

Statewide Work Zone Safety Committee Meeting

October 28, 2010 – Arden Hills Training Center

Attendees:

The attendance roster is listed at the end of these minutes. The list includes members, people substituting for members & guests.

Announcements:

Two changes have been made to the membership listing since the March meeting:

- Major Mike Asleson has taken Major Al Smith's position on the committee after Al's retirement during the summer.
- Tiffany Dagon was introduced as Metro's new Work Zone Engineer. She will be coordinating projects between maintenance and construction for better scheduling besides heading up the Traffic's temporary traffic control section.

The following status reports were presented for Previous Action Items and Round-Robin Topics:

State Patrol:

- Major Mike Asleson reported that clarification is needed on the duties anticipated or allowed to be done by State Troopers who are working in a work zone under the Extra Enforcement funding. Troopers have been requested to do a variety of tasks while on duty at the work site by both the state's engineer and the contractor. There is confusion on who has the authority and when. Time is wasted while the trooper waits for direction.

Craig Mittelstadt explained that the Troopers may be present on a work site for 2 reasons depending upon how they are being paid for the work. If they are being paid through Extra Enforcement Funding, then they are working for the project engineer and should be there under his/her direction, which may be either ticketing or just presence in the zone. It is possible that the contractor has paid for traffic control duties for the Troopers, which could be a temporary road closure, or traffic control at a signalized intersection. For traffic control duties, the trooper could likely work with either the contractor or the engineer on scheduling.

ACTION ITEM: OCIC will work with State Patrol to clarify a procedure for informing the trooper of their anticipated duties which should reduce wasted start-up time at the beginning of shifts. This procedure should also highlight typical duties and how to identify when they are appropriate for the funding source.

TTC Services - Northland ATSSA:

- Ken Russell reported that Northland Chapter of ATSSA held its July business meeting and used the gathering of representatives from 3 states (Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota) to conduct a special meeting to discuss the striping paint shortage that plagued the country last summer (2010). Through the efforts of NCATSSA, the states met with representatives of the striping industry in the 3 states, were able to discuss priorities and solutions to the shortage problems. It was networking at its best.
- Northland Chapter of ATSSA will be conducting its annual "How-To" Conference in Fargo North Dakota on March 15-16, 2011. To expand NCATSSA's role in providing training on pertinent TTC, signing and pavement marking topics, they are including

sessions for Work Zone Training, ADA requirements in Work Zones, CDL's, the 2011 Field Manual, Personal Safety, Distractions and general Tri-State Updates. The Northland Chapter is also offering scholarships to cities, counties and others who have not been able to attend in the past.

Worker Safety:

- Todd Haglin reported that the department is reviewing new soft hats for appearance and comfort. He brought an example to show the group.
- The September 2009 directive mandates that employees HI-VIS garments be purchased by the state and must have a Mn/DOT logo. Any current HI-VIS non-logo garments should be utilized as best appropriate now and will need to be replaced prior to June 2011.

Public Affairs:

ACTION ITEM: The TEO WZ Safety Committee will investigate the various options to communicate with the truckers and other motorists and inform them of the proper and legal late merge etiquette. Concepts will be discussed with industry and the communications partners.

STATUS UPDATE: In preparation to establish a Public Awareness Campaign for Late Merge, the Mn/DOT Market Research Group conducted Market Research with Mn/DOT's online community regarding the Late Merge and Karla Rains, manager of the group, shared the results. CO Traffic and Construction, as well as Metro Traffic, have discussed the possibility of a more formal marketing effort combined with "blitzing" the late merge in maintenance and construction projects. Ken Johnson and Craig Mittelstadt presented the thoughts behind this effort.

Karla reported that 600 people have been selected by Mn/DOT as demographically significant for market research opinion polls. In general, it was discovered that most drivers would welcome the late merge method (either do it themselves or tolerate those who do) once they are informed of its benefits. The results of the Late Merge poll can be found online at: <http://ihub.dot.state.mn.us/onlinecommunity/pdf/FrontPageLateMerge091710.pdf>

Ken & Craig reported that it is anticipated that starting in the Spring of 2011, construction and maintenance will utilize the Late Merge signing on all temporary lane drops (2 lanes merging to 1 lane) where a traffic queue is anticipated. Since the volumes at which this will most likely occur are within the Metro area, we will be concentrating primarily on the Metro projects. Since the late merge signing can be enhanced with dynamic messaging, it will be recommended to add the IWZ technology to project when possible, but it will not be mandatory. Without active messaging, all project should have static signage asking motorists to USE BOTH LANES DURING BACKUPS. The new 2011 Field Manual will have layouts for the late merge (passive signage method) and for a mobile operation alternative.

Outstate Districts will be encouraged utilize the late merge concept on all freeway and/or expressway projects, but it is anticipated that Stopped Traffic Warnings would be more appropriate in the outstate areas. This is an IWZ system requiring queue detection. The Field Manual will also have a generalized layout for the Stopped Traffic system.

ACTION ITEM: OCIC (with assistance from OTST) will be issuing IWZ system usage guidance for the Late Merge and Stopped Traffic Warning systems.

Federal Agency (FHWA):

- Will Stein reported that the 2009 Federal MUTCD was issued in Dec 2009, and that Minnesota has 2 years to update the MnMUTCD to compliance with the Federal MUTCD.
- Ken Wood and Tracy Scriba (FHWA) will be conducting a training course on Transportation Management Plans (TMPs) for project managers, designers, and traffic engineers. The course is tentatively set for January 11-12, 2011, at the Training Center.

Maintenance:

- Ryan Otte reported that the Office of Maintenance (OM) and OCIC have agreed to use the California Title 13 specifications for LED vehicle warning lights. Mn/DOT will accept any LED light package that has passed the California testing if the lights are also capable of displaying the Mn/DOT Flash pattern. Manufacturers will be included on the vehicle lighting APL after documenting that they passed the California Title 13 testing.
- Ken Nelson reported that he will working with the Districts to conducting District-wide reviews (A&B) of maintenance operations (twice a year) for work zone standards and safety compliance. Ken has a checklist that should be used for the reviews.
- Randy Reznicek reported that D-3 has been using the temporary rumble strips and finding that they generally work great. They have found that a few cars attempt to drive around them and it is assumed that they are unaware of what the rumble strips are (may appear to be trash or tire scraps in the road). They are considering placing a rumble strip warning sign next to the rumble strips or assuring that the strips are placed adjacent to one of the existing signs.
Randy also reported that during a low temperature (0-20 degrees) test of the product, that the product failed by fracturing into pieces. The manufacturer was contacted, a replacement part was issued, and the manufacturer will be reviewing/testing the pieces. Randy also reported that his “boss is great”... (just checking to see who reads this)
- Sue Lorentz reported that Metro has updated their vehicle lighting policy regarding when vehicle beacons must be operating within a work zone area. A clarification of the vehicle warning light language in the Field Manual was also issued as follows:

Vehicle Warning Lights

All vehicles shall have approved operating vehicle warning lights when decelerating to enter a TTC zone and again when a vehicle leaves the TTC zone and enters the traveled traffic lane. All vehicles within a mobile TTC operation; or working within 15 feet of an open traffic lane should have approved vehicle warning lights.

- Ken Nelson presented a flagger paddle with LED conspicuity lights made by Tapco. He has arranged a low price package deal if agencies want to upgrade to LED lit paddles.
- Ed Barrett representing PERCOMM mentioned that they have been having issues with utility companies doing their own traffic control in more complicated situations – leading to less than ideal setups. It may be worthwhile for utility companies to use more experienced traffic control contractors to set up these work areas.

Local Agency:

- Wayne Sandberg (Washington County) presented on a Social Networking endeavor that the county is using on a construction project within the city of Woodbury. The County has been using Twitter to send information out regarding a couple County Road construction projects; however, the twitter accounts did not have much activity and had few followers. To increase awareness, they posted a sign along the roadways under construction which simple stated the name of the road “CountyRoad13” with the Twitter Logo. The county engineer managed the twitter account (with the same name as the roadway) for the project

and gave daily tweets about daily progress, closures or delays. While formal review of the experiment is lacking, it appears the concept of pushing data to motorists vs. having motorists seeking data (511) was welcomed by residents in Washington County. There were a significant number of people receiving the tweets for this project.

Construction – OCIC:

- Tom Ravn reported that OCIC will be continuing to stress the need to limit expose time of workers to traffic hazards and motorists expose to construction hazards. OCIC will continue to work on innovative ideas that reduce those exposes, such as lane rentals and bonus incentives.
- The Resident Engineer representatives for SWZSC will be filled by Steve Kordosky for Metro representation along with Trudy Kordosky as the representative for outstate districts. While Steve Kordosky is currently is working in a different position, he will have substitutes attending for him. David Herzog was present for Steve at this meeting.
- Craig Mittelstadt reported on several issues that the Specials Provisions Committee recently reviewed including:
 - Drop-Off expose time – local traffic hazards
 - ADA/Ped/Bike specifications – where will they be included?
 - Traffic Control Logs – daily logs needed?
 - Pay Items for IWZ applications
 - ADA & Business Liaison duty assignment – to TC Supervisor?

Traffic Engineering:

- Ken Johnson reported that OTST in partnership with the Northland Chapter of ATSSA and National ATSSA conducted a very successful workshop (June 2010) and focus group survey for pedestrians with disabilities within work zones. Mn/DOT has adopted PROWAG standards for pedestrian ADA requirements, and the standards needed to be explored to see how we could interpret them for temporary construction applications. The Temporary Pedestrian Access Route (TPAR) Workshop discussed the needs of peds w/disabilities and a demonstration area gave hands-on review of various devices currently on the market (and a few proto-types too). The focus groups of pedestrians provided insight on their concerns and Mn/DOT will use the feedback to develop spec for devices and to develop plan standards.
- Marv Sohlo reported that the TEO Work Zone Safety Committee has been meeting on a weekly basis to review Chapter 6 of the MnMUTCD and to update the Field Manual for a 2011 edition. New layouts will include IWZ applications (as mention above) and new ADA guidance for planning and design. The previous sidewalk layouts have been revised to include ADA compliance in a temporary bypass or detour. Two new pages will be included which give basic specifications for TPAR compliant devices and guidance on how they should be installed.
- Lynn Berg (SignCAD) presented the latest update on the ConeZone software. A short demo was provided and it was confirmed by OTST that the software was producing accurate TTC layouts (as per the 2007 Field Manual) and will soon incorporate the 2011 updates. ConeZone is compatible with most CAD software including Microstation.

District Traffic:

- Jeff Rieder reported that D-6 maintenance used a novel way to detour a low volume roadway for a day this past summer. They simply stationed a flagger near the closure and he/she talked to each motorist and gave them directions about the detour route. For this

short duration closure, they were able to detour traffic without any detour signage. Simple and practical for this situation.

- Tiffany Dagon of Metro Traffic reported that they are working on putting construction and maintenance projects into a GIS system to help keep track of impacts. Metro District is using Georilla to show information from 511.
- Mike Engh of Metro Traffic mentioned that a project on TH 61 used a Traffic Control Performance Spec – in his opinion, it was the people that made that spec work; with different people and personalities, the spec may not have helped the project.

Next SWZSC Meeting: March 14, 2011 in Fargo North Dakota

ACTION ITEM: The SWZSC Coordinator, Ken Johnson, will be following up with each action item and providing a monthly status report to the Executive Committee for review.

Refer to the following link for all current Work Zone information, standards, and documents, including the SWZSC information, such as previous meeting minutes and announcements.

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/trafficeng/workzone/index.html>

Statewide Work Zone Safety Committee – Membership Attendance – Oct 28, 2010

Name: present:
Co-CHAIRS:
 Mike Robinson (Duluth - Director)
 Sue Groth (OTST - Director) X

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:
 Bernie Arseneau (Division Director) X
 Mike Barnes (Division Director)
 Sue Mulvihill (Division Director)
 Rick Kjonaas (SALT - Asst Director)

EXTERNAL PARTNERS:
Federal Agency
 Will Stein (FHWA) X
Local Agency
 Wayne Sandberg (Washington County) X
 Adam Bruening (Washington County) X
 Jim Koslucher (City of Fridley)

NCATSSA
 Jay Blanchard (NCATSSA - Safety Signs) (SUB)
 Ken Russell (NCATSSA - 3D Specialties) X
 Gary Clark (NCATSSA - 3M)

TTC / IWZ Services
 Eric Johnson (Traffic Technologies) (SUB)
 Tim Lewis (Highway Technologies) X
 Lynn Berg (SignCAD) X
 Mike Granger (Street Smart Rental) (SUB)

LTAP
 Jim Grothaus (LTAP)

Consultants
 Larry McKenzie (URS) X
 Gary Thompson (URS)

Enforcement
 Major Mike Asleson (DPS – State Patrol) X

Contractors
 Frank Weiss (Shafer Contracting)

Utilities
 Vacant

Guests Attending:
 Ryan Otte CO Maintenance
 Bob Vasek CO Maintenance
 Judd Roby SignCAD
 Sheila Johnson Metro Maint – Traffic Services
 Karla Rains Market Research Group
 Tiffany Dagon Metro Traffic

Name: present:
INTERNAL PARTNERS:
Construction:
 CMG Mark Panek (D-6) X
 Central Office Tom Ravn (OCIC - Director) X
 Special Provisions Craig Mittelstadt (OCIC) X
 Training/Spk Bureau Leigh Kriewall (OCIC) X
 Resident Eng Steve Kordosky (Metro) (SUB)
 Resident Eng Trudy Kordosky (D-4)

Maintenance:
 OMG John Howard (Metro)
 Central Office Steve Lund (OM - Director) (SUB)
 Training Ken Nelson (OM) X
 Metro MWZSC Sue Lorentz (Metro) X
 Outstate MWZSC Randy Reznicek (D-3) X
 PERCOM Ed Barrett (Metro) X

Public Affairs:
 Central Office Kevin Gutknecht (OPA)
 District Kent Bernard (Metro) X

Design:
 PCMG Mark Waisanen (D-4)

State Aid:
 Central Office Mark Vizecky (SALT)
 District Vacant

Worker Safety:
 Central Office Todd Haglin (OMCS) X
 District Doug Thies (Metro)

Traffic Engineering:
 Central Office Cassandra Isackson (OTST) X
 Ken Johnson (OTST) X
 TEO WZSC Marv Sohlo (OTST) X
 WZ Signing John Benson (OTST) X
 WZ APL Ted Ulven (OTST) X
 District Mike Engh (Metro) X
 District Kevin Schmidt (D-3) X
 District Jeff Rieder (D-6) X

Sub's Attending: Representing:
 Sue Lodahl CO Maintenance (Steve Lund)
 Reed Leidle Safety Signs (Jay Blanchard)
 Steve Anderson Street Smart Rental (Mike Granger)
 David Herzog Metro Const (Steve Kordosky)
 John Story Traffic Technology (Eric Johnson)