Meeting Notes

Joint Special Meeting
Transportation Planning Board
Management, Operations, and Intelligent Transportation Systems
(M&O/ITS) Policy Task Force

CHAIR: Honorable David Snyder, City of Falls Church

And

TPB M&O/ITS Technical Task Force

CHAIR: Alex Verzosa, City of Fairfax

VICE
CHAIRS: Kathleen Donodeo, Washington Area Metropolitan Transit
           Authority
           John Frankenhoff, D.C. Department of Public Works
           Jean Yves Point-du-Jour, Maryland State Highway Administration

DATE: Friday, January 25, 2002

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

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

ATTENDANCE:

Randy Carroll, MDE
Kathleen Donodeo, WMATA
Bruce Edwards, Fairfax County DOT
John Frankenhoff, DC DOT
Craig Franklin, Trichord, Inc.
Alfred Titus Glover, NVTC
Rick Gordon, Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Doug Ham, PB Farradyne
Doug Hansen, Fairfax County DOT
Tanya Husick, DRPT – VA
Breck Jeffers, FHWA - MD

Grady Ketron, VDOT-TPD C.O. Richmond
Mike Kinney, Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation
Bill Lecos, Greater Washington Board of Trade
Mark Maggio, George Mason University
Eric Marx, PRTC
Glenn McLaughlin, MD SHA/CHART
Frank Mirack, FHWA
Robert Nemchin, Montgomery County Emergency Management
Jean Yves Point-du-Jour, Maryland State Highway Administration
Jack Requa, WMATA
John Riehl, Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation
Jim Robinson, VDOT/ITS
John Sorenson, PBS & J
Honorable David Snyder, City of Falls Church
Alfie Steele, Montgomery County Ride-On
Phil Tarnoff, University of Maryland
Jose Thommana, Arlington County
Kenneth Todd, NCBW
Alex Verzosa, City of Fairfax, DPW
Bob Winick, Motion Maps, LLC
James Witherspoon, PBS&J

COG STAFF ATTENDANCE:

Malaika Abernathy
Kevin Adderly
Andrew Austin
Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Gerald Miller
Nicholas Ramfos
Joseph Zelinka

Actions:

General introductions were made. Chairman David Snyder congratulated the group on progress made thus far.

1.   **Review of Notes from the January 8, 2002 M&O/ITS Policy and Technical Task Forces Joint Meeting.**

Notes were approved.

2.   **Briefing on January 17, 2002 Regional Technology Tools Conference**

Chairman Snyder discussed the conference, and his presentation at the conference on the work of the M&O/ITS Working Groups. Chairman Snyder asked that the Powerpoint slides he presented on January 17 be emailed to everyone in the M&O/ITS group.

Andrew Meese discussed the proceedings at the Potomac Conference Meeting sponsored by the Board of Trade. The participants at that meeting concluded that the region should set aside money for traffic signal optimization, as one of the most cost-effective measures available. 511 should also be expanded for traveler information. The Board of Trade is expected to show continuing interest in this issue. David Winstead, a former Secretary of Maryland DOT, will be the Board of Trade's point of contact with the TPB on signal and ITS issues. The Board of Trade can advocate for technology applications to transportation across jurisdictional boundaries and at the federal level.   The transcripts of the meeting will be posted on the Board of Trade's web site.

3.   **Presentations from Member Agencies on their Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Efforts**

Egua Igbinosun, Maryland State Highway Administration: Mr. Igbinosun was not able to attend as originally scheduled.

Jack Requa, WMATA: WMATA has a 24-hour operations center. In the event of an emergency WMATA organizes a command center, including representatives of the police and press. WMATA plans to create a second command center in case the headquarters building becomes inoperable. WMATA has CCTV to monitor its stations. WMATA is participating in Level A agency conference calls.

At the level of bus transportation, WMATA did not have good communications with other agencies. WMATA is correcting that situation by acquiring contact information and participating in regional conference calls. Communications of unfolding events is a high priority. The WMATA web-site will be used as a tool to communicate with the public. The press will also be kept informed. WMATA has a contract under way for a new radio system and an AVL (Automatic Vehicle Location) system. Within one year all buses will have AVL and better radio communications. The new radios will cost about $70 million. The architecture will be the most open possible, in order to allow new

features to be added. Eventually, the AVL will provide information which could be communicated to the traffic signal systems, allowing WMATA to put late buses back on schedule through extended green traffic signals. It will take at least two years before prioritization to put late buses on schedule will be practical. In response to a comment, Mr. Requa noted that the bus operator will not have anything to do with prioritization decisions. It was noted that John Collura of Virginia Tech should be kept informed of WMATA's progress. Mr. Meese voiced his appreciation for the efforts of WMATA and Virginia Tech.

John Riehl, Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation: Montgomery County has a number of potential terrorist targets. Numerous incidents over the years have provided valuable experience. Montgomery County has numerous control, monitoring, and public information assets. The operations center can change the timing of its 700 signals remotely, and has 120 cameras to monitor traffic, as well as aerial monitoring. The operations center operates 7 days, 19.5 hours per day (24 hours per day if necessitated by an emergency). Additional staff would be needed to provide ongoing 24-hour operations. The County also has access to a cable TV station, plus a Traveler's Advisory System radio, a web site, variable message signs, and contacts with the media. Montgomery County has AVL and radio communications with all its buses. Mr. Riehl considered Montgomery County well-prepared for an incident.

Robert Nemchin, Montgomery County Emergency Management: This office reports to the fire administrator, who reports to the CAO. It is responsible for emergency preparedness and the hazardous materials permit program. That information is shared with 911. The office prepares an emergency plan and interacts with other agencies whose expertise will be needed under different scenarios. In the event of an emergency the office brings together an emergency management group, consisting of the County Attorney, Public Health, Police, Fire, Transportation, Public Works, the Public Information Office, and other agencies. Mr. Meese expressed his appreciation for the work Montgomery County has done, particularly the close relationship between transportation and emergency response. County executives make the decision to activate the Emergency Operations Center based on the situation.

Eric Marx, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) Snow and Emergency Plan: Mr. Marx provided handout materials. The objectives of the Snow and Emergency Plan include:
- Operate a safe transit system during emergencies.
- Establish a clear, easy to understand emergency plan for the public, PRTC, and WMATA.
- Establish clear criteria and timing for deciding when the Emergency Plan will go into effect.
- Keep buses out of gridlock traffic and off treacherous neighborhood streets.

Bus rides will be free on the day an emergency is declared, but paid on subsequent days. A plan, contact list, and contact procedures have been developed, including private bus operators. The Emergency Plan is an elaboration of the snow plan. PRTC plans to install GPS on buses. PRTC has the ability to send email alerts to subscribers.

A question was posed regarding consolidated distribution of information to the public. Metro has agreed to learn what is happening with the secondary transit agencies, and it will attempt to distribute that information on its web site in a timely manner. Mr. Meese pointed out that it is difficult to consolidate all this information. It will be necessary to put some public money into it if it is going to happen. Nicholas Ramfos discussed ridesharing issues. It was noted that ridesharing and transportation management agencies also had a need to discuss and be informed about operational changes in case of emergencies, and that they should be considered for inclusion in the transportation emergency communications coordination concept diagram.

4.   Update and Discussion of Emergency Response and Preparedness in the National Capital Region

- **Developing Transportation Policies and Procedures**. Mr. Meese discussed the development of contact lists. We also plan to summarize what the various regional agencies are doing, to help us identify what the gaps in planning may be. Participants should expect to be contacted on this subject. Partners in Motion needs to be revised, with the aid of a consultant.

  David Snyder congratulated the group on progress made thus far. Gerald Miller asked that the group support the addition of more COG staff.

- **Improving Communications for Coordination of Decisions.** We are exploring technical means of communications, accumulating contact lists, developing contact protocols, and testing all of the above. A meeting of the Conference Call Group was scheduled for February 5 [later rescheduled to February 6].

- **COG Board Activities.** The board has identified a consultant who will work on emergency response. TPB staff was to work with this consultant on the transportation components of the overall regional emergency baseline plan. The COG Board was also hosting, with the Greater Washington Board of Trade/Potomac Conference, a February 5 seminar on Israel's experience for emergency response.

5.   **Updates on Other M&O/ITS Activities**

- **Traffic Signals**   The next traffic signals meeting was to be March 8.

- **Regional ITS Architecture.**   A draft final Regional ITS Architecture had just been prepared. On Wednesday, January 30 the subcommittee was examine it prior to its distribution to stakeholder agencies for a two-month review period. Customized transmission letters were to be prepared for each stakeholder agency in the region, helping them to review and comment on portions of the Regional ITS Architecture particularly relevant to those agencies. Three training sessions on the architecture were to be held: March 6, 15, and 21. The architecture is complex, and has some emergency response implications. Mr. Meese asked that representatives be ready to receive the draft, and to see that their agency or jurisdiction fully participated in the review process.

- **ITS as a Data Resource.**   The final Task 2 report was completed on December 31, 2001. The ITS As a Data Resource Working Group was to meet next on January 28 to consider next steps.

- **M&O/ITS Professional Capacity Building Working Group:**   The group was to meet next on February 1.

- **Next M&O/ITS Task Forces' Meetings:**   Mr. Meese suggested that meetings of the M&O/ITS Task Forces be held twice a month in January, February, and March, due to the volume and urgency of the work of the groups. These dates were to be the second Tuesday at 1 p.m., and on the fourth Friday at 10:30 a.m. By April we may be able to go back to meeting once a month, which would be the second Tuesday time slot.

Adjourned.