

NYSMPO Safety Working Group – Meeting Notes
Teleconference – October 29, 2009
1:30 PM

Participants:

Matt VanSlyke, HOCTS
Sandy Misiewicz, CDTC
Mike Perry, ECTC
Hector Boggio, GBNRTC
Todd Cohen, OCTC
Marty Neveu, NYSDOT

Sarah Gebbie-Measeck, AGFTC
Jackie Berlant, NYSDOT
Barbara O'Rourke, NYSDOT
Chuck DeWeese, GTSC
Hao Cui, Wilbur Smith Associates

1. Introductions

2. Meeting Notes

Ms. Gebbie-Measeck asked if the RSA training is still taking place on November 17 and 18th as stated on the previous meeting notes. Ms. Misiewicz stated this was a typo – the notes should have stated that this is a pedestrian action plan training, not RSA training. Mr. Levy should revise the notes accordingly.

Pedestrian Action Plan training sessions were originally for invites only but are now open to anyone due to low attendance. Dates are November 17th and 18th in Schenectady and 18th and 19th in Rochester. Ms. Neveu will confirm that space is available. The intent of the training is to increase involvement of the public health community and local government officials. Mr. Torzynski has additional details – please contact him for additional information.

Additional Correction to the September meeting notes: Ms. Neveu stated that the MPO Peer Exchange - High Risk Rural Roads location notes should be revised - HOCTS will be using approximately \$500,000 of the \$2M available to make improvements at six (6), not (3) (as shown in the previous notes) locations. Mr. Levy should revise the notes accordingly.

3. SWG Goal Area Updates

a) Safety Roundtable

Ms. Misiewicz stated that the Governors Traffic Safety Committee, the Association of Traffic Safety Boards, and Stop DWI held their annual Highway Safety Conference on October 19th and 20th in Saratoga. The SWG held a safety roundtable session on the 20th. Only an hour was provided for the session so it was only a presentation, not a roundtable discussion. The session was well attended with approximately 15 - 20 people. Ms. Misiewicz presented an overview of the MPO Safety Working Group and what each MPO can offer in regards to safety. She also discussed the safety assessment process and brochures were distributed.

It was disappointing that a roundtable didn't work out and the feedback Ms. Misiewicz received was that the roundtable is something that needs to be committed to every year. For the MPO conference in Syracuse in 2010, we need to make sure a roundtable discussion is scheduled.

A few people from the Traffic Safety Boards, and police officers in attendance, spoke about the ALIS software. Lois Chaplin, Cornell Local Roads Program, spoke about their programs with respect to safety work.

b) ALIS

It was discovered that MPOs are not recognized entities in the data structure for the Office of Technology and thus, we didn't receive user names. It was also discovered that towns in NY State are also not recognized in that data structure. If you know of any towns having difficulty or questions with the system, please have them contact Don Terry at NYSDOT.

c) QRA Module

There are two main issues the Department is currently working to correct: 1) the limitation of concurrent users which is now limited to 4, and 2) problems with multiple server issues. Mr. Terry is hoping that the MPOs will have access to the system by the end of the year.

d) MPO Peer Exchange

Ms. Misiewicz discussed a conversation she had recently with Mr. Schissell regarding the best use(s) of MPO resources. The result of the conversation was a suggestion that all the MPOs, or as many as possible, include a task related to safety in their unified planning work program, essentially stating that the MPO will "work in conjunction with the Safety Working Group and state, federal and local partners, to develop and implement a comprehensive safety planning process." Additional context and background information such as referencing the safety assessment process, and individual safety planning work underway/planned in each office should also be part of the task statement. The group should discuss internally and with their staff the value of developing a unified planning task for next year and possibly additional years. The goal is to develop a comprehensive safety planning task at each MPO.

ECTC can be used as a pilot program or case study as we work together to figure out what is the best use of our resources, the data we now have access to, working with our safety partners, etc. The overall question to be answered is: "What should we be focusing on and is this work of value to the Association and individual MPOs?"

Mr. Van Slyke discussed the concept in relation to the existing work of the Human Behavior Subcommittee. He is trying to develop more structure and thinks this may be a good method to achieve it. This would likely be more applicable for the smaller MPOs such as Elmira and Glens Falls and would not necessarily include NYMTC or larger MPOs. The smaller MPOs have staff resource issues and this effort could help greatly.

Mr. Boggio suggested canvassing individual member agencies and surveying them to determine what they could use assistance with to support their individual goals. The more detail we have, the better this process will work. It was suggested that the SWG consider developing a consistent survey for completion by all MPOs – this will provide the ability to assess consistent patterns and needs. This would likely require channeling information/questions through the counties and the county sheriff - a bottoms-up type approach. Ultimately these are the people we are trying to help with data or analysis and that will be implementing much of what is recommended.

Ms. O'Rourke stated that each region has their own way of dealing with these issues and each region is completely different. Region 1 is very organized and has a more documented safety process. Mr. Van Slyke added that Region 2 provided HOCTS with an excerpt from their annual program update. It was recommended that the first step may be to review the safety section in annual report.

The program update report listing the goals and objectives was sent to the MPO Directors. It is accessible on the NYSDOT web site homepage. Ms. Misiewicz will share this information with the group on the next call. This concept should be pursued further and will be reviewed on the next call. Ms. Misiewicz will follow up with Mr. Schissell and come up with some initial ideas.

e) MPO Peer Exchange

Ms. Dozier was not available for the call but she and Ms. Misiewicz have information regarding the Peer Exchange and will share it during the October call.

f) Human Behaviors Subcommittee

Mr. VanSlyke discussed the upcoming December Traffic Safety Board Meeting in Colonie.. Karen Liddle has invited the SWG to speak to their group on December 3rd and to attend their executive committee on the evening of the December 2nd. Mr. VanSlyke agreed to attend pending travel cost approval. He asked if the group thought it was worthwhile to present the MPO 101 Powerpoint presentation or should the group develop a more detailed presentation? Ms. O'Rourke stated that focus should be on how the SWG relates to their needs, the partnership possibilities, and what the MPOs are working on that could be a benefit to the TSB's. Mr. Van Slyke will develop a PPT presentation and review it with the SWG prior to the TSB meeting.

g) ALIS & Data

Mr. Boggio briefly discussed the GBNRTC safety analysis tool. He explained that the first half of the documentation gives details regarding the project - the AMPO/FTA innovative grant project. The 2nd half is documentation for the application - a main product that was developed through the project.

Prior to initiating this project, GBNRTC was able to perform, on a regional level, roadway intersection screenings for the local system - with help and some guidance from the department in acquiring the necessary crash data. Once GBNRTC had the pieces in place to do a regional level screening of all the local highway segments and segment intersections in the region, it was discovered that repeating the process periodically became more cumbersome - as time goes by you have to integrate data sets and get updates from multiple databases.

GBNRTC applied for the AMPO/FTA grant with the objectives of: 1) automating the analysis of the raw crash data to produce safety screening results for many locations simultaneously at the regional level, and 2) generating outputs from this application to use for detailed studies to do street level analysis, identify problems, confirm the overall screening results, and develop counter measures.

GBNRTC wanted to access and manipulate the data required to compute the rates, compare those rates to the statewide rates, and added in a new indicator for severity of problems. Analysis results will be archived to an MS Access database and used for tracking location screening results. The results will be exportable and used to get a general picture of the local federal-aid system safety performance for the region using GIS software. The individual location crash event data will be used to import to a separate safety analysis program which can use the files to produce collision diagrams. A method for updating results data after

importing new data has been developed. Mr. Boggio can forward additional information to anyone that would like a copy.

We have yet to find out if the ALIS data could be imported to the application and will be looking into that process. Ms. Misiewicz said that this could be added to the safety planning task with detail for all to consider.

Ms. O'Rourke will look into the automation process project before the next call and let Ms. Misiewicz know status of the process.

h) Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Ms. O'Rourke said the draft is being completed – it is just a matter of finalizing the numbers. The draft should be available at the end of next week. Injury number issues are being addressed but the data may have to be provided at a later date. Road Safety Audit guidelines were sent to NYSDOT safety evaluation engineers and have produced good feedback. The guidelines are available on the NYSMPO website.

i) Training

Mr. Levy sent out an email regarding planning for the Low Cost Safety Improvements workshop. If you haven't replied regarding how many people at your individual MPOs may be interested in attending the course, please let him know immediately so we can get a good head count to facilitate the planning of this workshop.

For any Safety Action Plan Training Course questions, please call Jason Purvis at CDTC.

4. GTSC Update

Mr. DeWeese spoke about the Highway Safety Symposium. They have not had a debriefing meeting yet but he noticed that there was too much time between sessions and it was not clear why. Positive feedback was received even though things were scaled down a bit. Next year will be on Grand Island in Buffalo. Please let Mr. DeWeese know if you have ideas for next year.

Grants being worked on – GTSC has approximately 400 completed and approximately 400 more to be addressed. He is hoping to hear about an additional continuing resolution regarding funding soon. Currently, GTSC is being advised to fund at 1/12th of what was provided last year. This makes it very hard to approve 800+ grants.

The next step for the Highway Safety Plan is to get final revisions made and get a final report published by December.

Ms. Misiewicz stated that she attended many sessions and the variety of topics at the Symposium that were very helpful and educational. There are a number of resources available that she will forward to the group under a separate email. The "older driver safety" website is live and is an extremely useful resource tool.

5. Other

NYSP – The email issue regarding TraCS reporting has been resolved and the group should be receiving monthly updates from Ms. Misiewicz.

The next call will be rescheduled for a week earlier than usual due to Thanksgiving holiday.