May 18, 2005

ITEM 11- Information

May 18, 2005

Update on Actions to Improve Regional Transportation Communications and Coordination During Incidents

Staff Recommendation:	Receive briefing on progress establishing and funding CapCom, including a $1 million FY2005 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant for the program.
Issues:	None.
Background:	At the March 16, 2005 meeting, the Board was updated on actions toward establishment of the CapCom regional transportation coordination program partnership of the region's transportation agencies and the University of Maryland Center for Advanced Transportation Technology.

CapCom – The Need for Regional Transportation Coordination And the Plan for Its Implementation

Philip J. Tarnoff, Director
Center for Advanced Transportation Technology
University of Maryland
May 18, 2005

Background

CapCom represents a cooperative effort of the Washington region's transportation agencies with the support of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) and the Greater Washington Board of Trade. CapCom is a targeted activity responsible for overseeing the planning, communications and dissemination of status information associated with the region's transportation system during incidents. The region's support of the CapCom effort results from an evaluation of previous incidents, a review of existing operating procedures, and a review of the Regional Emergency Evacuation Transportation Coordination Annex for transportation (R-ESF #1) worksheets. From these reviews, it was concluded that continued and accelerated progress was needed toward improved regional coordination during transportation incidents and other major events.

The Need

A number of significant procedural and communications improvements have been made in the area of transportation incident response in general, and emergency response in particular, over the past few years, and transportation agency personnel have strong working relationships that facilitate coordination of the transportation sector's response to incidents. However, with current operational procedures it is an added challenge for individuals who are participating directly in the response to incidents to provide real-time regional information about the status of the transportation system. The best incident management requires real-time receipt of information, predefined action plans, and quick information dissemination to providers and the public.

- Coordination at the incident scene is the responsibility of individuals with many other important responsibilities.
- Currently, the media must contact multiple agencies to develop a comprehensive picture of regional transportation status.
- It has been a challenge for response personnel from individual agencies to convene and create coordinated regionwide, multi-agency operations plans. This may be accomplished in a more timely fashion if a regional program with experienced operations personnel, able and assigned to take a regionwide perspective, is assigned the responsibility for ensuring that such plans are developed.
- For existing regional communications systems to operate effectively, clear responsibilities, procedures, and protocols must exist for initiating and following up on inter-agency communications, and this could be facilitated by a program with a regional perspective.

There is a need for enhancements that expedite the region's capability to coordinate regional response to transportation incidents.

The CapCom Concept

CapCom is being established to fulfill the following roles:

- Information Backbone – CapCom will be responsible for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the RITIS (Regional Integrated Transportation Information System) data/status information exchange system, and the use of the integrated electronic communications paths, both wireline and wireless, as the electronic backbone of the RITIS regional transportation data exchanges. In their award of a $1 million FY2005 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant in response to the University of Maryland's CapCom proposal, the states' Homeland Security Senior Policy Group singled out the importance of this activity.
- Live Transportation Information Exchange Among Agencies – CapCom will serve as a focal point for information regarding the status of the transportation system regionally on an everyday basis, including at critical times during incidents. CapCom would receive and disseminate all available data regarding the status of all modes and major transportation routes in the region. While the incident is in progress, CapCom personnel would be responsible for establishing and scheduling communications among all involved parties in the transportation sector.
- Public Information – CapCom, through its tracking of regional incidents and shared data, will play a vital role in ensuring that transportation status information is provided to the public. It will make transportation information available directly to the public through the Internet and potential future 511 telephone systems, relying upon RITIS and its associated automated transportation information sharing systems. It will also enhance information availability through individual agency public information officers as well as the traditional commercial radio and television media traffic information outlets. CapCom will help ensure that this transportation status information is coordinated, timely, and thorough.
- Planning – CapCom will be responsible for development of concepts of operations required to define transportation sector procedures and responsibilities for coordination and communication during major incidents. CapCom will support coordination of transportation sector preparation activities prior to incidents, as well as post-incident analysis to advise future regional emergency preparation, with the objective of continuous improvement in regional coordination through modifications to standard operating procedures, training and exercises.

The creation of an organization whose sole responsibility is the planning, communication and information dissemination for regional incidents is a critical step toward improved incident management for the transportation system in the Metropolitan Washington region.

CapCom Update and Development Plans

Prepared for the Transportation Planning Board

Presented by
Philip Tarnoff, Director
University of Maryland
Center for Advanced Transportation Technology
May 18 , 2005

Status

- Funding
    - CapCom awarded $1 million UASI Grant
    - One-time $2 million congressional earmark remains in House Transportation Bill
- Funding considerations:
    - Available $1 million will be assigned to near-term and initial tasks
    - Transportation earmark is hoped for, but is likely to arrive about one year from now in spring '06
    - Work plan now under development is based on establishment of format, procedures and protocols with one year of operation

Initial Work Plan

- Proceed based on current ensured budget of $1 million
- Train, organize, and assign University of Maryland staff to CapCom activities
  - Accelerate RITIS-based transportation information backbone activities
  - Develop procedures for and begin initial live interagency information sharing activities
  - Initiate transportation status public information prototype development
  - Address regional operations coordination planning

MACIP

- The Mid-Atlantic Communications Interoperability Partnership (MACIP) is being formed
- Letter under preparation requesting appointment of a range of representatives to MACIP
- Invite participation as appointments are made (next meeting June 1, 2005)
- A transportation committee being formed in the MACIP structure will steer CapCom

MACIP Exec Leadership Group

- **5 Maryland**
  - 2 Governor's appointments (transportation and public safety)
  - 3 Local government users
- **5 Virginia**
  - 2 Governor's appointments (transportation and public safety) 3 Local government users
- **5 District of Columbia**
  - 2 Mayor's appointments (transportation and public safety)
  - 3 D.C. Users
- **5 Federal**
  - 3 Cabinet-level Agencies
  - 2 Federal agency users
- **2 Inter-jurisdictional**
  - WMATA
  - MWAA

Outlook

- Appointments to MACIP Executive Leadership Group
- MACIP, University will focus on major CapCom topics
  - Initial work program and activities
  - Exploring funding
    - Additional startup costs
    - Ongoing annual costs: \$1.3 million for operations, \$450K capital costs
- Initiate staff and facilities development
- TPB Work Session on July 20 for stakeholders to discuss CapCom plans, progress
- With the \$1 million award received, the momentum of work will now accelerate

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002-4226
(202) 962-3200

MINUTES OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
May 18, 2005

Members and Alternates Present

Phil Mendelson, D.C. Council
Catherine Hudgins, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Kathy Porter, City of Takoma Park
JoAnne Sorenson, VDOT-NOVA
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Kanti Srikanth, VDOT
Michelle Pourciau, DDOT
Ron Spalding, MDOT
David Moss, Montgomery County DPWT
Damon Harvey, DDOT
Lora Byala, WMATA
Bill Wren, City of Manassas Park
Bruce Reeder, Frederick County
Skip Coburn, DC Council
Rick Canizales, Prince William County
Brian A. Glenn, FTA
Debbie Lipman, WMATA
W.S. Wally Covington, III, Prince William County
Patsy Ticer, Virginia Senate
Patrice Winter, City of Fairfax
Carol Petzold, Maryland House
David F. Snyder, City of Falls Church
Robert Werth, President, Diamond Transportation
Dennis C. Morrison, VDOT
Ludwig Gaines, City of Alexandria
Andrew Fellows, City of College Park
Senator John Giannetti, Maryland Senate
Cicero Salles, Prince George's County

Chairman Mendelson said he was less concerned about whether or not backfill development would occur than he was about the transportation implications of the shifts. He said he was concerned that these moves might force development on to highways that currently do not have adequate capacity.

Mr. Snyder said the final "what if" from a transportation standpoint should be related to cost. He said it was important to ask what it would cost to provide transportation to areas with new DOD jobs.

Mr. Fellows asked if COG and the TPB had considered what the most appropriate political response would be. He said this federal decision-making process seems to be quite top-down, involving very little discussion with local governments.

Mr. Robertson noted the positive example of the coalition that was assembled after the September 11 attacks to reopen Reagan National Airport. He said a coalition was formed very quickly, including the public and private sectors, to successfully engage on this issue. However, he cautioned that the current BRAC recommendations could be difficult to change because they were developed in a post-9/11 environment.

Mr. Snyder added that it would be important for the analysis to look at air quality impacts.

Chairman Mendelson asked Mr. Kirby to begin to prepare for the regional analysis of the DOD recommendations. He also asked that this issue be placed on the TPB agenda for June. He said the TPB was uniquely qualified to get data on the transportation implications of the DOD recommendations.

7. Update on Actions to Improve Regional Transportation Communications and Coordination During Incidents

Because of a scheduling problem this item was moved earlier on the agenda.

Mr. Snyder introduced Phil Tarnoff from the University of Maryland to make the presentation. He said Mr. Tarnoff would speak about CapCom, which would be an entity that would ensure coordination among the transportation agencies in the region, in the case of a natural or manmade disaster or in case of incidents that occur every day. CapCom would also ensure that information is disseminated to the public. Mr. Snyder said that CapCom was developed in response to gaps identified from the September 11 attacks and also from a growing need to improve coordination during everyday incidents. He also noted that incident coordination was an important way to ensure transportation capacity is used most effectively.

Referring to the handout and mailout material, Mr. Tarnoff gave an overview of the development of CapCom. He announced that the University of Maryland had officially received word that CapCom had received $1 million in an Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant. He also noted that CapCom had been designated to receive $2 million through an earmark, introduced by Congressman Moran, in the House transportation reauthorization bill. However, he said the money from this earmark is unlikely to arrive until next year. He said the work plan for CapCom is now under development. The work plan will establish CapCom's format, procedures, and protocols. He described the leadership structure for the Mid-Atlantic Communications Interoperability Partnership (MACIP). He said a transportation committee being formed in the MACIP structure will steer CapCom. He said that with the $1 million UASI grant, the momentum for CapCom will now accelerate. He noted that a TPB Work Session has been scheduled for July 20 to discuss CapCom plans and progress.

Chairman Mendelson noted that Mr. Tarnoff had earlier told the Board that $4 million was the amount of money needed for CapCom.

Mr. Tarnoff said that it had been estimated that $4 million was needed for the first 15 or 16 months of CapCom. He said that because the project was not yet fully funded, they would defer the production version of a database and they would be operating on a schedule that would be less than 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chairman Mendelson asked for more information on the database that was being deferred.

Mr. Tarnoff said the database is called the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS), which would report on incidents and traffic flow. He said the system would be able to provide consolidated incident reports from all three jurisdictions by July. He said that several aspects of the project were being delayed, including automated interface of the system with existing computer systems and integration with some county systems. He also said the project would not be able to provide everyone with automated, easy-to-use geographic information system access with maps and attractive interfaces.

Chairman Mendelson said the tasks that will not be done seemed to be fairly significant.

Chairman Mendelson asked to what degree the CapCom project would overlap with other information technology projects that he had heard are going through the UASI process.

Ms. Pourciau said CapCom and the other proposals would address two separate needs: the actual development of information technology systems and information dissemination.

Mr. Tarnoff agreed that these were two separate issues. He said he was not aware of an overlap.

Chairman Mendelson noted that Mr. Tarnoff had said that CapCom would not initially operate on a 24/7 basis. He asked what the hours of operation would be.

Mr. Tarnoff said it would be a 12-hour operation, two-shift operation, as opposed to a three-shift operation.

Mr. Dorsey said he was concerned that plans to make the user interface useful and attractive were being deferred. He said this should be an opportunity for the public to get immediate use out of CapCom.

Mr. Tarnoff said the CapCom project will be designed to improve dissemination of information across jurisdictional and state lines. He said it also is intended to improve the quality of traffic information that is reported.

Mr. Dorsey said he was interested in the prospect of vehicles collecting data instead of single collection points.

Mr. Giannetti asked whether CapCom would allow private sector and media outlets to have access to the data and to present it to the public in the way they want, or would the sponsors of CapCom be responsible for presentation.

Mr. Tarnoff said they would allow others to develop the data for presentation. He said he considered CapCom's role to be an information wholesaler, as opposed to a retailer. However, he said he understood that at times when a situation is rapidly developing, CapCom may be the only source of information.

Ms. Pourciau said she needed to clarify the District of Colombia's position on CapCom. She said that contrary to some assertions, the District is fully behind the CapCom project. However, she said the District is concerned with the characterization that no action has been taken since September 11, which is simply not true. She described actions taken to improve the development of transportation information and to develop a level of communications and communications redundancy that is shared at the transportation operational level. She said the steering committee for CapCom has been working hard trying to scope out the work for the project and determine how to best spend the $1 million UASI grant.

Mr. Sailes said that when he needs traffic information, he usually listens to WTOP radio. He said that kind of media outlet is perhaps the most important method for disseminating information. He suggested it might be interesting to have WTOP as part of the CapCom development process.

Mr. Tarnoff said he had just been speaking with WTOP that day. He said they had agreed to work with the CapCom project, at no cost, to be an information source and a means of disseminating information.

Mr. Fellows asked if CapCom would be able to interact with communications from federal officials to local officials. He mentioned the recent incident in which a private plane went into air space over Washington, but the District of Columbia government was not informed.

Mr. Tarnoff said no, CapCom would not be inserting itself into an operational role when incidents occur.

Ms. Pourciau clarified that CapCom would only be a clearinghouse for information.

Chairman Mendelson said he continued to be concerned that a budget of $4 million had been developed for CapCom, but so far only $1 million had been identified. He said he understood that the state departments of transportation had indicated their support for CapCom. But, he said the key issue was whether sufficient funding would be allocated to get CapCom fully operational. He said the TPB would be acting on the CLRP in the fall, at which time the Board will be able to see whether projects have been proposed to provide the necessary funding for CapCom.

Mr. Tarnoff added that the development process for CapCom had been slowed down because full funding had not been identified.

Mr. Snyder said Chairman Mendelson hit the key issue in his concluding remarks.

Ms. Pourciau said that when a DOT cannot find resources to cover all identified needs, they have to find a way to deploy the best possible program. Regarding CapCom, she said it was important to move forward to deploy the best possible system given the many demands they are facing.

8. Approval of the Letter to the Metropolitan Develop Policy Committee Regarding the Round 7.0 Cooperative Land Use Forecasts

Referring to the mailout material, Mr. Kirby said the Board had been presented the previous month with an earlier draft of the letter that was before the Board for approval today. At the Board's request last month, the letter had been revised. Mr. Kirby reminded the Board that the draft Round 7 Cooperative Forecasts were transmitted to the TPB by the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (MDPC) with a caveat that the planning directors would be examining the impacts of the forecasts. The MDPC also forwarded a letter from the District Office of Planning indicating that they voted against the approval of these forecasts because they objected to the imbalance between the total employment and total households.

Mr. Kirby said that staff will be looking at the forecasts in our region, in the areas outside the Metropolitan Statistical Area and in the areas outside the TPB's modeled area. Referring to the handout presentation, Mr. Kirby called attention to a table on page 11 which indicated the number of additional households that would be needed to fill the jobs that have been forecasted. He noted that the numbers were very significant. For example, 508,000 additional household