

BALTIMORE REGIONAL OPERATIONS COORDINATION COMMITTEE
SHA State Highway Administration Building 4, Training Room 1
7491 Connelley Drive, Hanover, Maryland
December 3, 2008
10:00 A.M.

ATTENDEES

Samuel Brice – Annapolis DPW
Mammen Daniel – Daniel Consultants, Inc.
Duane Daniels – Annapolis Police Dept.
Joe David – Whitman Requardt
Victoria Davis – MdTA Police
Al Friedman – Baltimore County Police
Janet Harrison – Maryland State Police
Egua Igbinosun – State Highway Administration / CHART
Breck Jeffers – Federal Highway Administration, DelMar Division
Tanya King – Daniel Consultants, Inc.
Wayne LeRoux - Anne Arundel Co Office of Emergency Management
Chris Letnaunchyn – Carroll County DPW, Bureau of Engineering
Larry Mabe – Harford County EOC
Alvin Marquess – State Highway Administration / CHART
Corey McKenzie – MdTA Police Tunnel Command
Patty Murawski - State Highway Administration / CHART
Donna Nelson – Daniel Consultants, Inc.
Kathie Raynor - MdTA
Edward Sherlock – Annapolis Emergency Mgmt
Eileen Singleton – Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Mona Sutton – State Highway Administration
Richard Williams – Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Emergency Management

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

TODAY’S MEETING OBJECTIVES: The objectives of the meeting were to provide a general overview of the B-ROC Committee, to provide an update on the results of the “Engaging Local Jurisdictions” Planning Committee Meeting, and to discuss lessons learned on funeral processions.

[Handouts: B-ROC Agenda and B-ROC Meeting Presentation]

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 3, 2008 MEETING: The meeting minutes were approved.

B-ROC OVERVIEW: Eileen Singleton delivered a presentation prepared for the ITS MD Annual Meeting, which had been modified based on feedback from a meeting with representatives from local jurisdictions. The presentation describes the mission, roles and objectives of B-ROC, and the status of recent and on-going B-ROC efforts. This presentation will serve as the foundation for a series of meetings with local jurisdictions.

General comments and suggestions are summarized below:

- B-ROC and Maryland National Capital ROC Committees have worked together on successful projects, such as the Spanish Language Field Guide.
- The Statewide Field Guide will be ready for publication pending a final review to ensure that it is consistent with recent changes in practice. Once the review is done, Alvin Marquess has funds available to print and distribute it.
- Memorandum of Regional Coordination (MORC) was completed some time ago; however, some new management and staff in agencies are not aware of it. Additional outreach is needed to maintain awareness of the MORC.
- B-ROC needs to develop simple processes to facilitate communication / information exchange with the committee, and to create and sustain awareness of products and resources (like MORC).
- B-ROC should explore strategies and tools that will help maintain awareness of B-ROC resources. These include e-mail distribution lists (list-serves) and a simple webpage to archive downloadable files for the Committee. A simple electronic newsletter could be used to share information on topics like RITIS and to announce information about upcoming events or new reports/resources.

Action Item: Donna Nelson will prepare a short outline of e-mail lists and other “tools” that B-ROC could use to improve communications with the Committee and to improve awareness of (and access to) B-ROC resources.

[Handouts: B-ROC Overview Presentation]

MEETINGS WITH LOCAL JURISDICTIONS: Ms. Singleton provided an overview of a meeting with representatives from local jurisdictions that was held in lieu of the full B-ROC Committee meeting scheduled for October 1st. The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm about the role of local agencies in regional operations coordination and how the B-ROC Committee might support their interests and needs. Highlights of the meeting were distributed to the group. Key items discussed during the October 1st meeting are as follows:

- Meeting participants encouraged B-ROC to organize meetings with local jurisdictions to discuss their needs, interests and practices related to traffic incident management (TIM) coordination.
- Individuals who represent their agencies at B-ROC meetings play a key role in disseminating information within their agencies and in bringing issues and ideas forward to B-ROC.
- While some jurisdictions have regular participation from multiple agencies, other jurisdictions are represented by one or perhaps two people at each meeting. This

highlights the importance of information exchange among people from different agencies within jurisdictions.

- Most local jurisdictions have regular meetings that provide opportunities for representatives from local agencies to interact and build relationships with their peers in other agencies. These meetings may provide opportunities for B-ROC Points of Contact (POC) to exchange information relevant to B-ROC.
- Use of e-mail distribution lists can make it easier to disseminate information to the committee (points of contact), and to help those points of contact disseminate information to the right people within their organizations. In addition to the official POC, agencies might wish to have information sent to other people - to facilitate the exchange of information within their agency.
- It may be possible to re-format B-ROC meeting minutes / notes to make them more interesting and useful. As a first step, notes could highlight key points for a broader audience.
- B-ROC could explore strategies for more effective information dissemination with member agencies through a variety of means that range from leveraging existing meetings within jurisdictions, electronic tools (subscription e-mail distribution lists). Some types of information (information about new documents, resources, or events) could be shared with internal agency newsletters.
- The first local jurisdiction meeting is scheduled with Carroll County for December 18. Meetings with other jurisdictions are being scheduled. The results of these meetings will be reported at the next B-ROC Committee meeting.
- The B-ROC overview presentation should be updated to include mention of funeral processions, ask about awareness of MORC, and solicit suggestions for improving information sharing / dissemination.

POST-INCIDENT LESSONS LEARNED DISCUSSION – FUNERAL PROCESSIONS:

Cpl. Al Friedman of the Baltimore County Police Department led a discussion of his recent experiences of managing traffic during high-profile funeral processions. Over the past year or two, at least seven high profile funeral processions have been held to honor fallen members of law enforcement and fire agencies in Maryland.

B-ROC members noted that over time, procession routes and associated activities are becoming more and more elaborate. Many shared anecdotal information about some of the adverse impacts and near disasters associated with these funerals.

- Large funeral processions can have tremendous impacts on traffic safety and congestion. Participation in processions often involves large numbers of public safety personnel, their families, public leaders, and the public. Sections of major transportation routes may be closed for considerable periods of time.
- Fire equipment is sometimes parked on highways along routes, closing at least one lane of traffic before and during lengthy processions. In one instance, the procession route was over 40 miles, visiting various locations the honoree served.

- As the length of the processions increase, vehicles begin to travel in “platoons” with gaps in between. Unsuspecting drivers can be inadvertently caught up in the procession or grow impatient and cross the procession route during gaps. In some cases, police vehicles have been involved in collisions.
- Approaches to informing the public vary considerably among jurisdictions and for funerals within individual jurisdictions. For some funerals, the public has been informed of road closures through newspapers or broadcast media and by messages on road-side signs.
- Plans for funeral processions are driven by the desires of all involved to publicly honor the service and memory of a fallen hero. The process for planning funerals varies among agencies. Meeting participants suggested that in most cases, individuals within agencies have been charged with guiding development of plans; the details are heavily influenced by the family and colleagues of the fallen. Elected officials and the public also support the need to honor these individuals.
- Meeting participants agree that this represents a serious problem, but recognized that the topic is complex and emotionally charged.
- Guidelines and practices related to honoring fallen heroes must have the support of the Chiefs of Police and their counterparts in other public safety agencies. Furthermore, making specific recommendations regarding how fallen heroes (or other public persons) should be honored is beyond the scope of B-ROC.
- While the public supports the need to honor the fallen heroes and will accept inconveniences, the public at some point may become frustrated and resent what they see as excessive impacts.
- Incident responders and the public may not be aware of the indirect impacts on safety, public health, and incident-response capabilities during these events. While the dollar costs may be important, identifying the potential “non-monetary” costs is more important. These include traffic accidents, inability to respond to medical and other emergencies, and loss of support/respect from the public.
- While the discussion during the meeting focused heavily on funerals honoring public safety heroes, participants pointed out that the same concerns apply to high-profile funerals of any type. The frequency of large-scale funeral processions (and other events to honor fallen heroes) may be more important for some regions than others.
- Little or no documentation is available regarding the impact of funeral procession routes and associated activities on traffic and safety. A preliminary search of the internet (including reports and practices related to managing traffic during planned events and selected concepts of operation) turned up very limited information about the topic.
- The group discussed the interests of B-ROC members and the potential role of B-ROC in beginning the process of addressing this issue. Since this topic is so filled with emotion, B-ROC could focus on making a case from the TIM perspective - better understanding and managing the impacts on roadway operations could enhance, rather than detract from, the respect being paid to fallen heroes.
- From a traffic operations/traffic incident management perspective, large funeral processions are a unique type of “planned” special event. As such, it would be

appropriate to define strategies or practices for managing traffic during high-profile funerals.

- As a first step, B-ROC could develop short “case studies” that gather and organize available facts and anecdotal information from a “traffic and road safety” perspective. Even anecdotal information may help raise awareness of the need for considering traffic impacts in planning these events and to identify strategies for managing traffic during processions.
- It was suggested that a B-ROC Committee working group be formed to discuss and consider how to proceed, and (if appropriate), recruit additional individuals to participate in the working group.

Action Items: Mr. Marquess and Ms. Singleton will take the lead in initiating a “Funeral Procession” working group.

If you would like to discuss a particular incident please contact Eileen Singleton (esingleton@baltometro.org) or Tanya King (tking@danielconsultants.com).

OTHER BUSINESS: The committee also discussed the following items:

Inauguration Preparations: Mr. Marquess provided an update on transportation issues and preparations for the Presidential Inauguration. The Inauguration will bring unprecedented crowds to the area and the impacts are expected to extend beyond the National Capital Region. Hotels are at full occupancy in DC, Baltimore and beyond. A record number of chartered buses are booked; parking for chartered buses will be at sports stadiums, however, those lots are already at capacity.

The inauguration planning committee is considering ways to reduce congestion and maintain security. Some of the items that are being considered are:

- Operating Metro on peak hour schedules the entire day on Tuesday
- Contracting heavy duty wreckers to ensure that vehicles are quickly moved off the travel lanes
- Designating specific roads for police use
- Designating arterial roads for bus parking
- Creating press releases encouraging people not to drive to D.C.
- Using 800 MHz radio (SHA being equipped with radios) to maintain open lines of communication with other agencies
- Setting up a central command center
- Declaring Inauguration day a county holiday, which means county schools and workers would be off for the day
- Closing ramps at strategic locations on the interstate and beltway

Towing in Baltimore County: Cpl. Friedman informed the group that Baltimore County Police will soon be implementing a new system for managing towing operations; it is based on software used in Texas and San Francisco. The contractor will be responsible for system management, tow dispatch, and tow operations. The system is web based which allows Baltimore County to provide input on the type of towing and recovery equipment needed at the

site of the incident and to monitor the contractor's performance. If the contractor (who developed the software) goes bankrupt, ownership of the system reverts to the BCPD. Certification rules have been developed for Towing and Recovery.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULE: The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, February 4, 2008**, at the **SHA SOC Training Room** in Hanover, Maryland. Meetings will be held the first Wednesday of **every other month**. Future meeting dates for 2009 are provided below:

- February 4, 2009
- April 1, 2009
- June 3, 2009
- August 5, 2009
- October 7, 2009
- December 2, 2009