

## Meeting Notes

### M&O/ITS Technical Task Force

**DATE:** Friday, October 26, 2001

**TIME:** 10:30 a.m.

**PLACE:** COG, 777 North Capitol Street, NE  
First Floor, Room 4/5

**CHAIR:** Alex Verzosa  
City of Fairfax

#### **ATTENDANCE:**

Armen Abrahamian, Prince George's County DPW  
Julie Bourbon, NVTC  
Randy Carrell, MDE  
Kathleen Donoleo, WMATA  
Craig A. Franklin, Trichord  
Doug Hansen, Fairfax County DOT  
Patricia A. Harrison, Quality Consultants Group  
Grady Kefron, VDOT – TPB C.O. Richmond  
Karen Cavallo Miller, Battelle/Partners in Motion  
Frank Mirack, FHWA  
Jean Yves Point-du-Jour MD SHA  
J.R. Robinson, VDOT/ ITS C.O.  
Amy Tang McElwain, VDOT  
Kenneth Todd, National Center for Bicycling and Walking  
Alex Verzosa, City of Fairfax DPW  
Jun Villoria, Transcore  
Bob Winick, Motion Maps LLC

#### **COG STAFF ATTENDANCE:**

Malaika Abernathy  
Michael Farrell  
Andrew Meese  
Gerald Miller

#### **Actions:**

**1. Review of Notes from the September 2001 Meeting.**

Alex Verzosa called the meeting to order at 10:47. General introductions. Not all participants had received the minutes due to mail failures. Minutes were approved.

**2. Appointment of Nominations Committee for 2002 M&O/ITS Technical Task Force Officers.**

Alex asked for volunteers for a nominating committee to name next year's chair of the technical task force.

**3. Transportation Management and Operation Response Capabilities in Emergency Situations: Follow-up to recent discussion by the TPB and the M&O/ITS Policy Task Force.** Andy Meese, COG/TPB Staff

Andy discussed recent and upcoming meetings on the topic of Emergency Response. On October 11 the MOITS Policy Task Force examined the issue, as did the TPB at its meeting on October 17. The TPB Board directed that regional coordination of Emergency Response be given a high priority. The separate COG Board has also been discussing emergency response, along with related topics. The COG board chair, Carol Schwartz, appointed herself and Chairman Mason of the TPB to head a COG board panel to look into Emergency Response. They met on October 24. The panel designated several tracks on which emergency response might be dealt with on a regional basis, one of which was transportation. The working group on transportation will be headed by Chairman Mason, and will meet for the first time on October 30. The M&O/ITS policy task force meeting of that day will be pre-empted by Chairman Mason's Meeting. The M&O/ITS Task Force will meet today instead. Chairman Mason wants a substantive report to go to the TPB by November 21<sup>st</sup>.

Gerry commented that the District was trying to address emergency response and evacuation routes without participation, thus far, from other jurisdictions. Chances of funding for proposals coming out of our effort are good, so we are not engaged in a purely academic exercise. The challenge for COG is to coordinate all the regional efforts. The main themes are communications and decision-making. We should make a short-term list of practical proposals which might actually be implemented, and which might have benefits even absent another terrorist attack. Alex said that the task force headed by Chairman Mason was becoming the policy task force, for which this committee would provide technical support.

Andy discussed a presentation on Emergency Response to be given by David Snyder at the TPB working group meeting on October 30. The key question is "What decision-making process is or should be in place in times of emergency, and how will that process interact with the region's transportation system operations?" Gerry replied that overall decision-making process is being

addressed by FEMA. Another issue is the adequacy of communications equipment, procedures, and transportation management centers. In addition to hardware, the region's agencies need an organized method of communicating with each other and the public, like Transcom. Yet another issue is how to handle public information as opposed to interagency communication. Amy Tang suggested that we try to figure out why the public is not using Partners in Motion. One problem with Partners in Motion is that it has no good means of telling people how to exchange information with another agency, just a shared database. Plus it's not industrialized enough for heavy use, such as would be needed in an emergency.

Karen Miller said that on September 11 Partners in Motion did get information. Staff called and got updates hourly from METRO, MARC, and VRE. Staff had to call continuously in order to get an open line. E-mail was working, but staff had no e-mail addresses for the agencies. Staff kept contact with the Mayor's office and with police and fire, and provided information to the Washington Post and Times. The web site worked, but was slow, with more than twenty minutes required to get a route.

Andy mentioned that he was disappointed to see that Partners in Motion had changed phone numbers and made no provision for finding out the new number by calling the old number. The group agreed that the performance of Partners in Motion was "terrible", due to their partner, Smartroute, going bankrupt. Better travel information, the group agreed, is a high priority for the region.

The group then discussed a second handout, listing a number of measures that might be taken. Measures were divided into three time frames: Short, Medium, and Long. Andy asked the group to provide comments on the list. Estimated costs were on the order of \$2 million for immediate measures, \$40 million for medium, and \$100 million for long. Short-term measures included better communications equipment, such as Nextel phones and highway advisory radios. A task force should be convened to talk about interjurisdictional and intermodal coordination. Every agency that is part of the transportation system should have a 24-hour point of contact, as should the military. Alex told the group that they would have two opportunities to comment on the list: right now, and later that day during the M&O/ITS policy task force meeting. This list of measures will be given to the TPB working group to serve as a basis for discussion. The group discussed how specific the list should be.

The group then turned to the mid-term measures. Mid-term measures included reinventing Partners in Motion with more public money, putting in more surveillance cameras, developing a playbook for transportation operation procedures during emergencies, a playbook for interagency procedures, hiring more staff, and developing a public information campaign to let people know what they should do in an emergency. Someone commented that we needed a short-term playbook too, in case something happens sooner than six months from now. A short-term playbook should use existing jurisdictional plans, traffic management, and communications. The District has already developed one,

though it has no coordination with Virginia and Maryland. Kathleen added that the playbook should include areas other than D.C., which might be more vulnerable than the District because they have less transportation redundancy, and fewer ways to get out.

The group discussed the option of using the Transcom operation center from New York as a model. The group was generally opposed to doing so, on the grounds that the States of Maryland and Virginia already have working operations centers. It would be better to improve communications between the two, not create another operations center. Those agencies that had command centers, such as VDOT, MDOT, DC, and WMATA knew what was going on on September 11. Other agencies did not know what was going on and need to be brought into the loop. Public information worked very poorly. JR argued that we should build the regional ITS architecture, but Gerry countered that the regional architecture was not finished and still had serious flaws. The group agreed to endorse the list of measures.

#### **4. Reports on Focus Areas**

Andy Meese briefly reviewed progress on the following focus areas:

- a. Incident Management Conference. Proceedin as planned, excepted that David Snyder, not Chairman Mason will be giving the overview. This conference is timely, and a good opportunity for field personnel to get together.
- b. Regional M&O Performance Measures. This item has been postponed. We will get back to it when we can.
- c. Traffic Signal Problem reporting system. No change to report.
- d. Pilot Interjurisdictional Arterial Corridors. Alex informed the group that the before and after travel runs have been finished for US 50 in Virginia. The next meeting of the Signal Task Force will take place November 9.
- e. Other Traffic Signals and Operations. Pat Harrison and Mike Farrell working on the long-delayed traffic signals white paper. Will hear more about it at the November 9 signals meeting.
- f. Regional ITS architecture. Reviewed, but more work needs to be done by the contractor to fix some errors.
- g. Electronic Payment systems. There will be a workshop on it sponsored on November 29.
- h. ITS as a data resource. Need to look at the data that is being collected and how it can be used for planning purposes.
- i. CAPWIN. Tentatively selected a contractor. Will have notice to proceed before the end of the year.
- j. Regional MOITS strategic plan. This effort is folded into this committee's efforts.
- k. Database Course at University of Maryland t<sup>2</sup> center, November 14.

#### **5. Adjourned, 12:38 p.m.**