

TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT FOR THE BALTIMORE REGION COMMITTEE

September 5, 2018
State Highway Administration, CHART
10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

MINUTES

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the June 6, 2018, meeting were approved.

2. CHART AFTER ACTION REPORT PROCESS

Mr. Jason Dicembre presented an overview of how SHA is using RITIS tools to conduct after action reviews. He showed an example from an August 2, 2018, superload incident. (Note: superloads get police escorts.) The trailer became detached from the tractor and the load came to a stop on a bridge over I-695. It took 2 days to reopen all lanes.

Mr. Dicembre discussed how the various RITIS tools and products were used to do an after action review.

- Event Query Tool (EQT)
 - Provides:
 - Timeline of various events
 - includes a notes section where operators can enter information that is not captured other places in the timeline
 - TOC Communications
 - Notifications and Responders
 - Lane Status
 - DMS messages
 - Speed readings (congestion scan)
- Region Explorer Tool
 - Used to determine chokepoints along a route.
 - Provides total amount of delay for a particular road segment.
- Trend Map Tool
 - Freeflow speed is based on the speed limit
 - Provides traffic congestion visualization for a road segment over a period of time.

- Planning time index
- Buffer time
- Congestion
- Congestion Scan Tool
 - Compare congestion during an event with historical congestion.
- User Delay Cost Tool
 - SHA is has started using this tool quite a bit; it helps prove the value of TIM and quick clearance programs. Also enables calculation of delay cost of each incident as soon as an incident is cleared rather than waiting for an annual report
 - Allows determination of the user delay cost for a date and compare it to other dates.
 - Translates the user delay into dollar values.
 - Can analyze the delay cost in the opposite direction to the incident (rubber necking); this was not done for this case study. In some cases, the cost of opposite direction delay has been found to be higher than delay from the incident direction.
 - User delay costs are conservative, erring on the low side.
 - Tool could also be used to measure (reduced) delay from geometric improvements (i.e., hard shoulder running)

Incident Impact Reports are now being created manually; SHA is working with UMD to automate the process for creating these reports.

Mr. Dicembre identified three key takeaways from using the RITIS tools for incident analysis:

- tools provide quick access to data and show benefits of quick clearance practices
- tools provide support for resource requests
- tools show reality and data-backed conclusions, not just perception, of what is happening, and over time can analyze trends

Discussion

- In person after action reviews are difficult to schedule; SHA is working to come up with a report that can be prepared automatically and shared electronically. AARs are important to identify ways to improve response procedures.
- A conference call system (GoToMeeting) has been used in the past for conducting an AAR and worked well.
- A suggestion was made to prepare a summary of AARs quarterly and bring that to decision makers.
 - UMD works with SHA to prepare an annual performance report (available at <http://chartinput.umd.edu/>) but it would be helpful to have updates that are more frequent. It is not possible to have UMD prepare reports that are more frequent so other options should be considered.

- There was a suggestion to prepare a periodic (perhaps quarterly) TIM newsletter on performance and to share lessons learned with other agencies. There would need to be a note that any data in the newsletter has not been through the annual vetting process though.
- It was noted that funding for the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS, www.RITIS.org) is in decline. It was suggested that users of RITIS make sure to document its value and benefits to provide support for funding.
 - MATOC provides free RITIS training monthly that is available to any RITIS user.
- It was noted that UMD created a Roadway Closure Entry Tool that is accessed through RITIS.
- The electronic AARs have not been shared with local jurisdiction TIM responders yet, but that is one of the goals of developing the new automated AAR. CHART is currently looking to distribute the AAR to the agencies within the region where the incident occurred.

3. FOLLOW UP FROM TIM SELF-ASSESSMENT

The annual TIM Self-assessment was conducted on August 22nd. A summary of the results is attached. Some of the highlights from the discussion include:

- Question 33 asks what level of coverage is provided by the Safety Service Patrol. The description for a score of 4 mentioned “ample coverage” and there was a question about what that means. The group agreed on a 3 for this question.
- Questions 41 and 42 refer to notification and coordination with the medical examiner. While there is always a need to improve coordination between law enforcement and medical examiner staff so they understand each other's challenges and reduce response times, it was noted that some agencies have noticed a decrease in medical examiner response time.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLANS

Ms. Cindy Burch, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, is leading the effort to develop strategic highway safety plans for each jurisdiction. She can provide logistical support to draft plans and help with other related work. Each jurisdiction will develop the local SHSP that works best for them to implement safety projects and show progress. Ms. Burch noted that MDOT Secretary Rahn has requested that each jurisdiction prepare a local SHSP. She noted that crashes are increasing across the region. Ms. Burch will be contacting each jurisdiction to set up a meeting to start the plan development. Since the local plans will include all roads, Ms. Burch mentioned that it would be beneficial to include appropriate state representatives also (i.e., districts, CHART, MDTA).

It was noted that local plans should consider including responder safety and TIM.

5. DISCUSS PLANS FOR OUTREACH TO LOCAL JURISDICTIONS

A presentation was prepared to be used as a way to identify TIM needs of local jurisdictions and inform them of the need for TIM. The presentation provides information on the TIMBR Committee, what TIM is and why it is important, and solicits ideas on TIM issues and needs of local agencies. Ms. Singleton has started identifying existing groups to hold the discussion, and she will start scheduling the presentations in the fall.

6. DISCUSSION OF RECENT INCIDENTS AND PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

Fleet Week: October 3 – 9, 2018; planning meetings have been ongoing

Across the Bay 10k: November 4, 2018; eastbound span of Bay Bridge will be closed during this event.

[Handout: Traffic Incident Management for the Baltimore Region (TIMBR)]

7. STATE AND LOCAL TIM UPDATES

TIM Training: Pat Rooney provided a TIM training update:

- So far, almost 30% of Maryland responders have been trained.
- There are over 200 TIM trainers in Maryland but only a handful are actively training. Trainers are encouraged to schedule and run a session. There was a suggestion to hold a conference call for TIM trainers to answer questions and encourage them to set up a training session.
- TIM training is included in the MDTA Police academy.

Incentive Tow Program:

- SHA is working on conceptual document with a consultant and with Towing and Recovery Professionals of Maryland. SHA would dispatch qualified heavy-duty specialists when needed. SHA is waiting for approval from Secretary's office to approve the cash incentive for meeting 90-minute clearance goal. They are hoping for approval in late 2018/early 2019.
- MSP has been working to include their towing policy in the Maryland law (COMAR).

ACRS Update:

- The ACRS update will be rolled out when the 5th edition of the Minimum Model Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) document is available.
- There was a request for additional elements in ACRS for secondary crash data.
- The next ACRS update is expected to collect data for struck by under pedestrian section so responder crashes can be captured.

- It was noted that the definition of “struck by” is struck on foot not in a parked vehicle.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Waze Navigation: There was a discussion about how operating agencies can share information with Waze so the navigation app modifies its directions so it does not send users on dangerous and/or inappropriate routes.

- It was noted that around the Bay Bridge corridor Waze directs users on side roads that all ultimately connect back to US 50, causing significant backups on side routes.
- In addition, Waze directs users onto routes that require a left turn from a side street onto a major route at an unsignalized intersection.
- Queen Anne’s County has been investigating how to notify Waze of incidents in the county but most roads are state roads.
- There was a question about how to let people know that there are not safe, viable alternate routes in some areas, like the Bay Bridge corridor. So far, there has not been a process identified to share this information with Waze and other navigation applications.
- Another question was asked if Waze would know if there were people directing traffic, for example after a large event.

MTA Data: Mr. JJ Lynott noted that MTA will be pushing transit data schedules to RITIS soon and real time tracking for bus, light rail, and metro will begin in early 2019.

National Traffic Incident Awareness Week: Reminder, National Traffic Incident Awareness Week is November 11 to 16. On November 13, Maryland SHA will host a demonstration for National Traffic Incident Awareness week in a parking lot of Ravens Stadium. It will begin at 10 AM. TIMBR Committee members are encouraged to attend. There will be a national event on November 15th on the National Mall. On November 10th, SHA is partnering with VDOT on a press event for the National Capital Region to be held in Fairfax at the Northern Virginia office of VDOT. At the end of that week, the National Towing and Recovery Convention will be held in Baltimore.

Upcoming meeting: December 5.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne’s Co DPW

Norvel Cooksey, State Highway Administration, CHART

Joe Davis, Maryland Transit Administration, Transit Operations Center

Jason Dicembre, State Highway Administration, CHART

Mark Harris, Maryland Department of Transportation
Chris Letnaunchyn, Carroll Co DPW
JJ Lynott, Maryland Transit Administration
Jason Pulliam, Maryland Transportation Authority Police
Patrick Rooney, State Highway Administration, CHART
Steve Scherba, Baltimore County Police
Daivamani Sivasailam, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
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