



QUARTERLY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

10 AM | October 24, 2023

8th Floor, American College of Physicians Building | DVRPC Main Conference Room

190 N Independence Mall West, Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520

1. Call to Order

Ariella Maron, Executive Director of DVRPC and Goods Movement Task Force Co-Chair, called the quarterly joint meeting of the freight advisory and transportation operation committee to order and welcomed all task force members and friends. Attendees were called on to introduce themselves.

Chris King, DVRPC gave a brief introduction to the Transportation Operations Task Force (TOTF), a task force that focuses on regional ITS and coordination between transportation agencies. **Dan Farina, DVRPC** introduced the Goods Movement Task Force, a public-private initiative that allows the freight community to participate in shaping regional policy.

2. US Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay

The ports of the Delaware River play a vital role in the regional and national economy, providing a critical link for industries to the global supply chain. Through coordination with key partners, the United States Coast Guard works to ensure this vital link is sustained. **Todd Wardwell, Port Recovery Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay** will provided an overview of the Coast Guard's role in the region and resiliency efforts.

Todd highlighted current issues in waterborne transportation: the St. Lawrence Seaway is closed due to a Canadian labor dispute, rates for the Suez Canal have doubled due to the conflict in Israel, and the Panama Canal is still at half capacity due to low water levels. Knowing the impact these types of challenges can have on national commerce, the current commandant of the USCG has made safeguarding the Marine Transportation System (MTS) the USCG's top priority. When something goes wrong along the Delaware River, the MTS Recovery Unit restores the river's operations, and this unit plans for disruptions such as bridge strikes, ships running aground, hurricanes, fires (like the scrap metal barge last year). The USCG Sector Delaware Bay has performed numerous exercises around response: maritime firefighting (especially after the fire at the Port of Newark), mass rescue of plane crash at PHL airport, and a train derailment into the river.

Todd also shared some examples of actual response events. When an oil spill occurred on the Delaware and closed the river for 11 days, PHL airport only had 6 days' worth of fuel stockpiled, Philadelphia's sewer system nearly overflowed from not having barge access to relieve plants, and oil from the spill entered the intake of the nuclear power plant in Salem. This event made the USCG and the port complex reevaluate their response and coordination and has led to additional planning to better understand the impacts of closing the river.

Sector Delaware Bay is seeing an increase in traffic on the river as ports in the region are reinvigorated (e.g. Port Richmond). Other reasons for river closures can include large events (e.g. Democratic National Committee) or after a hurricane to check navigational aids. The Coast Guard can sometimes use a partial closure, and are very conscious of the massive economic impact of full river closures.

3. Cross-River Coordination Panel and Roundtable Discussion

Cross-river coordination is critical during both everyday operations and emergency operations. This roundtable focused on the scenario provided below and all task force attendees were invited to discuss how their agencies and companies would be impacted and involved.

Scenario: *A bridge is struck by a ship at a Delaware River crossing, rendering the bridge closed until further inspection. There is limited debris that must be cleaned up before ships can continue in the navigable river. Incoming ships are not allowed up the river and are delayed while the cleanup takes place. Cargo arriving via truck has to be held somewhere until the ports reopen, and trucks passing through the region are routed to other crossings.*

Participants were asked the following:

- How do you find out about this incident?
- Who do you share the information with?
- What decisions do you make?
- How does this event impact your operations?
- Where are there gaps in communication?

Discussion Highlights Included:

Communication and Response

- Response would be tiered and local agencies will defer to higher level agencies.
- There have been many measures taken to plan for and prevent inadvertent strikes and to strengthen the bridges.
- There are cameras on the bridge and dispatchers would notify bridge police.
- DRPA Police would shut down the struck bridge, establish a perimeter, divert traffic, and notify counties and other departments via radio. State Police would notify their state's DOTs
- The Everbridge system is used to respond to critical conditions on the bridges. Systems are in place to notify Waze and Google Maps. DOTs can update ITS signs almost immediately. Drivewyze is a useful system for truckers to communicate.
- A Joint Information Center (JIC) will be set up after an incident to help unify messaging. Misinformation is common after a disaster and can cause confusion.
 - It's important to be nimble in the social media age to prevent delayed messages leaving a void of information
- Ben Franklin Bridge is a Top Tier Asset, so there are numerous security improvements underway and in the pipeline

Regional Impacts

- Since many freight cargoes are seasonal- perishable fruit, road salt, and heating oil- the effects of a river shutdown will vary by time of year.
- If a ship flips or sinks, the moving and salvage operations can take years.
- If an incident occurs on the river, a temporary flight restriction (no-fly zone) may be used to keep news choppers away.
- In order to operate in the US, foreign vessels need to carry very large insurance policies that can pay for disaster response and damages.
- Truck traffic could be diverted to the sports complex (with coordination from the City's OEM).

Gaps and Opportunities

- Questions around the impacts that would be caused if the Delair Bridge was shut down.
- Opportunity for a regional scenario workshop might include a bridge falling into the river channel. There are alternate road bridges in this circumstance, but there are no alternate river channels.
 - There isn't a comprehensive plan for this but the Sector Delaware Bay has a plan for the first month. This scenario would likely require a National Incident Commander in Washington to manage the federal response.

4. Two-minute Reports

The following Task Force and Subcommittee chairs and Task Force members provided updates on the activities of their companies and agencies:

Janice Marino Doyle NJDOT

Janice Shared that NJDOT’s Truck Parking Study is underway and they will be coordinating with stakeholders and conducting social media outreach to raise public awareness about the impacts of truck parking.

Brett Fusco DVRPC

Brett shared that DVRPC is currently updating the region’s Long-Range Plan. The Plan sets the vision and goals for our region, strategies to achieve them, and allocates \$67 billion in state and federal transportation funds through the year 2050. DVRPC invites task force members to participate in a brief survey to shape the vision for 2050. The survey is available here: www.dvrpc.org/update2050.

5. Old or New Business/Adjournment

The proposed 2024 meeting dates of the Delaware Valley Goods Movement Task Force include:

- Wednesday, January 17th
- Wednesday, March 20th (TBD)
- Tuesday, July 16th
- Thursday, October 17th

The meeting was adjourned.

Any modifications or corrections to these highlights can be transmitted to DVRPC’s Kristen Scudder (kscudder@dvrpc.org).

Meeting Participants

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Kayla Bancone	DVRPC
Daniel Blevins	WILMAPCO
Matthew Brahms	DVRPC
Stephen Chiaramonte	WSP
Mike Christie	DRPA Walt Wittman Bridge
Tony Correia	NJ State Fire Chiefs Association
Ricardo DeOliveira	DRPA Walt Wittman Bridge
Shawn Dougherty	DRPA
Alma Fargason	WSP
Dan Farina	DVRPC
Brett Fusco	DVRPC
Sean Greene	DVRPC
John Haak	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Rohan Hepkins	DRPA/PATCO
Malia Hindle	U.S. Coast Guard
Dennis Jones	NorthPoint Development
Mike Kennedy	U.S. Coast Guard
Chris King	DVRPC
Andrew Ludasi	Self
Nipa Maniar	NJDOT
Janice Marino-Doyle	NJDOT
Ariella Maron	DVRPC
Joseph McAroy	Delaware River Port Authority

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
John McCreavy	NJRRRA
Michelle Meyer	PSA Penn Terminals
Kurt Miles	CSX Transportation
Jim Miller	Michael Baker International
Jenna Monaghan	SJTPO
Paul Myhre	Maritime Exchange
Justin Neff	DVRPC
Michael Pack	PA Turnpike
Wayne Patterson	NJDOT
Kate Pellegrini	DVRPC
Stephen Pelna	Lewis Environmental
Ek Phomsavath	USDOT - FHWA NJ Division
Michael Rakowski	DRPA
Christian Regosch	Bucks County Planning Commission
Michael Roscoe	Schnabel Engineering
Ben Russell	PADEP
Alex Sankaran	Chester County Planning Commission
Kristen Scudder	DVRPC
Laureen Sendel-Grant	Montgomery County Planning Commission
Bill Shanahan	DRPA
Denise Soisson	PennDOT (Ports)
Todd Wanhell	U.S. Coast Guard
Mark Washington	City of Philadelphia Streets Department
Raymond Young	NJDOT