Meeting Notes

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

District of Columbia
Bowie
College Park
Frederick County
Gaithersburg
Greenbelt
Montgomery County
Prince George's County
Rockville
Takoma Park
Alexandria
Arlington County
Fairfax
Fairfax County
Falls Church
Loudoun County
Manassas
Manassas Park
Prince William County

DATE: Tuesday, June 14, 2005

TIME: 1:30 PM

PLACE: COG, First Floor, Meeting Room 1

CHAIRS: Hon. David Snyder, City of Falls Church
          and Lora Byala, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

VICE CHAIRS: John Contestabile, Maryland Department of Transportation
          Soumya Dey, District Department of Transportation
          William Haynes, City of Alexandria

Attendance:

Peter Buckley, Montgomery County Ride-On
Patricia Bush, Arlington County
Lora Byala, WMATA
Soumya Dey, DDOT
Brian Glenn, Federal Transit Administration
Noah Goodall, Parson Brinkerhoff
Jana Lynott, NVTC
Sanjeev Malhotra, DMJM & Harris
Alvin Marquess, MDOT/SHA
Peter Meenehan, WMATA
Mark Miller, WMATA
Frank Mirack, FHWA
Wolfgang Scherr, PTV America Inc.
Chisa Winstead, MDOT/SHA
Jean Yves Point-du-Jour

COG Staff Attendance:

Andrew Austin
Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Jim Yin

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Participants introduced themselves.

2. **Update on FY 2005 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Activities and Funding**

A summary as of May 2005 of the FY2005 UASI awards was distributed. Several transportation projects were included for UASI subgrant awards, some of which may not have been discussed in earlier forums:

- Regional capabilities to improve transportation systems management ("CapCom") (partially funded at $1 million)
- DDOT/National Capital Planning Commission freight rail relocation study
- Upgrades to public safety communications within WMATA tunnels
- Project linking DC-Net's and WMATA's fiber optic networks
- Emergency electric power back-up for key traffic signals in the District of Columbia; since DDOT has converted to LED signals, back-up generators will be able to operate signals for up to 16 hours, though securing the portable generators from theft was an issue.

3. **Update on Actions to Improve Regional Transportation Coordination during Incidents**

Funding was in place for work on CapCom, both from the FY2005 UASI subgrant and from Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) funding from previous federal transportation/ITS earmarks. The TPB work session on CapCom will be held July 20. The workshop will give TPB members a chance to hear about CapCom in detail from the stakeholders, and give the TPB a chance to give their feedback directly to the agency stakeholders. The relationship between CapCom and CapWIN was to be clarified for better common understanding between elected representatives and agency representatives.

The Ad Hoc CapCom Steering Committee had been discussing how to proceed in the initial phase of CapCom. Draft scopes of work had been distributed, an initial draft from Mr. Tarnoff from the University of Maryland, and a suggested revision from Mr. Dey of DDOT staff. The Ad Hoc Committee would need to take up the topic how to proceed at an upcoming meeting.

What is CapCom's value-added? An example was raised from the "tractor man" incident, where earlier notification of traffic signal staff would have meant they could have adjusted signals right away, and thereby mitigating congestion. CapCom would provide staff whose job it is to manage such ripple effects of major incidents, and coordinate with affected jurisdictions.

Ms. Byala noted that whatever is presented to the TPB on July 20th will be the plan in the minds of TPB members, and if the agencies decide to do something different the TPB will have to be briefed again.

It was noted that the name "CapCom" was a copyrighted brand of video games, and a name change will have to be explored.

4.   **Update on 511 – Traveler Information Activities**

A draft of the Regional 511 feasibility study, prepared on behalf of the region by PBS&J, Inc. under contract to VDOT, was distributed. Regarding institutional setup, it was assumed that implementation of 511 likely would be accomplished through a new CapCom organization. Regarding content, nationally, there has been a convergence on certain types of features, including available information, main roads, unusual conditions reporting, and a Web presence. A regional 511 service will not take on roles usually held by the private sector. A regional 511 system could pivot from VDOT's newly-implemented statewide system, though cost allocations would have to be explored. A full report on 511 was to be given at a future meeting.

5.   **Update on Development of the Regional ITS Architecture**
Materials available at www.mwcog.org/transportation/archdocuments

Many comments had been received, and the documents were still being fine-tuned. One of the main features of a regional ITS architecture are agreements on projects that need to be coordinated on a region-wide basis, with a focus on a key handful of projects/topic areas such as traveler information. There is no intention of regional control of individual agency projects. Another regional ITS architecture workshop may be held in the fall, in part to discuss the next steps to make the architecture useful in ITS project design and implementation. Mr. Point-du-Jour suggested showing a connection between the architecture and the projects. Certain projects with regional implications may need to take into account or reflect the regional architecture.

6. **Discussion of the MOITS FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Activities**
      Andrew Meese, MWCOG

A handout on the UPWP was distributed. The regional UPWP describes the activities TPB staff will undertake in a given fiscal year to address long-range transportation planning. The next fiscal year begins July 1.   The possibility of an emergency preparedness workshop was discussed, though an inter-functional exercise was preferred, rather than one for transportation only.   Mr. Meese asked for comments regarding activities the Task Forces may want to undertake under this UPWP line item for the new FY2006.

Mr. Marquess suggested a test of CapCom or RITIS. A clear expectation of what is expected from a drill would be needed. State agencies have processes for a drill; the regional level protocol may not be as clear. Mr. Marquess noted that many incidents that should be on RICCS are not; often used was the WAWAS communications system among emergency response centers. Also discussed was the problem not of communications among people in operations centers with access to the WAWAS, but rather in getting information in a timely manner to people who are not in operations centers, who only carry cell phones or pagers. A related problem is how to avoid sending those same people too many unnecessary messages.

Ms. Byala asked the group to look at the UPWP and prepare comments for the July meeting.

7. **Other Business**

None.

8. **Adjournment of the Main Meeting and Break**

9. **Special Demonstration Session on Traffic Management: Leaving the Traditional Limitations of Traffic Forecasting**

Mr. Meese introduced the topic to note that the Task Forces may be interested in the possibilities for in traffic management by short-term forecasting tools now available, and that today's presentation will show unique applications of new tools from European experience.

Mr. Wolfgang Scherr of PTV America Inc. presented. By applying them in real time, methods from traffic forecasting can be used in traffic management and traveler information.

PTV is a vendor of macroscopic and microscopic modeling software. Web-based services are provided for the Berlin area at www.vmzberlin.de.   Short-term forecasting assists traveler information. People can find out both the current and the future traffic conditions around the region. Benefits for the user include better trip planning and estimated arrival time. For government benefits include peak spreading and better use of alternate routes, thus reduced congestion and more efficient use of existing infrastructure.

It was noted that bus operations could be integrated into this model. Forecasts are typically for the next one-hour time frame, but that can be customized, within limits. One could not go down to a five-minute forecast due to the time needed for the operator to verify information, etc. For a fee, subscribers can get updated information sent to their cell phones during the trip, together with revised arrival time estimates.

How would an evacuation scenario be run? What is the added value of the PTV tools? Mr. Scherr replied that PTV software had been around for a number of years, and its macro modeling and micro-simulation capabilities were somewhat better integrated than was the case with some competitors' software. An evacuation scenario (of a sports stadium) was demonstrated.

It was asked if the microsimulations addressed pedestrian movements, which are key to evacuation. Originally PTV modeled only vehicles, and has only recently started to model pedestrian movements on a micro scale. The pedestrian model derives from a vehicle model, but pedestrians do some things that vehicles do not do, which still need to be incorporated into the model. Much progress has been made modeling bicycles as PTV has done more work in China.