

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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Meeting Notes

MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, AND INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (MOITS) POLICY TASK FORCE AND MOITS TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 8, 2011

TIME: 12:30 PM

PLACE: COG, First Floor, Meeting Room 1

CHAIRS: Hon. David Snyder, City of Falls Church, Chair, Policy Task Force
Sean Kennedy, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority,
Chair, Technical Committee

Attendance:

Shahid Abbas, Arlington County
Tad Borkowski, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Ed Daniel, Montgomery County Police Department
Pooja Dwivedi, IBI Group
Kathy Frankle, Univeristy of Maryland
Michael Harris, Virginia DRPT
Taran Hutchinson, MATOC
Sean Kennedy, WMATA
Alvin Marquess, MSHA
Deborah Matherly, Louis Berger Group
Curt McCullough, City of Fairfax
Amy Tang McElwain, VDOT
Frank Mirack, FHWA DC Division
Jean Yves Point-du-Jour, MSHA
Tom Scherer, Arlington County DES
Amit Sidhaye, Arlington County
Jeremy Siviter, IBI Group
Greg Williams, Joint Forces HQ National Capital Region
James Witherspoon, VDOT

COG Staff Attendance:

Andrew Meese
Patrick Powell
Wenjing Pu
Daivamani Sivasailam

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Actions:

1. Welcome and Review of Notes from the February 8, 2011 MOITS Joint Meeting

Participants introduced themselves. Notes from the February MOITS meeting were approved.

2. U.S. Department of Transportation ITS Joint Program Office (JPO) Professional Capacity Building (PCB) Program Project to Identify Core Competencies Critical to ITS Positions

Based upon the successful completion of the NCHRP Project 20-77 “Transportation Operations Training Framework” for transportation operations technicians, engineers, and managers, The Center for Advanced Transportation Technology (CATT) of the University of Maryland was asked by the U.S. Department of Transportation ITS Joint Program Office (JPO) Professional Capacity Building (PCB) Program to develop an operations training framework to general ITS positions, including senior management, mid-level or project related personnel, and technician or field personnel.

Ms. Frankle, the Principal Investigator of the NCHRP Project, briefly introduced the background information and then solicited inputs from the participants on different categories of “core functions” for the three-level ITS positions. In particular, she focused on Systems Development, Project Management, Real-Time Operations, and Real-Time Traveler Information four “core functions” for suggestions.

Participants provided advices from different perspectives. Some participants expressed the desire to include more transit operations in this framework; others suggested adding after-action analysis, data management/database development, system maintenance, etc. Ms. Frankle appreciated the inputs and welcomed further comments and advices after the meeting through the end of March, when the core functions will be finalized.

3. Update on Regional Emergency Support Function #1 – Emergency Transportation Committee Activities

Mr. Powell reported the status of the UASI process. The CAO and SPG met in early March and released a document regarding the direction of this year’s UASI process. This document was distributed to RESF-1 list with a 30-day comment period. On April 4th, the different project concepts for each RESFs will be due; the RESF-1 project concept will be discussed on March 18 RESF-1 meeting.

As of March 8, there was still no federal allocation of the UASI budget. Mr. Powell estimated that the funding range for the NCR could be \$50M - \$60M, with a possibility that the NCR will receive less funding than last year. He envisioned that most of the funding would be spent on maintaining what we have other than initiating many new projects. In response to Ms. McElwain’s question, Mr. Powell mentioned there is no formal projects list that the current UASI process could select from. Ms. McElwain suggested that surveillance cameras would be a good project to fund.

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Mr. Meese reminded the participants that the RESF-1 committee meeting schedule permanently changed to the third Friday of each month starting at 1:00 PM at Rooms 4&5.

4. Update on the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program and Related Activities

Mr. Meese distributed a handout of “Proposed Regional Snow/Ice Incident Response Action Plan” that will be brought to the March 9th COG Board of Directors meeting and reported. The January 26 snow/ice storm triggered concerns of preparedness for future similar incidents from public officials, business leaders and area residents. COG invited several of its policy boards (including TPB) and committees to provide input on this issue, and this Action Plan was one of the results of this effort.

Mr. Meese emphasized the four focus areas identified in the proposed action plan: (1) Improving Real-Time Information or Situational Awareness among Local, State and Federal Government Agencies with Operational Authority or Responsibilities; (2) Improving Real-Time Information to the Media and the Public; (3) Improving Regional Coordination and Decision-Making; and (4) Examining Best Practices or Alternative Models for Regional Incident Management and Decision-Making.

Participants discussed transportation reactions to the January 26 snow/ice event and generally agreed that DOTs and other transportation-related agencies worked diligently in response to the winter storm. There were other aspects to improve the preparedness to such an event in the future, including traveler education, more timely snow calls and decision making above the transportation level.

5. Updates on Current and Upcoming MOITS-Related Activities

- **Congestion Management Process**

Mr. Pu distributed a one-page summary of the Washington D.C. metropolitan area in the newly released INRIX National Traffic Scorecard 2010 Annual Report. Our region was ranked 4th for data year 2010 by both total absolute congestion and average congestion intensity measures. This ranking was different from that of Texas Transportation Institute’s 2010 Urban Mobility Report (for data year 2009) in several aspects, including data source, methodology, and performance measures. So caution should be taken when interpreting the ranking results. The most congested highway segment in the region (I-66 WB at Fairfax Drive/Exit 71) was ranked 168th nationally, meaning our region's bottlenecks, though serious, were less severe than in other metropolitan areas such as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

Staff was continuing development of a dashboard-like, quarterly updated regional congestion report based primarily upon the I-95 Corridor Coalition Vehicle Probe Project data (including expanded coverage enabled by VDOT and MSHA), and RITIS/MATOC information. Staff was also in the process of procuring complementary vehicle probe data from INRIX for the 2011 CMP Technical Report as well as TPB travel forecasting model validations.

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- **Traffic Signals**

Mr. Meese announced that the 5th Regional Traffic Signal Forum will be held on Wednesday, May 25, 2011 at the Maritime Institute, Linthicum, Maryland (692 Maritime Boulevard). This Forum was sponsored by Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) with additional support from the NCR TPB. It will have several sessions with limited sponsorships available for member agencies. Registration information will shortly be available online at www.baltometro.org.

- **Multi-Modal Coordination**

Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Meese briefly introduced the Multi-Modal Coordination for Bus Priority Hot Spots project that was included in the proposed FY 2012 UPWP. This \$126,000 WMATA FY 2012 Technical Assistance project will be undertaken in conjunction with \$30,000 in additional funding from each of the Technical Assistance programs of DDOT, MDOT, and VDOT, for a total of \$216,000. The proposed project will build on the methodology from WMATA's previous study by examining both WMATA and local bus service frequencies and speeds, to identify a truly "regional" hot spot prioritized top 10 list for each of the three states.

- **Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Meese announced that the next MOITS meeting was scheduled on April 12 and will be a RITIS working session, as many participants expressed the interest on RITIS. Ms. McElwain suggested that each MOITS meeting could have a spotlight in the future.

6. Other Business

Mr. Daniel made the participants aware of that the golf 2011 U.S. Open Championship will be held at the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, MD from June 13 to 19, 2011. There will be elevated traffic congestion during the course of the Championship and relevant transportation agencies should be prepared for this.