Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Information Resource Exchange Group

Highlights from meeting of Wednesday, September 7, 2011

The 80th meeting of the Information Resources Exchange Group (IREG) took place on Wednesday, September 7, 2011 at the offices of PennDOT District 6-0 in King of Prussia, PA. Two dozen people were in attendance. Highlights from the June 1st meeting were available as a handout and on the internet.

Presentations

"Overview of the Traffic Management Center at PennDOT District 6-0"

Manny Anastasiadis, Traffic Operations Manager, PennDOT District 6-0 gave an overview of the Traffic Management Center (TMC). PennDOT has three Regional Traffic Management Centers (RTMCs) for the West, Central and East part of the state. The King of Prussia RTMC is responsible for Districts 4, 5 and 6. After reviewing the Incident Command structure, Manny went over the Standard Operating Guidelines for responses to highway incidents. Of all incidents, bottlenecks account for 40% of all congestion (nationally), where bad weather is only 15% and work zones, only 10%.

The goals of the RTMC are to reduce congestion, inform motorists, reduce fatalities, minimize backups and secondary incidents, ensure responder safety, coordinate resources, and clear the roadway. Tools in place to help accomplish this include closed circuit TV, variable message signs, vehicle detectors, tag readers, and service patrol vehicles. Almost three-quarters of the incidents that the service patrol responds to are disabled vehicles. Accidents account for only 11% of all incidents.

The TMC opened in 1993, with 24/7 operations starting in April 2005. There are 220 traffic cameras, 64 permanent dynamic message signs, 27 portable dynamic message signs, and 28 EZ-Pass readers with a 98 % uptime record. Real-time video is shared with the Philadelphia Police Highway Patrol, the PA State Police, Chester & Montgomery Counties, Westwood One, traffic.com, and most recently, Tango Traffic (WPHL TV 17.4).

"Regional Integrated Multi-Modal Information Sharing (RIMIS) Project"

Stan Platt, Manager of Transportation Operations Management, DVRPC, gave an overview of the RIMIS project. Besides this operation at District 6 and their coordination on the PA side, other organizations such as NJDOT, DELDOT, Burlington County NJ, nine 911 centers, state police, and countless local police and fire companies are also coordinating in this complex greater Delaware Valley region. RIMIS addresses the issue on how soon can you get the information out to the local people that need it. RIMIS has three major components: the video wall, situational map, and information used to manage operations centers. Stan gave a demonstration of the region's traffic camera video wall, showing a 4 x 3 matrix, displaying 12 video cameras in Burlington County. Video from CT through PA along the Northeast corridor are now accessible via the RIMIS system. The situational map shows incidents within the region. Using drop-down menus of words in the traffic management data dictionary, users can create a standard incident report. The situational map offers the big picture of what is going on, which is helpful in certain circumstances, like flooding, where you would not want to divert traffic from your jurisdiction into an adjacent jurisdiction that also has flooding.

Tour

After presentations, attendees were given a tour of the PennDOT Traffic Management Center.

Information Items

- The 81st IREG meeting will be held on December 7th at DVRPC.
- Government Web Professionals of NJ will have their next meetings on December 2nd (Lyndhurst/Bergen County), February 3rd (Willingboro/Burlington County).
- The Government Web Professionals of Southeastern PA will have their next meeting on Friday January 27th at the Chester County Government Services Center in West Chester, PA.
- The Next Mid-Atlantic Geographic Transportation Users Group (MAGTUG) meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 2nd, 2011 in Smyrna DE, hosted by Delaware DOT.