsylvania sub-region TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) has been approved by the DVRPC Board, and efforts to prepare a new TIP for the New Jersey sub-region are now under way. A new CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program) project selection committee, primarily for the Pennsylvania portion of the region, has been formed. CMAQ funds are expected to total \$120 million over six years and will be used for projects which improve air quality and congestion; project selection will be on a competitive basis. Also, a three year effort is under way to prepare a 2025 long range transportation plan (which will include a goods movement element).

Jeff Sutch (Economics Subcommittee), reporting for Chairman Gary Shields, noted that the subcommittee met at the Packer Avenue Marine Terminal on March 31. With a large turnout on hand, the subcommittee discussed the Pennsylvania and New Jersey railroad assistance programs, unanimously passed a resolution to help update the Pennsylvania Railroad Industrial Properties Directory, and was treated to an excellent discussion and tour of the facility by Walter Curran (on behalf of the Holts). A fall subcommittee meeting is planned at a local pharmaceutical facility.

Kelvin MacKavanagh (Chairman, DVGMTF Long Range Plan Subcommittee), also noting excellent attendance, discussed the subcommittee's recent meeting to discuss the Petty's Island access study, the identification of freight-related projects for inclusion as a separate break-out table in the Pennsylvania sub-region TIP, the selection of Ed Duffy (Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation) as a goods movement representative to the CMAQ project selection committee, and new passenger rail initiatives in the region (as presented by John Dawson of DVRPC). The April 15 meeting of the New Jersey Short Line Railroad Association, featuring Linda Morgan of the Surface Transportation Board, was also noted.

Ted Dahlburg (Data Subcommittee) reported the distribution of brochures detailing the commencement of multi-year construction on US 202 near I-76. Mr. Coscia noted that a new regional ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems) initiative, funded through TEA-21, and affirmed the consultant's work would be coordinated with the DVGMTF.

Jocelyn Jones (Baltimore Metropolitan Council) described the efforts of the Baltimore MPO to address freight issues. Among these are a study of truck parking and strategies to provide better directional signs and information to drivers. Preparing a new trucker's map is now under consideration.

Charnelle Hicks (FastShip) reported on recently reached agreements to construct the Philadelphia terminal and to operate the FastShip fleet. Talks are now in progress with CSX regarding use of land for terminal construction. Mr. Coscia noted that a presentation on FastShip would be made to the DVRPC Board at its May meeting.

Carmine Fiscina (Federal Highway Administration) noted there was opposition to construction of the Pennsylvania Turnpike/I-95 interchange and that its completion was not a certainty. Doug Golden (Main Line Management) commented that the project provided little benefit to local residents and did not improve local access.

Rick Crawford (Norfolk Southern) reported on the railroad's progress to construct a 100-125 acre intermodal facility at the former Philadelphia Navy Yard.

Terry Foley (Port of Philadelphia and Camden) stated that a follow-up meeting on the new Philadelphia-South Jersey Shared Assets Area will be held at the Tioga Administration Building at 2PM on May 5. Don Nelson of Conrail will be the primary presenter with other Class I railroad representatives on hand.

Jerry Kraft (New Jersey Turnpike) discussed recent traffic growth on the turnpike, and the provision of turnpike truck data for the Freight Lines goods movement monthly bulletin.

Carol Thomas questioned the genesis of apparent New Jersey state requirements to secure local government support for federally funded transportation improvements, and noted that this could have a quieting effect on projects which have predominant regional or goods movement dimensions.

[6] Old/New Business

The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for 10AM, July 14. A special presentation by the American Trucking Associations on incident management is planned.

Attendance List

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Kim Kraeuter	PENJERDEL
Ed Duffy	PIDC
Gail Powers	Summit Bank
Ray Lagomarsino	UPS Professional Services
Lee Feldman	New Jersey Motor Truck Assoc.
Jerry Kraft	New Jersey Turnpike Authority
Kelvin MacKavanagh	CSX Transportation
Rick Crawford	Norfolk Southern
Steve Fisk	CP Rail
Jeff Sutch	SMS, Penn-Jersey Rail Lines
Fred Winkler	Winchester & Western Railroad
Tom Collard	Southern Railroad of New Jersey
Charles Clark	Federal Railroad Administration
Donald Thomas	Federal Railroad Administration
Doug Golden	Main Line Management
Tom Pinkava	Crowley American Transport
Terry Foley	Port of Philadelphia and Camden
Shannon Graham	PennPORTS
Charnelle Hicks	Consultant
Greg Mester	Sverdrup Civil
Carmine Fiscina	FHWA, Phila. Metropolitan Office
Carol Ann Thomas	Burlington County
Larry Wilson	Phila. Office of Transportation
Elizabeth Voras	PennDOT
John Brown	PennDOT
Dennis Tiley	PennDOT (District 6-0)
Dennis Keck	New Jersey DOT
John Powers	New Jersey DOT
Jerry Mooney	New Jersey DOT
Jocelyn Jones	Baltimore Metro. Council
Patricia Horrocks	RCC
John J. Coscia	DVRPC
Don Shanis	DVRPC
Ron Roggenburk	DVRPC
Ted Dahlburg	DVRPC