

NYSMPO Safety Working Group – Meeting Notes
In-Person Meeting @ CDTC-MPO
November 14, 2008
10:00AM

Participants:

Chris Hardej - NYMTC	Patty Pericak – NYSDOT
Sweta Basnet - UCTC	Mike Doody - NYSDOT
Emily Dozier - PDCTC	Barbara O'Rourke - NYSDOT
Jay Schissell - ECTC	Marty Neveu - NYSDOT
Matt VanSlyke - HOCTS	Chuck Conroy – NYSDMV
Bob Torzynski - GTC	Anthony Torre - NYSDOT
Cyndi Paddick – BMTS	Emmit McDevitt – FHWA
Sarah Gebbie-Measeck - AGFTC	Christine Thorkildsen – FHWA
Chuck DeWeese – GTSC	Jim Levy, Wilbur Smith Associates
Jim Allen - GTSC	

1) **Meeting Notes**

Ok as submitted – no changes requested.

2) **SWG Overview**

The group reviewed the goals sheet distributed. For the SWG website, it would be desirable to have a joint safety website because there is no reason to duplicate efforts. Mr. DeWeese stated that the GTSC website has links to several safety-related topics (safeny.com) and traffic safety topics are also listed. The SWG should review this website and recommend any additional topics to post. This can be the central outlet for safety information since it is already available. The nysmpos.org website should link directly to safeny.com on the SWG webpage. The GTSC website is a link on the links page. Mr. Levy will put a link to safeny.com on the SWG page.

The SWG discussed the most effective method for distributing information and educating the public on safety related topics. The original idea of a safety tips brochure was discussed and it was decided this is not the best method. Instead, topic sheets will be created for posting to a website. These can be downloaded and printed as needed and updated periodically. This will prevent printing material that may become out-of-date and subsequently need to be recycled.

Mr. DeWeese will add the nysmpos.org website link to the safeny.org website. NYSHTSA and FHWA links should be added to the safety pages on the GSTC website. The SWG generally agreed that the most effective and useful method for distributing material is to work with the existing GTSC website. It is important that all members of the SWG provide information to safety-related entities to let them know where to go to get information.

Mr. McDevitt stated that a mechanism for communication/information sharing between NYSDOT, FHWA, MPOs, TSBs and others should be considered and developed.

3) GTSC Update

A committee has reviewed grant requests and developed a list of recommended projects. Mr. McDevitt asked if the list can be sent to the NYSDOT Region offices. Mr. DeWeese stated that he will work to create a list of relevant projects with each NYSDOT region for review by staff in that region. For the next SWG teleconference call, the SWG should review the safeny.org website and develop a list of ideas for new or expanded topics.

4) Younger Driver Unit of the NYSDMV Presentation

Mr. Conroy provided a presentation to the SWG. The objective of this office is to become the primary source for younger driver safety in New York State. A message must be branded and publicized in a coordinated manner. The Younger Driver Unit has a website that will be upgraded to be more user friendly. Mr. Conroy will add nysmpos.org as a link to the website. A teen driver brochure is available (this should be provided on the safeny.org website if it isn't already there). There are new driver/parent workbooks now distributed with a drivers permit. The state also has a Teen Electronic Event Notification Service to let parents know if their teen has incurred a major infraction such as a license suspension or revocation. This information is kept until a teen is 18 years old at which time the information is erased from the system. The SWG stated that there is a need to ensure that questions related to bicycles/pedestrians-related traffic laws be provided on all driver tests.

The 3rd week of October 2009 will be Teen Driver Safety Awareness Week. Mr. Hardej stated that participating in a younger driver workshop series is a SWG goal. The SWG, in coordination with NYSDMV and GTSC should investigate other similar programs and identify entities capable of delivering a workshop. This topic needs follow-up and the SWG should discuss any specific topics or ideas about this, or anything else, with Mr. Conroy. Mr. Hardej will provide Mr. Levy with a presentation for distribution to the SWG.

5) Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

Questions were asked about implementation and mechanics of the program. Ms. O'Rourke distributed a copy of the program instructions to the SWG and a question and answer session followed.

The instructions are an update of the existing Highway Safety Procedures. NYSDOT has a percentage goal by region for investigations. The instructions permit regions to capture low-cost safety improvements and get a credit. It was asked what a low-cost improvement is and the answer was that this has not been determined yet. Regions will track each item cost. Individual elements may be low cost even though an entire project may add-up to a high cost. A safety improvement has to be based on data and a safety investigation. SWG members stated some concern that locals are either not aware of the ability to use these funds or how to implement a project. Mr. McDevitt stated that MPOs may need to provide locals with a list of high-crash locations, request them to look at the information and at the same time provide information on the available of funding through HSIP.

Potential issues discussed – the 10% match, dollar cap and lack of data to support a request, as well as general confusion over funding and the program as a whole.

6) Presentation of Safety Planning in Europe

Sandy presented slides and a brief description of safety-related aspects of her trip to Europe.

7) **Presentation by Marjorie Geiger – EMS/MPO Collaboration**

Ms. Geiger presented slides and an overview of the work done by NYS to coordinate EMS. Ms. Geiger recommended that the regional stakeholders (18 Regional EMS councils, Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committees) are the best source to talk with about MPO/EMS coordination/discussions. In approximately one year, the Albany School of Public Health will have bio-statistics calculated for 2006. On the Department of Health website, there is data available (SPARCS) that details trauma-related calls. There is a potential opportunity for coordination on the initial rollout of the 511 system that should include the EMS stakeholders. The SWG will find information on the 511 system and send it to Marjorie. The SWG should begin to develop a list of potential topic areas that could be discussed between the MPOs and the Regional councils.

8) **Review of SWG Goal Areas**

I. **Safety Assessment**

The NYSDOT is generally ok with the document but is waiting for additional review/comments from Rick Wilder (NYSDOT Design section). The final piece is a brochure to be created by the consultants which states the who, what, when, why of the SWG and SA. Mr. Schissell is working to develop a term agreement setup in the ECTC work program. ECTC and ITCTC have already identified safety assessments that need to be undertaken. Mr. Schissell will talk with Ms. Neveu about the term agreement and potential funding methods. Each MPO needs to decide if they are likely to undertake an SA and as such, would need to identify those in the 2009-2010 UPWP. Mr. Schissell will work to create an SA sub-committee. There may be an opportunity to utilize GTSC funds for conducting safety assessments. This is an option that needs further investigation.

II. **ALIS**

Mr. Torre distributed NYSDOT Base Traffic Count Program statistics. As of 2009, the entire federal-aid highway system will need to be counted, including ramps. This will require approximately 6,000 additional count stations. All counts will be done by contractors over the next 3 years. An RFP will go out to bid over in the next few weeks. The NYSDOT will be doing approximately 2,000 counts per year and data will be saved in GIS format. This will total approximately 11,000 miles of locally-owned federal-aid roadways and ramps that will be part of the count system in NYS.

The NYSDOT Regions and all the MPO Directors should have received, or will shortly, letters from NYSDOT Main Office regarding this program.

The pavement data report will be out soon for the year 2007. A report for 2008 will follow in a few months. Kevin Hunt will be distributing GIS information soon. At this point, the MPOs need to coordinate with the Regions (if doing counts) on count & data collection. The NYSDOT hopes to have all of this information available publically on the NYSDOT website in early 2009.

Only a few of the MPOs have sent back the questionnaires sent out by Don Baker. The remaining MPOs are encouraged to return the surveys as quickly as possible so that NYSDOT has the most accurate and up-to-date information.

III. TraCS

Grant requests were sent to GTSC and approvals have been forwarded to the Commissioner. There are TraCS coordinators in each NYS Police Troop. Mr. Daily will get this information to Mr. Levy for distribution to the SWG. Mr. Hardej will follow-up with Suffolk County regarding TraCS. Participation in Rochester and Buffalo is moving forward.

9) Next Meeting(s)

Need to determine schedule for 2009 meetings.