

BALTIMORE REGIONAL OPERATIONS COORDINATION COMMITTEE
SHA Statewide Operations Center Training Room
7491 Connelley Drive, Hanover, Maryland
September 17, 2007
10:00 A.M.

ATTENDEES

Kwame Arhin – Federal Highway Administration
David Dabkowski – Maryland Transportation Authority, Engineering
Joe David – Whitman Requardt
Mark Demski – Baltimore County Emergency Management
George Frangos – Howard Co. DPW
Mark Harris – Maryland Department of Transportation
Sgt. Janet Harrison – Maryland State Police
Egua Igbinosun – State Highway Administration/CHART
Tanya King – Daniel Consultants, Inc.
Battalion Chief Wayne LeRoux – Anne Arundel County OEM
Chris Letnaunchyn – Carroll County DPW, Bureau of Engineering
Leah Littlefield - MIEMSS
Alvin Marquess – State Highway Administration/CHART
Roxane Mukai – Maryland Transportation Authority
Patty Murawski – State Highway Administration/CHART
Donna Nelson – Daniel Consultants, Inc.
Eugene Parson – Maryland Transportation Authority Police
Lt. Richard Ricko – Maryland Transportation Authority Police
Eileen Singleton – Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Pamela Spring – Maryland Department of Human Resources
Richard Thorne – Maryland Transportation Authority Police
Lt. Richard Williams – Baltimore City Office of Emergency Management

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Chris Letnaunchyn called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

TODAY'S MEETING OBJECTIVES: The primary objectives of the meeting were to provide an update on the Traffic Incident Management On-Line Training Course, discuss the priorities for regional evacuation planning, and have a post-incident lessons learned discussion on the recent Bay Bridge incident.

[Handouts: B-ROC Agenda]

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 6, 2007, MEETING: The meeting minutes were approved.

UPDATE ON THE TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT ON-LINE TRAINING COURSE:

Donna Nelson reviewed the approach to the training course. The course is designed to be delivered on-line or on a CD and be used as a self-study course or an instructor-led class. The course has several stand-alone sections which typically take 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The course is designed to fill gaps in available training resources and provide Maryland specific information on incident management (e.g., CHART overview, etc.).

The software used to create the course is user-friendly and provides narration and some interactivity. Drafts of several sections of the course can be found on the internet at www.dci-projects.com/TIM. The committee was asked to review and provide comments on the training. Comments will be incorporated into the training sessions and graphics will be refined before the final product is distributed.

Below are suggestions that were provided:

- Provide list of the quiz questions that can be printed out before taking the lesson, similar to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) courses on National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Try to get accreditation from Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI) and the Police Training Commission.
- Provide access or links to the courses on Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) website.
- Try to provide verbal narration for quiz questions and answers at the end of each lesson.

[Handouts: Traffic Incident Management Self Study Lessons and Some slides from the Training Course]

PRIORITIES FOR REGIONAL EVACUATION PLANNING: Eileen Singleton asked what the next steps should be for regional evacuation planning, using as a starting point the Regional Protective Action Coordination Guidelines and Agreement and Next Steps Memorandum. She added that the focus of the next steps discussion would be on transportation aspects of evacuation planning.

Attendees provided the following comments:

- Coordination of evacuation routes/critical routes is needed. Recently, local jurisdictions submitted evacuation routes to MEMA as part of their evacuation plans.
- Many jurisdictions do not think that the entire jurisdiction will be evacuated at one time, therefore, in many cases, specific evacuation routes are not identified because the threat of evacuation can come from many directions. Instead, many of the agencies have identified critical routes, which are the roadways that can be used for all possible evacuations.
- University of Maryland (under contract to SHA) is creating a target specific evacuation model for the National Capital Region. The model allows the user to identify the location of an incident and the type of incident and show the areas that will be affected by the evacuation.
 - The Baltimore region is looking to obtain Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding to expand the National Capital Region model into the Baltimore region.
- MEMA has agreed to host all the Traffic Evacuation Plans on WebEOC.
- Some jurisdictions have considered contra-flow but noted that in contra-flow operations, their road networks would not allow for emergency vehicles to access the affected area. It was noted that this should be documented so that during an emergency, when officials

ask for contra-flow on a roadway, it can be noted that the road is unable to support contra-flow and why the road is not suitable for contra-flow.

- A plan should be created on how to get relief personnel to different sites during an emergency (this may also be another reason why contra-flow is infeasible on certain roads).
- MTA is dealing with the issue of evacuees transporting pets. The counties each have different policies but the State Animal Response Team (SART) is in the process of providing statewide guidelines.
- The issue of who has the authority to order an evacuation was discussed. The governor has authority at the state level. At the local level, some elected officials have authority to order an evacuation and others may not.
 - Baltimore County recently updated its law to allow the county executive to order an evacuation. Baltimore County based its law on a Howard County law. The law essentially authorizes the county executive, during an emergency, to limit ingress and egress on routes near an affected area.

While the committee did not identify specific next steps, there was agreement that there are additional needs for regional transportation evacuation planning.

[Handouts: Regional Protective Action Coordination Guidelines Transportation Issues – Next Steps and Evacuation Checklist from Regional Protective Action Coordination Guidelines-Details]

POST INCIDENT LESSONS LEARNED DISCUSSION ON THE BAY BRIDGE INCIDENT: Lt. Richard Ricko from MdTA Police presented information on a Bay Bridge incident that occurred on Thursday, May 10, 2007 at 4:00 pm. The incident occurred on the westbound (WB) span, which at the time was operating two lanes WB and one lane eastbound (EB). The primary cause of the incident was a WB trailer that detached from an SUV; the trailer was not properly secured and the safety chains were too long.

The incident closed the bridge from 4:00 pm to 11:30 pm, a total of 7 ½ hours. The incident involved seven vehicles (two tractor trailers) and three fatalities. The crash blocked all three lanes on the bridge and the other bridge had one EB lane open and one lane open for emergency vehicles. The traffic backup from the incident never exceeded four miles because detours were set up and motorists were informed of the incident in several ways. New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, and Maryland all had messages on DMS signs warning motorists of the incident. The Cape May - Lewes Ferry made announcements of the closure as well. The media also informed motorists of the incident.

The detour for the incident was 100 miles. Traffic was turned around on MD 8 and directed on US 301 NB to get to I-95. The MdTA noted that the tolls collected showed a very small spike in the tolls on the detour route indicating that the effect of the incident was spread out over time.

Twelve (12) to fifteen (15) agencies responded to the incident. Agencies arrived from each side of the bridge. Since the road was blocked, two command posts were set up, one on each side of the bridge. Agencies had trouble communicating with one each other on their radios. Only Queen Anne's and Anne Arundel counties' agencies were able to communicate because of radio compatibility. Cell phones were not always able to get service because the circuits were overloaded. As a result of the incident, MdTA has installed in their command center ways to communicate with Queen Anne's and Anne Arundel counties. The GETS (Government Emergency Telecommunications Service) was mentioned as an option for responders to improve the chances that wireline and wireless phone calls go through. This service gives

priority phone service to emergency personnel. Pre-registration is necessary; however, there is no fee to register. There is a small fee when a call is made using GETS.

Although there were issues with the radios, the command post worked well in providing the responding agencies with information that was relayed to the field responders. It was noted at the meeting that Anne Arundel County has a command bus that can patch radios together; the incident commanders at the scene were not aware of this resource.

The incident responders had to wait for the Medical Examiner (ME) to arrive at the scene. The ME was escorted to the site in a police vehicle because ME vehicles don't have emergency lights. During the debriefing it came to MdTA's attention that the MSP have a form that allows a police officer to remove a body from the scene of an incident (after the Office of Chief Medical Examiner has provided a verbal approval). The MdTA plans to adopt the form for their use.

The media plays an important role in distributing the incident information; however, during this incident, media representatives often left the designated area, entering areas where they were not supposed to go.

If any agency is interested in presenting lessons learned from past incidents, please contact Tanya King at tking@danielconsultants.com or Eileen Singleton at esingleton@baltometro.org.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Incident Management Conference: Eileen Singleton noted that funding for another regional incident management conference is still being pursued. Once funding is secured, a committee will be convened to plan the conference.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULE: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 28, 2007, at the SHA Statewide Operations Center Training Room in Hanover, Maryland.