**MEETING MINUTES**

**SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS**

**COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

Date: October 19, 2012

Time: 9:00 AM

Meeting Held: Southeast Michigan Transportation Operations Center, (SEMTOC), Detroit, Michigan

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City of Detroit Department of Transportation

Ben Virga from the City of Detroit Department of Transportation described the December 2011 fire at the City of Detroit Coolidge bus facility. Six DDOT buses were destroyed in an accidental fire, at the Coolidge bus yard.

The two alarm fire at the DDOT maintenance facility took several hours to put out. The facility is located on the city's west side on the 14000 block of Schaefer where the buses were engulfed in flames and the roof collapsed above them.

The buses were contained by a firewall to separate them from the rest of the fleet. A fire official took control of the incident, and the police department blocked off streets in the vicinity of the fire. The fire apparently resulted from a hydraulic line failure in one of the buses. The fire resulted in damage to the bus facility and six of the buses. Having fire hydrants on the property would have been helpful in fighting the fire. Firefighters used foam inside the building as there were no hydrants available. There are reports that the sprinkler system inside the building was not working.

Black smoke from hundreds of gallons of diesel fuel blew toward nearby homes. Authorities monitored the air quality and were concerned over smoke damage. They were uncertain if hydraulic fluid may have caught fire. Firefighters were allowing drivers into the yard to access their buses. One firefighter is reported to have slightly injured his shoulder while pulling a hose across the yard. Dozens of fire trucks as well as a HazMat team were on the scene.

The buses, worth $350,000 each were insured. The damage would have been much worse had the employees not acted so promptly. Several mechanics and bus drivers put themselves at risk to drive other buses through the black smoke so they would be safe.

Freeway Operations Subcommittee Report

Dayo Akinyemi from the Michigan Department of Transportation noted that the City of Detroit would be hosting the Baseball World Series October 27-28 and that planning for this special event was in progress. Other special events being planned include the Free Press Marathon and the Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot.

The video wall at the new SEMTOC Center is operational, and two new employees have been added to the control room. Chanita Charles has been assigned to work at the City of Detroit Traffic Management Center.

The Michigan Department of Transportation had a three day exchange with the Missouri Department of Transportation to share best practices for freeway operations. Highlights included techniques for moving vehicles and leadership training.

The Freeway Courtesy Patrol will be expanded to include coverage in part of Washtenaw County.

Dynamic message signs now include distance information as well as the travel time to specific destinations, and Dayo Akinyemi is seeking feedback on the sign messages. There is typically a 5 minute delay in changing messages on the signs. The I-94 user delay initiative is proceeding to measure and record delay. Outreach and after action activities have included a table top exercise for Detroit and an after action review of the freeway closure in Farmington Hills The Southeast Michigan Fire Chiefs will be holding their November meeting at SEMTOC.

Rail Safety for Emergency Responders

Curtis Stewart from Michigan Operation Lifesaver provided an overview of the four hour rail safety training for emergency responders. He noted that in 2012 there have been 15 rail trespasser fatalities. Some of these are suicides. It is important that emergency responders know the mutual aid agreements in the area. At a 55 mph speed, it takes one mile to stop a train. To stop a train, one needs to call railroad dispatch.

Responders finding a bent rail should be aware that it is dynamically loaded. The training provided includes an overview of hazardous material issues. Autorack cars have vehicles, and could have “passengers”. Emergency responders need to be aware that locomotives may contain electrical hazards. Railroad employees know that they should leave the firefighting tasks to the fire department. The conductor is the official in charge of the train. Train documents include the train length, weight, and any hazardous materials that may be present. Railroad mileposts are measured from point to point along the railroad line. Milepost information is important when calling the railroad. There are 6900 railroad crossings in Michigan.

Washtenaw County Traffic Signal Operations

Brent Schlack from the Washtenaw County Road Commission described the traffic signal operations program in his county. A new signal system was installed approximately one year ago. The Road Commission maintains 146 traffic signals and flashers, and 56 traffic signals and flashers under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation. There are loop detectors at intersection approach lanes and at the stop bar. The county is using the KITS advanced traffic management system developed by Kimley Horn. Wireless communication to traffic signal locations is provided with the aid of three communications towers. The system uses NEMA TS2 Type 1 cabinets, and it includes 6 CCTV cameras to monitor signalized intersections. The system provides real time alerts from controllers. The Traffic Operations Center is in a Road Commission office with monitors on the wall. Tracking phones are used to record corridor travel times and average speed. NTCIP protocols are used to communicate with the different controllers in the system. Signal preemption is provided for transit vehicles, emergency vehicles, and snow plow operations. Center to center communication is provided with the City of Ann Arbor traffic signal system.

Statewide Traffic Incident Management Report

Angie Kremer from the Michigan Department of Transportation summarized statewide traffic incident management activities. To develop a strategy for hold harmless legislation in Michigan SEMCOG staff and MDOT are scheduled to meet on November 15. The research report on emergency rerouting is expected to be online soon. A manual will provide guidance on developing detour routes.

MDOT has trained over 1500 people in traffic incident management techniques. The SHRP-2 research program has developed training for trainers of traffic incident management programs. MDOT is evaluating whether this program should be brought to Michigan.

The SOCIT I-75 team has been meeting with the County Medical Examiner to develop protocols that would allow clearance within two hours in the event of a fatality. The team concept for combining communities to respond to traffic incidents is working in other parts of the state, and a team may be developing for Jackson County.

Next Meeting

The next meeting for the Southeast Michigan Regional Transportations Operations Coordinating Committee is scheduled for 9 am January 11, 2013 at the Southeast Michigan Transportation Operations Center in Detroit.

These minutes are intended to be a summary of those items discussed. Any corrections and/or comments should be noted to the writer as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

BEAUBIEN ENGINEERING.



Richard F. Beaubien, P.E., PTOE

Chair-Southeast Michigan Regional Transportation Operations Coordinating Committee

pc: All present