

## Transportations Operations Task Force Meeting

**Meeting Time:** Monday, December 11, 2017 at 10:00 AM

**Meeting Location:** DVRPC Main Conference Room

**Meeting Highlights:**

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Chris King, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, 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:

- ▶ New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT): Direct Connect continues to move forward, with Phase 2 scheduled to be completed in 2018. Direct Connect Phase 3 will involve additional and rotating lane and ramp closures, and agencies and responders will be informed as those dates approach.

NJDOT is automating its Lane Closure system, allowing each step to be monitored and reviewed. Requests for closures will be sent electronically. Funding provided by the federal government.

- ▶ Federal Highway Administration, PA Division (FHWA): Renee Siegel has left the agency and her position will soon be filled by Alicia Nolan.
- ▶ Bucks County Transportation Management Association: Steve Noll is now acting Executive Director of the TMA.
- ▶ Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission: The incentive towing pilot program continues to show decreased clearance times. Over the course of the program, the average clearance time for qualified incidents has decreased from 3 hours and 18 minutes to 1 hour and 21 minutes. Much of the improvement has stemmed from a willingness by towers to allocate more resources to the scene earlier than in the past. In addition to reduced clearance times, the program allows the PA Turnpike to review incidents with towers away from the scene, improving overall relations.

The Safety Service Patrol now provides 2.5 gallons of fuel for stranded motorists; over 570 vehicles have been provided this service.

- ▶ Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), District 6-0: A Safety Service Patrol Vehicle is being added to US 1 in Bucks County in 2018.
- ▶ Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission: A Regional Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Conference will be held this Spring/Summer, to gather first responders from the entire area and examine issues that permeate through all agencies. The official location is TBD, but in the past it has been held at Citizens Bank Park and will likely be held there again.

FHWA held a Performance Measures Workshop at DVRPC in November, with a number of regional agencies in attendance.

RIMIS/SPATEL enhancements continue to be rolled out; upcoming iterations will include performance measure metrics.

- ▶ Philadelphia Street Department: Signal upgrades continue on both City Avenue and Allegheny Avenue.
- ▶ Burlington County Bridge Commission (BCBC): Painting and steel repairs continue at the Burlington-Bristol Bridge. Deck replacement is also needed on the bridge, and will likely result in full weekend closures to allow for faster completion.

Tacony-Palmyra Bridge will soon be painted, pending an agreement with NJDOT.

### 3. **NJDOT: Hard Shoulder Running (HSR), US 1**

Kelly McVeigh, NJDOT, detailed the HSR Pilot Program currently underway on US 1 in South Brunswick. The project takes place within the existing footprint of the roadway, with repaving and restriping allowing the shoulder to be utilized as a temporary travel lane. The location was selected so the traffic is not funneled back to two lanes at the endpoint and there is ample driveway access for emergency pullovers. Passenger vehicles are only allowed to use the new lane.

Though it took a few weeks for drivers to become accustomed to the new temporary available travel lane, the data has shown travel times have decreased along the duration of the project. Compliance has also improved, with a relatively small number of drivers using the shoulder when it is closed. There has not been an official study, but it's possible a longer queue now develops at an intersection downstream in the southbound direction.

Cameras were placed on existing utility poles, allowing the operations center to have eyes on the entire stretch without adding completely new designed infrastructure.

#### **4. Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission: Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC)**

Todd Leiss, Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, provided an overview of two ABC projects, one on the Northeast Extension in the Eastern portion of the state and the other on the Mainline in Western Pennsylvania. This approach allows a new bridge to be constructed alongside the existing structure, and then demolishing the old bridge and sliding the new one into place in a relatively short period of time. This requires the roadway to close for a weekend as opposed to a prolonged traffic disruption.

The construction and engineering of the projects progressed with only minor glitches, both roadways opening within the allotted time. Many of the ongoing issues involved the determination of alternative routes leading up to the closure and rerouting motorists during the closure. Because many traffic apps did not have the closure in their network and drivers ignored VMS messaging, drivers often returned to a dead end and required assistance getting around the closure.

Lessons learned included clarifying messaging, ensuring DMS functionality, having the ability for bilingual communications, how to handle U-turns, involving additional tow services, the need to notify car rental/share companies, determine where Waze and 511 will redirect traffic, create pull off areas for directions, and more communication is always better.

#### **5. Rowan University / New Jersey Institute of Technology: Mobile Data Collection System for Transportation System Management & Operations**

Parth Bhavsar, Rowan University, provided a high-level overview of connected and autonomous vehicles (CVTs) and some of the challenges facing DOTs as CVTs continue to be integrated into the transportation system. The necessary infrastructure funding will continue to be a challenge, as will having the properly trained personnel within the DOTs.

One solution is to automate as much data collection as possible by using the existing vehicle fleet. For example, an ongoing project was described that places data collection units on NJDOT's Safety Service Patrols that would gather information on potholes, ground and air conditions, traffic, and other pertinent data. The collection units are designed to be transferred from one vehicle to another, to reduce the costs of outfitting the entire fleet.

Cameras would also be affixed to SSPs, giving the Traffic Operations Center a 'boots on the ground' assessment of real-time conditions, especially in the case of an incident.

Security and privacy is an obvious concern, and will continue to be discussed and assessed as the program moves forward.

## 6. New Business

### 2017 TOTF Meeting Dates

- ▶ **Monday, March 12, 2018 – Annual Construction Coordination Meeting**
- ▶ **Monday, June 18, 2018**
- ▶ **Monday, September 17, 2018**
- ▶ **Monday, December 10, 2018**

### **MEETING ATTENDEES:**

1)	Steve Noll	Bucks County TMA
2)	Matthew Popek	Montgomery County Planning Commission
3)	Richard Brahler	Bucks County Planning Commission
4)	Todd Leiss	Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission
5)	Kelly McVeigh	NJDOT
6)	Lou Belmonte	PennDOT
7)	Jo-Young Lee	NJ Institute of Technology
8)	Manny Anastasiadis	PennDOT
9)	Patrice L. Nuble	Philadelphia Streets Department
10)	James Diamond	Philadelphia Police Department
11)	Daniel Ragone	DRPA Police Department
12)	Jim Paral	FHWA – PA Division
13)	Parth Bhavasar	Rowan University
14)	Mike Pilsbury	NJDOT – TSM
15)	Elizabeth Schoonmaker	DVRPC
16)	John Ward	DVRPC
17)	Jesse Buerk	DVRPC
18)	Paul Carafides	DVRPC
19)	Chris King	DVRPC
20)	Justin Neff	DVRPC

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