

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, June 12, 2012

TIME: 12:30 PM

PLACE: COG, First Floor, Meeting Room 1

CHAIRS: Hon. David Snyder, City of Falls Church, Chair, Policy Task Force
Jean Yves Point-du-Jour, Maryland State Highway Administration,
Chair, Technical Committee

Attendance:

James Austrich, Parsons Brinkerhoff
Ron Burns, Frederick County
Ed Daniel, Montgomery County Police Department
Peter Doan, FHWA
Claire Gron, NVTC
Taran Hutchinson, MATOC
Wendy Jia, WMATA
Greg Jones, Frederick County Highway and Transportation
Linda LaSut, SAIC
Curt McCullough, City of Fairfax (phone)
Amy Tang McElwain, VDOT
Jean Yves Point-du-Jour, MD SHA
Tom Scherer, Arlington County DES
William Truong, MATOC
Greg Williams, Joint Forces HQ National Capital Region
Dwight Wright, Telvent USA

COG Staff Attendance:

Andrew Meese
Erin Morrow
Wenjing Pu
Huijing Qiang
Eric Randall
Daivamani Sivasailam

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Actions:

1. Welcome and Review of Notes from the April 10, 2012 MOITS Joint Meeting

Participants introduced themselves. Notes from the April MOITS meeting were distributed. There were no comments. Any comments after the meeting can be sent to Mr. Meese.

Item 2: Coordination Updates

a. Regional Emergency Support Function #1 (RESF-1) Emergency Transportation Committee Update

Mr. Meese reported that three proposals submitted by RESF-1 were accepted for UASI funding pending federal approval. The proposals were to provide UMD CATT Lab and RITIS with one year of maintenance, funding for enhancements, and funding to develop emergency weather and traffic information. The next meeting is on Thursday June 21st at 1 pm. He was asked if the UASI funding was connected to the transportation bill to which he responded that it was part of homeland security funding which goes every fiscal year. The total amount for the bill for the country has been cut back, but funding for large areas including Metropolitan Washington region have remained stable.

b. Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program Activities

Mr. Hutchinson reported that MATOC is working on more outreach and training for RITIS including a training session the next Monday for federal and military agencies. MATOC is looking to host two training sessions per month, on the first and third Wednesdays. There was interest in having a RITIS training session for the MOITS Subcommittee. Additionally, the FY2013 plan was approved the previous Friday and discussions have begun on how MATOC will coordinate with RIC.

c. Status Report on the Regional Survey on Traffic Signal Power Backup Systems

Mr. Meese informed the subcommittee that they last meeting of the Traffic Signal Subcommittee was on May 15th and the next meeting will be on July 10th before the MOITS meeting. The information on traffic signals with back-up power is mostly at the jurisdiction level and the Traffic Signal Subcommittee is looking at how to get that information to relate to emergency transportation plans. Staff plans to conduct a new survey as of June 30th with the understanding that new power back-ups are being installed all the time. The data received from the survey will be reported to senior officials. Even if a jurisdiction or agency receives a grant for the installation of power back-ups, ongoing maintenance costs are a concern, and possibly higher than installation costs, leaving the question of who will be responsible for those costs in the long run. The issue of costs and shared responsibility between agencies will need to be studied more in-depth before putting together a proposal. The IMR is interested in the differences between local jurisdictions and state DOTs in handling power back-ups. At this time, the Traffic Signal Subcommittee has informed senior officials that its focus is on power back-ups are they related to emergency routes.

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The subcommittee was told that VDOT has identified 200 critical intersections and has 140 of those backed-up with either a battery or a generator hook-up. According to the specifications, the batteries being used provide six hours of power, but lab tests have showed that they can last for 13 hours. It was noted that each of the three states has very different situations for traffic signal power back-ups in terms of penetration, responsibility, and authority. Additionally, if a traffic signal is running on back-up power, the colors might be on, but if coordination and/or communication are lost, it is unclear how effectively those signals would be functioning.

Item 3: Presentation on the Draft 2012 Congestion Management Process (CMP) Technical Report

A draft of the 2012 Congestion Management Process (CMP) Technical Report is available on the MOITS website for review and comment. The bi-annual report is a federal requirement and a major feature of the TPB work program. Comments should be sent to Ms. Morrow (emorrow@mwcog.org) by July 10, 2012. It is anticipated that the report will be presented to the TPB Technical Committee in September. The report has six chapters: 1. Introduction; 2. State of Congestion; 3. Consideration and Implementation of Congestion Management Strategies; 4. Studies of Congestion Management Strategies; 5. How the results of the CMP are integrated into the CLRP; and 6. Conclusions. Mr. Pu, Ms. Morrow, and Mr. Sivasailam presented an overview of the report highlighting the key findings and recommendations, new and/or significantly updated strategies in the 2012 report, and examples of strategy studies.

Mr. Pu reminded members that the MOITS Subcommittee had already been briefed on the findings from Chapter 2. Discussion followed on INRIX data. There have been favorable discussions from DDOT about potentially purchasing their data from INRIX. There was discussion about how good INRIX data is for real-time and historic analysis based on the sample of size of the data. For the historic analysis, such as in Chapter 2, staff uses a year of data for the analysis. Geographic and network definition are some of the biggest challenge with the analysis. Mr. Pu said that there are new sources of data in Maryland that will be compared to INRIX data. VDOT is currently working to identify areas where INRIX data is not considered to be good enough for real-time information and is looking to use Bluetooth in those locations. It was decided that discussions on INRIX data should continue in the future. If INRIX data is not considered to be good enough for real-time information, do the contributing factors impact the use of INRIX data for historic analysis?

In the discussion about the congestion management strategies, a question came up as to whether it would be better to group the strategies by phase of implementation rather than by strategy type. In the past, the preference was to group by strategy type. The description of the strategy should indicate what phase of implementation the project or program is in, and if while reviewing the document the text is not clear, a comment should be sent to Ms. Morrow.

It was noted that the presentation of the CMP Technical Report was at the regional level and a question was asked whether staff found that particular areas of the region had different congestion-related issues. Mr. Meese responded that one of the challenges of this report is the scale. Small MPOs can get into specifics, but a larger MPO will have to generalize. Based on the results of the federal review, the amount of detail included in the CMP by TPB is appropriate. Reporting on

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congestion management is a requirement for MPOs. The general idea of the CMP document is to show that alternatives to increasing road capacity are being considered. It was pointed out that the states DOTs often act as individuals in transportation planning, but their decisions affect others and they should work together on issues. The possibility of MATOC looking at construction near bridges was brought up as an example of coordination between states.

There was a suggestion to strengthen the language in the report encouraging investment in transit. If the transit is traveling at 8-10 mph, who is going to be encouraged to ride it? What other actions can be done to provide benefits that encourage people to ride transit?

Item 4: Update on the *Multimodal Coordination for Bus Priority Hot Spots Study*

The MOITS Subcommittee received two major presentations on milestones of this study. There will be a webinar on June 14th for the MOITS and Regional Bus Subcommittees where the study team will discuss the findings of Task Four. The purpose of Task Four is to analyze possible strategies for implementation for two proposed hot spot locations in each Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The study team used Synchro to analyze the strategies with respect to person throughput rather than vehicle throughput. Ms. Jia asked if anyone had a copy of Synchro and could help WMATA analyze its ideas versus the consultants' ideas. Mr. Randall responded that it would not be possible to complete such an analysis within the study timeframe, but it is an idea for future discussions.

Item 5: Jurisdictional Roundtable

Ms. Jia announced for those who did not already know that the "Rush Plus" service begins on Metrorail on June 18th.

There was follow-up discussion to a question that had been asked earlier in the meeting about vehicle probe project data from DDOT. Mr. Meese responded that the data comes from a contract with the I-95 Corridor Coalition, and in the past, Maryland and Virginia have purchased additional supplementary data over and above the base coverage, but the District of Columbia has remained with only its base coverage in the overall Coalition contract. There was promising feedback that the District of Columbia will purchase the additional data which everyone in the I-95 Corridor Coalition, including the TPB, will have access to. Mr. Doan said that he could contact Jim Cheeks' group to see if that could be expedited. There was a question about whether traffic data around the opening of the new casino in Anne Arundel County could be summarized, but since that is out of the TPB planning area, that would be a consideration for MD SHA.

Item 6: Other Business

There was no other business.

Item 7: Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, July 10 at 12:30 pm in COG Meeting Room 1.