

**TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS TASK FORCE**  
**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

**September 15, 2014**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Lou Belmonte, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), welcomed members and thanked them for attending.

**2. Two Minute Agency Reports**

Each person in attendance introduced themselves and added any relevant ITS and operations updates from their agency. Some of the highlights include:

- ▶ Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC): The reconstruction project on I-476 North Extension mileposts A20 to A26 will be completed this fall coinciding with the beginning stages of a similar reconstruction project from mileposts A26 to A31.
- ▶ Pennsylvania Department of Transportation: The new ATMS software for their Regional Traffic Management Center should be operational by the end of September. A new project will begin shortly to examine the use of ATMS strategies such as hard shoulder running and variable speed limits on a portion of I-76.
- ▶ DVRPC: The I-76/I-476 Crossroads Incident Management Task Force celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> year at their June meeting.

The annual FHWA Traffic Incident Management Self-Assessments were conducted for the Pennsylvania portion of DVRPC and for New Jersey statewide and for with their scores being 90.9% and 89.7% respectively.

At the recent RTC meeting, the PA Turnpike presented plans for the resignation scheme for I-95 in coordination with the PA Turnpike/I-95 Interchange project. Once the interchange is completed, I-95 will continue to the PA Turnpike over the Delaware Bridge and connect directly to the NJ Turnpike. The highway north of the new interchange will be signed as I-395 to US 1 in New Jersey.

**3. Climate Change Resilience and Emergency Management - A Regional Perspective**

Rob Graff, DVRPC Manager, Office of Energy and Climate Change Initiatives, provided a brief introduction to the impacts of climate change on the region, and how agencies and organizations are preparing to address issues such as flooding, snow, extreme heat, and storms. The future is expected to have more frequent and larger extreme weather events, and these are likely to damage transportation

infrastructure. There is a need to prepare now, both to protect infrastructure, and to be ready to repair it. The first step in preparation is to know where we are most vulnerable. Mr. Graff offered an invitation to TOTF to participate in an upcoming project: Integrating Regional and County Comprehensive Planning with Hazard Mitigation Planning. DVRPC will be organizing and leading a regional discussion later this fall.

Mr. Graff highlighted an FHWA-funded project to assess the vulnerability to climate change for two regional transportation corridors in New Jersey. One study area focused on coastal NJ, running from the mouth of the Raritan River to the tip of Cape May, while the other central study area focused on much of the NJ Turnpike corridor region. This project used FHWA's Conceptual Risk Assessment Model to identify infrastructure at risk for exposure to climate change impacts and determining which threats carry the most significant consequences. The climate change impact studied included sea level rise and storm surge, inland flooding and extreme precipitation and average precipitation levels.

Mr. Graff also reported on an FTA-funded project for SEPTA to complete updates to the Norristown-Manayunk Regional Rail line, which runs along the Schuylkill River and is susceptible to flooding. Signal huts are now elevated to avoid flooding, and a turn-around was installed at the edge of the flood zone so the line can run until that point. SEPTA has also instituted several administrative changes, such as using social media to alert customers of service changes, and suspending service prior to a storm so trains and buses do not get stranded. By suspending service earlier, SEPTA can reinstate service faster once the weather event clears.

#### **4. Delaware Valley Early Warning System (EWS)**

Kelly Anderson, Philadelphia Water Department, provided an overview of the Delaware Valley Early Warning System (EWS). The EWS is an integrated monitoring, communication, and notification system that provides advanced warning of water quality events in the Schuylkill and Delaware River watersheds. It is a web-based tool for determining proper event response, and is a strong partnership between water users and emergency responders. The EWS was initially deployed in 2004 and has grown to include over 300 users in 50 different organizations within the EWS coverage area. EWS partners include 25 water treatment plants from 17 utilities in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, along with PA DEP, NJ DEP, County Health Departments, and various industries and regional organizations.

The EWS is comprised of 4 principal components: partnership, the notification system, the monitoring network, and the web-based database and portal. The system reports and provides event notifications for various types of incidents, including maritime incidents, fire and transportation accidents, sewage overflows, toxic contaminants and flooding and dam breaches. PWD recently completed a Strategic Plan for the EWS that recommended additional monitoring locations,

expanding the coverage area and user base, upgrading the website and to incorporating a tidal spill model.

**5. Delaware River Infrastructure Protection Project (DRIPP)**

Lt. John C. McMahon Jr, New Jersey State Police, presented on the Delaware River Infrastructure Protection Project (DRIPP). The purpose of DRIPP is to mitigate the potential risk or loss of strategic transportation facilities, and other critical assets along the Delaware River by bolstering security through the use of advanced alert and camera systems. This will enhance the ability of the NJSP, NJDOT, DRPA, U.S. Coast Guard, and other government entities to prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to, and recover from, terrorist acts and other “all hazards” events, including infrastructure failure.

The DRIPP project connects short-range and long-range cameras, video analytics, and other sensors to the various agencies. There are 15 surveillance cameras positioned at select waterside locations and additional sensors and cameras at four critical infrastructure sites: Ben Franklin Bridge, Walt Whitman Bridge, Commodore Barry Bridge, and USCG Sector Delaware Bay Headquarters (Philadelphia). Currently, the system is only in New Jersey with the future build plans to include facilities and connections in Pennsylvania and Delaware.

**6. New Business**

- ▶ Next Meeting Date: Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at DVRPC.

## **MEETING ATTENDEES:**

1. Bill Brady Bucks County TMA
2. Brian Styche Chester County Planning Commission
3. Joe Zito DRPA
4. Chris King DVRPC
5. John Ward DVRPC
6. Laurie Matkowski DVRPC
7. Matt West DVRPC
8. Paul Carafides DVRPC
9. Rob Graff DVRPC
10. RJ Griffith GVFTMA
11. Will Day NJDOT
12. Catherine Valencia NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness
13. Susan Winters NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness
14. John McMahon NJ State Police
15. Amber Reimnitz PA Turnpike Commission
16. Lou Belmonte PennDOT
17. Manny Anastasiadis PennDOT
18. Matt Werner Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management
19. Rich Montanez Philadelphia Streets Department
20. Kelly Anderson Philadelphia Water Department
21. Paul Fachetti Temple University

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