

**Penobscot County
Traffic Incident Management Group Agenda
December 14th, 2021 at 1030
State Police Barracks - 198 Maine Ave, Bangor and Via Zoom**

1) Welcome and Introductions

2) Meeting Minutes - September 28th, 2021 (Attachment A)

3) Area Incidents / After Incident Reviews

Meeting attendees are encouraged to discuss recent area incidents and after incident reviews.

4) Statewide TIM Updates - Strategic Plan Recommendations

5) Training Updates

BACTS Staff will provide an update on TIM training opportunities.

6) Other Business

Discussion of other items not on today's agenda.

7) Upcoming Meetings

Quarterly on 2nd Wednesday of the Month at 1030.

Tentative Dates - March 8th, June 14th, September 13th , and December 13th, 2022.

Attachment A
Penobscot County
Traffic Incident Management Group Agenda
September 28th, 2021
State Police Barracks - 198 Maine Ave, Bangor and Via Zoom

Welcome and Introductions

In Attendance:

Steve Hunnewell, Assistant State Traffic Engineer, Maine DOT
Steve Theborge, Region Manager in Region 4, Maine DOT
Joe Lacerda, Supervisor of Operations in Region 4, Maine DOT
Alan Farrington, Region Traffic Engineer in Region 4, Maine DOT
Eric Pelletier, Deputy Chief, Bangor Fire Department
Ryan Davis, Fire Chief in Holden and Eddington
Rob McGraw, Fire Chief, East Millinocket Fire
Oriana Flemming, Northern Light Medical Transport
Andrew Emery, Assistant Chief, Bangor Fire Department
Andrew Allen, Assistant Traffic Engineer, Maine DOT
Angela Helms, Northern Light Transport Medical Transport
Steve Landry, State Traffic Engineer, Maine DOT
Dianne Rice-Hansen, Transportation Project Manager, BACTS

Guest Speaker

Steve Hunnewell, Assistant State Traffic Engineer- Maine DOT
Presentation on the Maine Traffic Management Center (TMC).

Steve shared the phone number for the TMC with the group, and asked them to write it down and use it when they needed to. He wanted to also give an overview of what the TMC is and what they do.

The TMC is open and manned 24/7, 365 days a year. There are between 1 and 3 people who work in the TMC at any given time. They cover from Kittery to Fort Kent. Each of the desks has multiple monitors to allow for every possible piece of information there is to be in front of the operators who work at the TMC. This is so they can monitor what is going on out on the roads right from their desks. There is now also a wall of monitors referred to as the Management Information Screens. This wall of screens shows the same information that the operators are seeing at their desks. If upper level management comes to the TMC, they can see exactly what is going on at any given time without interrupting the operators. There is also a second room which is the

command center where upper management, government and such would meet in the event of an emergency, or extreme weather event this room also has a wall of Management Information screens.

The mission of the TMC is three fold (1-3 Operators)

1. Serving as a centralized communications hub, for the public, other Agencies and MaineDOT field personnel in order to both send and receive transportation network information.
2. Detecting all unplanned incidents and being aware of all planned incidents on our transportation network.
3. Communicating that information accurately to other public agencies and Maine DOT field personnel for incident management; and to motorists using 511 and ITS devices (like message boards) so they can make better safety and mobility decisions.

Information comes in from many different sources such as: traffic/ITS, general public, contractors, MaineDOT crews, municipalities, and the State Police. The TMC averages around 100 calls/day. During weather/storm or other events the number of calls can be much higher. Operators are responsible for knowing and keeping track of many things. The current weather conditions /RWTs, all the current construction projects and maintenance lane closures so they can be entered into the 511 database. They may have to call contractors or dispatch plow crews. They also field calls and manage traffic incidents (crashes etc.) and monitor traffic so they can alert the traveling public.

When they moved into the new TMC they wanted to use more technology to better manage traffic. This allows them to be more proactive instead of waiting for someone to call to tell them about a crash or poor road conditions. Some of the technology they are using is TMC alerts via probe data, which gives them real time information. They can monitor the speed of traffic on the roads. They have weather stations and are trying to automate the message boards so that pop up messages alert the traveling public. They are integrating the State Police dispatch into their system so if the State Police enter into CAD that there is a traffic incident it would come up on the TMC screens. The state is going to be responsible for a lot more signal maintenance so they will want to be able to monitor them to ensure they are working properly. In the last year they were able to put up cameras along I-295 which allows for streaming video with pan, tilt and zoom features. This provides a real eye for what is happening. It is important to note these cameras do not record video but if an incident is reported or speeds are slowing the operators can go to these cameras and see what is going on in real time.

The software program the TMC uses is called Compass which is map based. What started it all was the new message boards, all of which have a camera and a radar detector attached to them. They have these situated pretty much after every on ramp on the interstate system as well as some off the interstate system. This allows them to get real time information about the current average speed of the traffic. If traffic slows down this will send an alert to the operator's screen. They can then look at the cameras to see what may be causing the slow down. If traffic slows below a certain speed that area will come up in yellow to alert the operator.

They also have a way to see what message is on the message boards at any given time. This allows them to be able to remove messages that may no longer need to be there. This is also part of the compass software.

They also have other hybrid signs in southern Maine. These signs are auto filled by probe data and help to alert the traveling public of any delays due to high traffic volumes. The probe data vendor they use is TomTom. They have probe data for the entire state. Most of this information comes from cell phone data which helps monitor the traveling public's locations and the speeds they are traveling.

MaineDOT developed an app for the maintenance crews, which can be downloaded to a cell phone. They have 80+ crews out on the roads and they can report back using the app their locations and the road conditions. This saves time for the operators as in the past these crews would be calling in with their reports. The operators could get backed up taking these calls and trying to get this into the system in a timely manner. With the app the information is instantly reflected in the system and on the map. Steve showed a map of what it looks like during a winter storm. As the crews report in using the app the map will populate with their reports.

In addition to the crews reporting via the app MaineDOT also put up weather stations around the state. There are currently 6 of them set up in Bangor, Etna, Augusta, Richmond, Freeport and Scarborough. In the software that comes with the weather stations they can set up alerts which will send text messages to the crews phones to let them know to go check the road conditions in those locations. Along with these weather stations, last year MaineDOT hired road meteorologists. These meteorologists can predict based on the current dew points and other conditions if there may be some travel issues like icing.

There are now safety patrols that patrol I-295 from Freeport to Scarborough. These folks are there to help motorists who have broken down, run out of gas, someone who is lost or possibly just debris on the road. They run primarily on the weekdays but in the

summer they do go into the weekends. They are looking at potentially expanding this service into the Bangor area. Steve Landry would like to have any feedback on areas or boundaries where this service would be useful.

All of the information that Steve shared in his presentation can be seen on the New England 511.org website. Within that site you can also sign up for what is called My Trips. You put in information about your location and you can get a text alert or email if there is an incident, construction, delays, bad weather etc.

Maine DOT is in the process of using GIS to build dashboards that show information that is received at the TMC. These dashboards can be prepared upon request for any location if any entity would find the information useful.

Lastly, MaineDOT is always looking for areas where they can add additional message boards or cameras which can then be integrated into the TMC. In 2024 they plan to add some pan, tilt zoom cameras in the Bangor area. They could also provide dashboards to view the cameras to entities who may find them useful. If anyone has any thoughts on locations please share these with Steve Landry (stephen.landry@maine.gov)

Area Incidents / After Action Reviews

Ryan Davis shared the incident that happened on Route 1A in Holden at the start of Labor Day weekend. There was a rollover near the KOA campground. 1A was completely shut down for a short time but managed to get alternating traffic flowing in one lane. MaineDOT did show up to assist but at that time we did not set up any detours because they had the one lane open. Message boards were turned on to alert people of the incident so those who knew the area could seek alternate routes. The Penobscot County Sheriff's office did the reconstruction. Ryan noted that was the first time they have worked with PCSO in a potentially fatal reconstruction. They did not have a drone so they were doing it old school so it did keep one lane shut down for a couple hours, longer than it typically would have with the drone.

Steve Landry asked if the PCSO has anyone who can fly a drone or if there is another entity that could have one and get certified to use it in that area. Ryan was asked to reach out to the PCSO to see where they are on drones and training. Ryan said the fire department has thought about using them on fires and we could get someone to get the certification on his staff but wasn't sure if they may also need to be certified as a reconstructionist.

Update post meeting: Ryan reached out to Lt. Jim Ellis to enquire if the PCSO had a drone. Lt Ellis said the PCSO is very interested in getting drones and personnel certified

to use them. He said they have submitted an application for a grant through Penobscot County Emergency Management to buy two drones and fund training for personnel to get certified to use them. They have not received notice that they are approved but have been asked to submit additional information.

There were other incidents in the area that Holden has responded to and all went fairly well. He did want to give a shout out to MaineDOT's crew as they are showing up to most every incident to see if we need any help.

Ryan also wanted to share that fire departments across the state are all short staffed. At this time if there is a scene where there is extrication the fire departments cannot help with flagging and traffic. There is just not enough man power. Police a lot of the time want them to direct traffic but they just do not have the staff and they need to take care of the patients and deal with the extrication and recovery efforts. This is just something to think about as we move forward.

Steve Theborge and Joe Lacerda shared that there have been some minor incidents around the bridge projects on the interstate but as far as major incidents there has not been a lot. There has been night paving on the interstate with some lane and ramp closures but other than that nothing to report.

Statewide TIM update

Maine DOT and an advisory committee have been working with IBI Group to develop a Statewide TIM Strategic Plan. The consultant has provided us with a draft Recommendations report. We are going to be having a Statewide TIM group meeting in October. Dianne asked any of those in this group that participate in the Statewide group to please mark your calendars for October 18, 2021 at 1 PM. (Note: An email and Evites to those who are on the Statewide TIM Group list went out on September 29.

Training Updates

We have held several TIM Responder training classes in the state. Dianne is looking to set up an in person training in Southern Maine as well as a virtual class with anticipation of those classes happening in late Oct, early November. Dianne also mentioned that we will be looking at the training piece as part of the recommendations and that piece will be forthcoming. Dianne had a booth at the 5 county EMA preparedness conference and got a lot of contacts from that. The goal is to hold at least 1 training per month for anyone, and then target the smaller stations for in person training at their stations.

Other Business

Steve Theborge mentioned that there are issues with staffing moving into the winter. If the OSHA rule for public employees happens it could cause a real staffing issue. Currently they are down 5 plow truck drivers in Hancock and they received 3 applications. All other areas are okay, staffing is tight but he said they can make it work.

Interstate paving should be wrapping up in the next few weeks. There were some issues in other areas of the state with the recent rain.

Steve Landry mentioned that they are looking at potentially expanding the safety patrol into the Bangor area. Ryan mentioned that the State Police field calls all the time for broken down vehicles and that Aaron Turcotte may be able to share that information. Steve mentioned that they are looking at WAZE data as well to see where the problem areas are. Steve would like to have any feedback on areas or boundaries where this service would be useful.

Andrew Allen said they made some minor tweaks to the signal system at Route 1A and Rt 46 in Holden. These were to adjust the gaps to allow more traffic flow from Rt 46. Although the new signal was working to clear 1A it was causing clogging on both sides of Route 46. These changes were done on 9/27 so hopefully folks will be seeing positive results moving forward.

Next Meeting Dates

Keep the current date for the December meeting but change the time to 10:30 AM. We hope to have it in person with a virtual option available.

Setting Dates for 2022 - March June, September and December
Decided to look at the 2nd Tuesday of the month as a potential date.

March 8, 2022 - 10:30 AM

June 14, 2022 - 10:30 AM

September 13, 2022 10:30 AM

December 13, 2022 - 10:30 AM

Adjourn