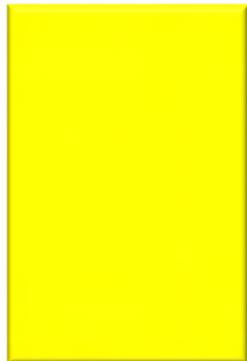


HAMPTON ROADS

HIGHWAY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (HIM)

REGIONAL CONCEPT FOR TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS (RCTO)



June 2008

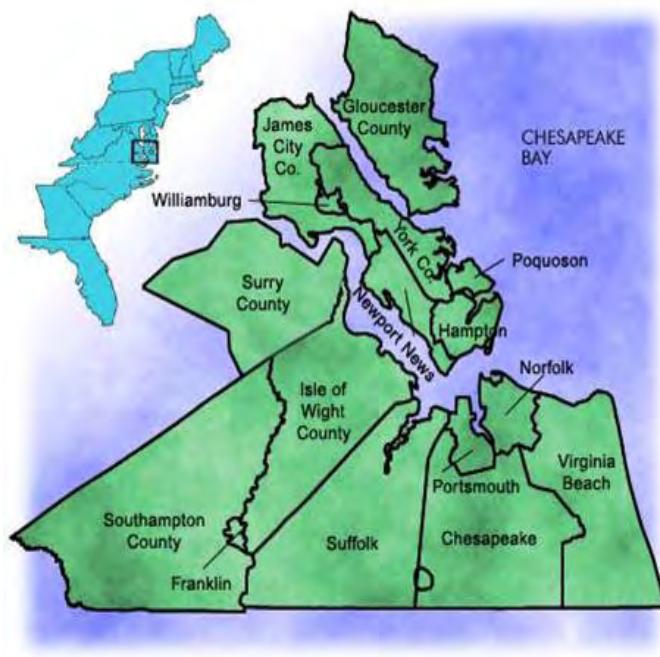
Hampton Roads Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO)
Hampton Roads, VA



PURPOSE

The purpose of the Hampton Roads RCTO for Highway Incident Management is to provide the appropriate guidance for all vested stakeholders in working towards a collaborative solution for the region's highway incident management challenges.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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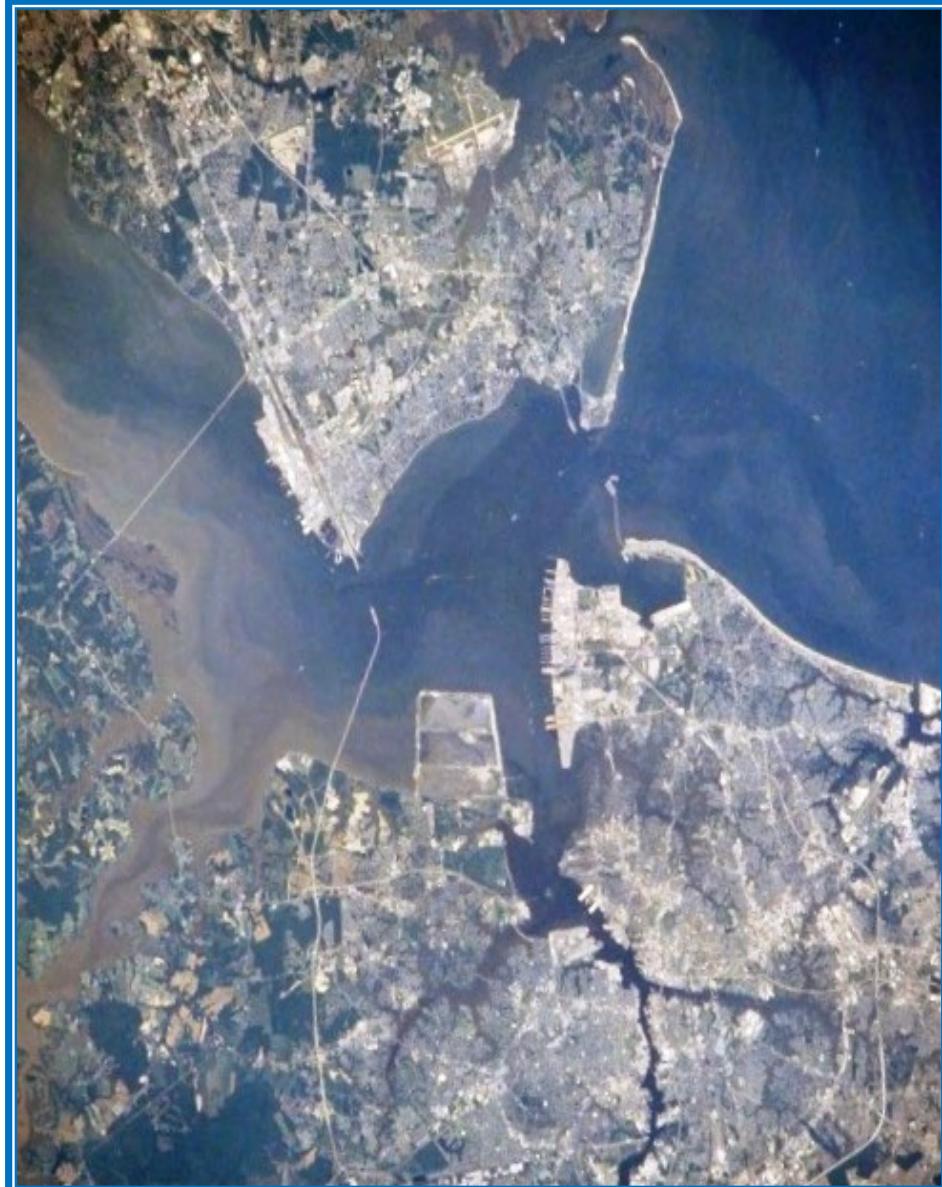
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SECTION 1. REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Hampton Roads is a vibrant, fast-growing region that offers its citizens and visitors a host of economic and recreational advantages. Because it is such an excellent natural harbor, Hampton Roads is home to large port facilities such as the Newport News Marine Terminal and the Norfolk International Terminals. The location and physical features which make the region attractive as an access point for foreign trade also make it an attractive region for the military. The region's military presence is anchored by the Norfolk Naval Base, the largest in the world, which totals more than 89,000 military and civilian employees. Miles of beaches and access to the Chesapeake Bay also make Hampton Roads a primary East Coast tourist destination. All of these factors combine to create the demand for an efficient, well maintained highway infrastructure.

The same factors that provide the region with so many economic and recreational advantages also create a set of geographic challenges in terms of creating that highway infrastructure. Hampton Roads is the name for the nearby water area, which is one of the world's biggest natural harbors. It is separated by two distinct landmasses, the Peninsula and the Southside. This harbor is formed from the mouths of the Elizabeth, James, and Nansemond Rivers emptying into the Chesapeake Bay. One bridge (the James River Bridge) and two bridge-tunnels (the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel and the Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge Tunnel) link the Southside to the Peninsula. Both landmasses are crisscrossed by many small waterways which had to be taken into account when the highway network was built.

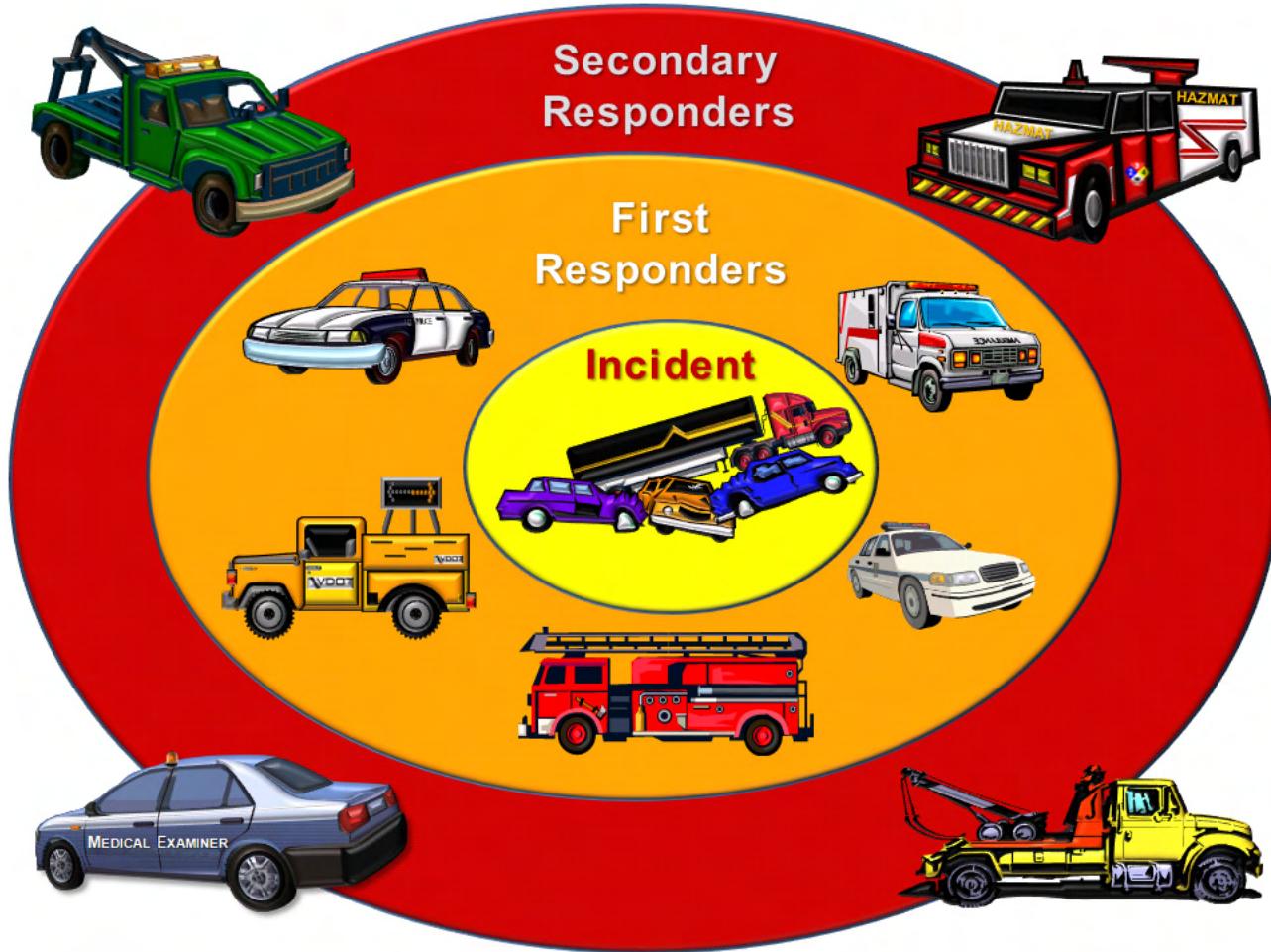


"A system of advanced technologies, known as the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), is being used to develop strategies to help reduce traffic congestion and increase safety on our roadways." - HRMPO

SECTION 2. OVERVIEW

Within the Hampton Roads Highway Incident Management (HIM) community, multiple agencies have a hand in ensuring that traffic is flowing efficiently on the region's highway network. These include first responders such as the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)*, the Virginia State Police (VSP), traffic engineers, and local law enforcement agencies as well as multiple fire and rescue agencies. Secondary responders such as local medical examiners and towing agencies also play important roles in terms of HIM.

The agencies and jurisdictions which comprise the Hampton Roads HIM community have a rich history of cooperation and coordination which has been dictated by the collaborative framework of integrated HIM. This is evidenced by the work of the Hampton Roads Highway Incident Management Committee (HRHIM)*, a group which consists of a cross section of the responding agencies within the region. HRHIM was instrumental in producing the Multi-Jurisdictional Memorandum of Understanding for Highway Incident Management in December of 1999. This nationally recognized document provided a uniform guide for safe operations at incidents occurring on the region's highway system.



*http://www.virginiadot.org/about/emergency_response.asp

*<http://www.virginiadot.org/news/resources/CTBER051408.pdf>

*http://cts.virginia.edu/incident_mngt_training.htm



"Traffic incidents account for about one-quarter of all congestion on U.S. roadways. For every minute that a freeway travel lane is blocked during a peak travel period, four minutes of travel delay results after the incident is cleared."

- FHWA Administrator J. Richard Capka

SECTION 3. CHALLENGES

Even the best managed metropolitan highway systems in the nation are feeling the squeeze from mounting congestion. In 2003 alone, congestion in the country's 85 most populated urban areas caused a staggering 3.7 billion hours of travel delay in addition to 2.3 billion gallons of wasted fuel. A broad range of quality of life issues are being impacted by congestion, ranging from lost family time to poor air quality to more money wasted in the face of rising fuel costs.



Simply adding more capacity to urban highway systems is not a viable option in many places. From a logistical standpoint, additional road capacity is often difficult to construct, especially in Hampton Roads. For example, the complex task of adding extra lanes to the bridge-tunnel systems in the region will not happen in the near future, and projects of this complexity will take years to complete. The issue of logistics aside, perhaps the biggest hurdle to increasing capacity through projects such as expanding the bridge-tunnel systems is the cost involved. Taking the increased costs of materials into account, the price tag for adding lanes in urban areas averages \$10 million per lane mile and will only increase in coming years.

Even if every needed project in the region were to become reality, adding lanes only works if capacity stays ahead of population growth. Officially, the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC metropolitan statistical area has a population of about 1.7 million, making it the 33rd-largest metropolitan area in the United States. In less than a decade, Hampton Roads has absorbed the equivalent of the city of Martinsville, VA (population of 70,122 by 2007 estimates). Eventually, the region's steady growth would outstrip any increase in highway capacity.

While recurring congestion is a big enough issue on its own, congestion resulting from highway incidents only serves to exacerbate the problem. An incident during rush hour on one of the region's Interstates can generate traffic queues stretching for miles, generating a negative impact on both the region's economy and quality of life. Even an efficient HIM community such as the one at work in Hampton Roads can only do so much in the face of more and more vehicles being added to the region's highways with each passing year.



"Delays, misinformation, and lack of resources and coordination during any phase of incident response can delay clearance."

- Anthony R. Kane, Director of Engineering and Technical Services for the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO)

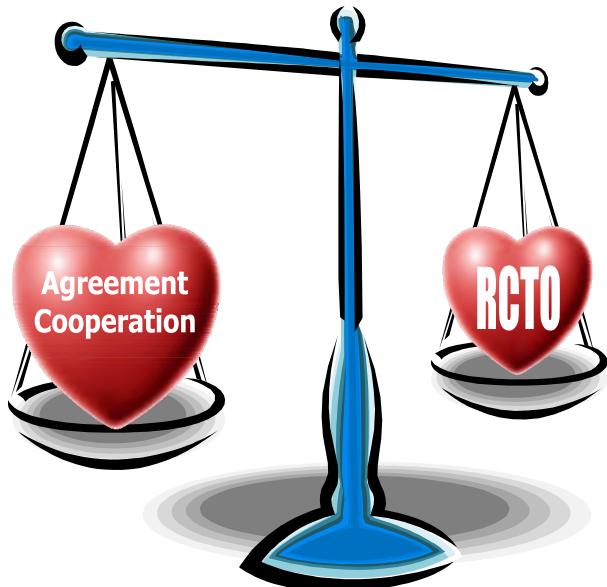
SECTION 4. REGIONAL CONCEPT FOR TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS (RCTO)

The need exists in the region for a solution which will provide the tools to pursue objectives which will not only enhance HIM, but do so in a timeframe where results can be achieved sooner as opposed to later. Most importantly, this solution will be tailored to the region's unique needs while crafting an approach that is truly regional in scope. Such a solution is the Regional Concept for Transportation Operations (RCTO).

An RCTO, as defined by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is a management tool that assists in planning and implementing management and operations strategies in a collaborative and sustained manner. In formulating the framework for the RCTO, the FHWA developed a three to five year timeframe to implement the operations strategies that will emerge as a result of the process. This offers a middle ground between the immediate needs of operators with current responsibilities and planners who are looking into the future.

The scope of the RCTO can address a very specific service or a collection of related services. But regardless of a given RCTO's intended purpose, at its core, the initiative exists to promote collaboration. In the case of the HIM community of the region, the RCTO can enhance the existing spirit of collaboration in the face of new challenges. When agencies come together under the auspices of an RCTO in order to devise a common approach to an existing transportation problem, that same spirit of collaboration can be applied to other issues as well.

In summary, an RCTO contains six key elements as follows:



- Motivation
- Operations Objective
- Approach
- Relationships and Procedures
- Physical Improvements
- Resource Arrangements

The motivation for the Hampton Roads RCTO is to reduce the number of injuries incurred by responders, while decreasing the clearance times associated with these incidents, and to improve the operational coordination among those same responders. This RCTO seeks to push the region's planners, operators, and responders to meet on common ground and build upon the existing spirit of cooperation to not only enhance HIM, but also any subsequent initiatives that this same group of stakeholders might undertake. Agreement and cooperation is at the heart of the Hampton Roads RCTO.



"Improving safety may improve congestion. Forty to fifty percent of all non-recurring congestion is associated with traffic incidents."

- AAA

SECTION 5. HAMPTON ROADS RCTO SYNOPSIS

This document serves as an executive summary for the *Hampton Roads RCTO Resource Guide**. Within the Resource Guide, all the concepts presented in this document are fleshed out in greater detail. The heart of the Resource Guide includes:

- **Objective 1** - Increase Responder Safety by Eliminating Struck-By Incidents and Fatalities
- **Objective 2** - Decrease Incident Clearance Time
- **Objective 3** - Decrease Secondary Incident Occurrences
- **Objective 4** - Improve Inter-Agency Communication During Incidents
- **Objective 5** - Identify Existing Regional Incident Management Resources and Establish Plan for Inter-Agency
- **Objective 6** - Establish a Regional Incident Management Pro-Active and Post-Incident Review Consortium

Each objective within the Hampton Roads RCTO has an associated target. For example, the target defined for Objective 1 is to Increase Responder Safety by Eliminating Struck-By Incidents and Fatalities. Defining a target for each objective is necessary for the formulation of action items which dictate exactly how each objective will be achieved. Simply putting out a list of objectives would serve the somewhat limited purpose of defining the "What?" The RCTO concept goes the extra step of tying specific action items to those objectives, resulting in identifying the "How?"

The collection of meaningful and reliable data is very important to the success of the RCTO process. Through the analysis of reliable data, performance measures can be tied to the first three objectives for the purpose of allowing stakeholders to see what type of progress is being made. While the remaining objectives are not as easily quantified by statistical means, the RCTO Working Group has nonetheless identified methods of tracking their performance.



The following sections will cover each objective, presenting them with their associated targets, action items and, performance measures. The concluding sections will identify the tools and resource arrangements which can be utilized to help the RCTO achieves its objectives, as well as identifying which aspects of the initiative will require special attention in terms of ongoing maintenance.

* The Hampton Roads RCTO Resource Guide can be located at the HRMPO office mentioned on the cover page of this document.

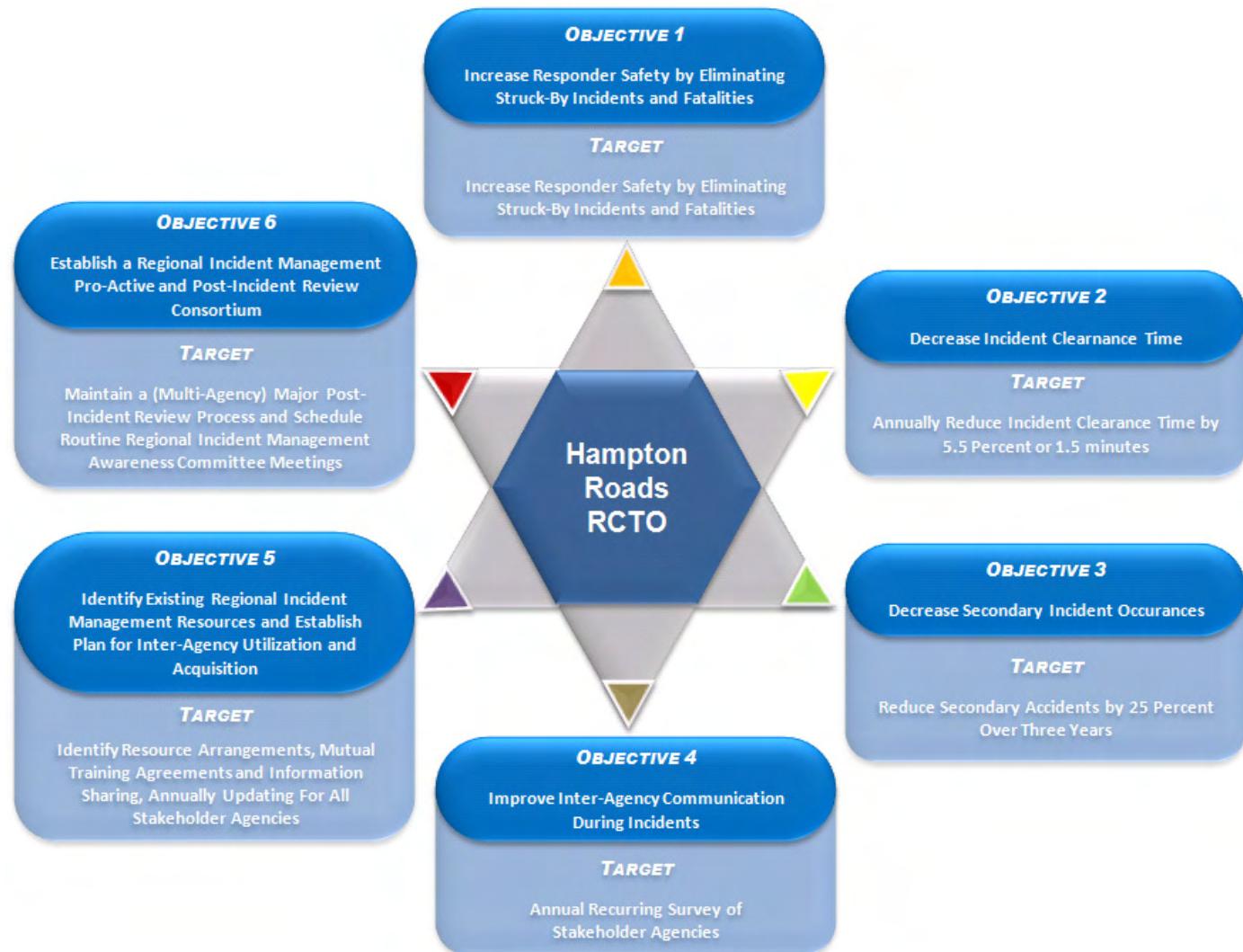


SECTION 6. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The mission statement for Hampton Roads RCTO states the following:

Hampton Roads responders will operate under a clear set of understood and agreed upon incident management practices allowing for enhanced response cooperation and decreased incident impact.

To accomplish this, Hampton Roads RCTO has established six objectives and targets to fulfill the RCTO mission.



“Mission Statement: To provide protection and safety to the community in order to prevent emergencies when possible, and to respond quickly, minimize pain, suffering, and loss when emergencies do occur.”

- York County Department of Fire and Life Safety



OBJECTIVE 1

Increase Responder Safety by Eliminating Struck-By Incidents and Fatalities

Ensuring the safety of responders is a great concern in regard to HIR. If highway incident scenes are not secure, then the ability of responders to work in a safe environment is severely compromised. This results in not only higher numbers of responder injuries, but undermines any attempt to reduce the time it takes to clear highway incidents.

TARGET

Increase Responder Safety by Eliminating Struck-By Incidents and Fatalities

The target represents what the RCTO Working Group considers to be the only logical number in reference to responder safety. No injury or fatality incurred during the incident management process should ever be considered acceptable.

Action Item

Start a Regional Public Awareness Campaign Concerning the "Slow Down, Move Over" Law and the "Move It" Law

Virginia's "Slow Down, Move Over" law requires motorists to approach cautiously when an emergency vehicle is stopped on two or four lane roadways with emergency lights flashing. Motorists are required to change lanes away from the emergency vehicle if they can do so safely (<http://www.vsp.state.va.us/>). Motorists who are unable to change lanes due to heavy traffic must slow down. In regards to public awareness of the law, The RCTO Working Group will explore methods of getting the message out on a consistent basis to the widest possible regional audience. Only then can optimal levels of awareness be achieved and maintained. Please view http://www.its.dot.gov/its_publicsafety/index.htm.

There is also Virginia's "Move It" law, which mandates that if vehicles involved in an incident can be safely moved to the shoulder or other safe area and no one has been injured, then the motorists involved should do so in order to ensure not only their safety, but that of others who are approaching the scene. The RCTO Working Group can utilize the same avenues it identifies to increase awareness of the "Slow Down, Move Over" to also increase awareness of the "Move It" law.

Action Item

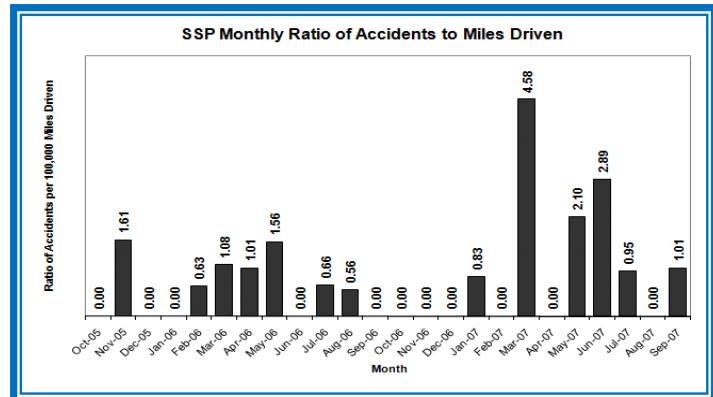
Encourage Optimal Lighting and Traffic Control Equipment for Secondary Responder Vehicles

The use of emergency-vehicle lighting is essential to all incident responders. However, secondary responders such as the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are not required to adhere to the same vehicle lighting standards that first responders

are required to adhere to. This is due to the fact that there is no agency or association in place to dictate lighting standards for secondary responders. The RCTO Working Group will explore ways of getting vehicle lighting for secondary response vehicles more in line with that of primary response vehicles.

Performance Measures

The two performance measurement categories which are tied to this objective are "Ratio of Crashes per 100,000 Miles Driven for Virginia State Police (VSP) and Safety Service Patrol (SSP)" and "Incidents Involving Vehicle Fires." In terms of the first category, a reduction in the crashes involving these entities should provide insight into whether progress is being made toward meeting the stated target. The second category will be useful to the RCTO because it will identify incidents that most greatly compromise the safety of responders.



FACT
 "71 percent of Americans have not heard of 'Move Over' laws, 86 percent support enacting 'Move Over' laws in all 50 states, and 90 percent believe traffic stops and roadside emergencies are dangerous for law enforcement and first responders."
 - Mason Dixon Polling and Research, sponsored by the National Safety Commission



OBJECTIVE 2

Decrease Incident Clearance Time

The more quickly incidents are cleared from highways, the more quickly that traffic flow can return to normal patterns. This results in savings in fuel consumption as well as lost time, both of which are key concerns for citizens of the region. Balancing the need for rapid clearance of incidents with the need to always be cognizant of responder safety will be one of the RCTO's key initiatives.

TARGET

Annually Reduce Incident Clearance Time by 5.5 Percent or 1.5 Minutes

This target represents what the RCTO Working Group considers to be a reasonable number which can be achieved in the lifespan of the RCTO process. There is no reason the number cannot continue to decrease beyond the lifespan of the RCTO if the processes and procedures laid out by the RCTO are continued.

Performance Measures

The two performance measurement categories which are tied to this objective are "Incident Duration" and "Average Number of Incidents Lasting Longer than 30, 60, and 90 Minutes." For the purpose of the RCTO, incident duration will be defined from when the incident responders are notified until the scene is cleared. The tracking of incidents lasting longer than 30 minutes will be useful to the RCTO because that information will help identify which incidents might require post-incident analysis as well as detect trends regarding when and where long duration highway incidents are occurring.

Action Item

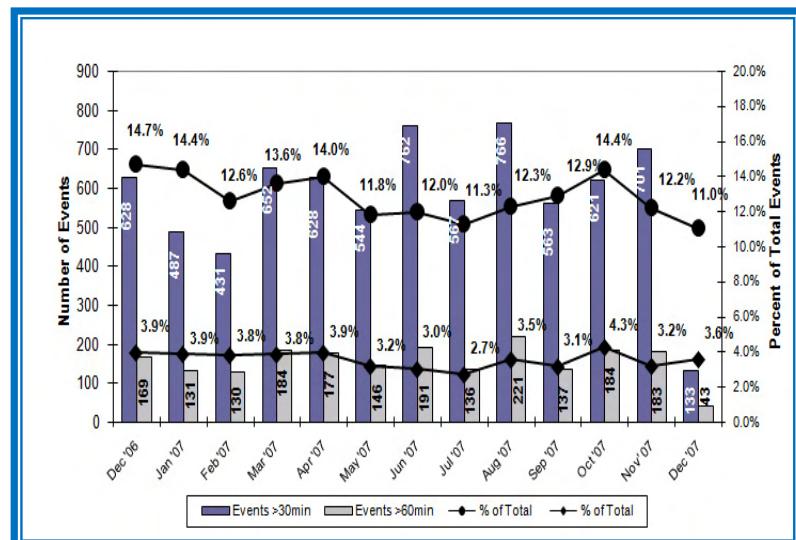
Implement the Use of Intermediate Reference Location Signs

Pinpointing the location of an accident on a roadway can sometimes be problematic. It is not uncommon in this country to have long stretches of freeway which contain no easy points of reference. Therefore, tools are needed to allow motorists and emergency responders to effectively communicate their location to dispatchers. To aid with incident location and management, many states have installed reference signs at either 1/10th mile or 2/10th mile intervals along roadways. These types of mile markers are referred to as Reference Location Signs (RLSs). The RCTO will work not only to have these signs introduced in the region, but to also undertake a public awareness campaign to promote the benefits of this tool to the motoring public.

Action Item

Pursue the Use of Incentive Based Towing Contracts or Other Innovative Towing Initiatives

Incentive based towing contracts provide financial benefits for towing companies to respond to calls for their services in the fastest possible amount of time. Under such a contract, the faster a towing company responds to an incident scene and performs its duties, the greater its financial reward will be. Conversely, financial disincentives are put in place to penalize a towing company which fails to perform its duties in the agreed upon timeframe. While some innovative towing programs follow the incentive model, the RCTO could also explore other innovative towing concepts such as the SafeCLEAR program in Houston, TX.



FACT

"TIM partners in Virginia worked together to pass State legislation requiring certification of towers."
- National Traffic Incident Management Coalition (NTIMC)





OBJECTIVE 3

Decrease Secondary Incident Occurrences

The definition of a secondary incident is a visually confirmed incident within a queue that is formed by an earlier incident, or an incident that occurs while traveling in the opposite direction of an incident derived queue. Traffic queues resulting from the most severe highway incidents dramatically increase the possibility of secondary incidents occurring. The RCTO will seek to identify a means of decreasing this type of incident, not only through faster clearance of primary incidents, but through the rapid dissemination of information regarding those incidents.

TARGET

Reduce Secondary Accidents by 25 Percent Over Three Years

This target represents what the RCTO Working Group considers to be a reasonable number that can be achieved in the lifespan of the RCTO process. There is no reason the number cannot continue to decrease beyond the lifespan of the RCTO if the processes and procedures laid out by the RCTO are continued.

verification capabilities of the TMC, thus providing a boost for the entire incident management process. Also, this would result in the TMC having a greater role in terms of ensuring the accuracy of reporting currently being done by the region's traffic reporting community.

Performance Measures

The reduction of secondary incidents is a key objective for the Hampton Roads RCTO. Studies have shown that for each additional minute of primary incident clearance time, the likelihood of a secondary crash occurrence increases by 2.8 percent. Obviously, a reduction in the number of primary incidents would serve as a means of preventing secondary incidents. The process of collecting and analyzing the data related to secondary incidents is still being refined, but will be in place once the first set of performance measures are distributed.



Action Item

Provide VPA and Other Regional Entities Information Regarding Major Incidents in Hampton Roads

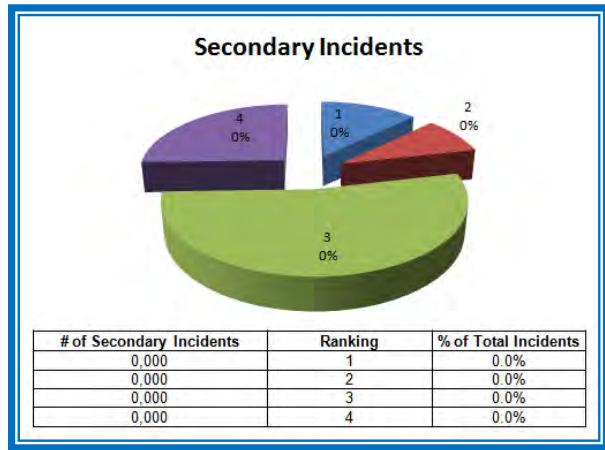
Information dissemination is a key factor in effective HIM. The Regional Transportation Incident Management Information System (RTIMIS) is a system designed to facilitate information dissemination by incorporating the data from several agencies into a single, easy to read resource which can be utilized by everyone connected to it. Most importantly, RTIMIS does not mandate that participating agencies abandon their established tools and procedures related to information exchange. Therefore, agencies such as the Virginia Port Authority (VPA) could utilize the solution as a means of having a real-time picture of highway conditions in the region, and subsequently adjust their operations in response to the most severe incidents.

Action Item

Enhance the Dissemination of Incident-Specific Information to the Motoring Public

One of the primary means of disseminating information regarding freeway incidents, especially to those already traveling on the region's freeways, is through traffic reports broadcast on local radio stations. The information gathering networks utilized by traffic reporting entities are quite sophisticated and conceptually similar to ATMS software currently being utilized in transportation management centers (TMCs) around the country. Therefore, strengthening the communication ties between the Hampton Roads

TMC and the traffic reporting community would enhance incident detection and



FACT

“National studies indicate that secondary crashes account for over 20 percent of all crashes. The USDOT estimates that 18 percent of the fatalities occurring on interstates are due to secondary crashes.”
 - South Carolina Department of Transportation



OBJECTIVE 4

Improve Inter-Agency Communication During Incidents

With so many agencies and jurisdictions being part of the HIM community of Hampton Roads, effective communication between those entities is very important. This is not limited to communication at the incident scene, but to the formation of things such as post-incident reviews and regularly scheduled RCTO meetings that are well attended by stakeholders.

TARGET

Annual Recurring Survey of Stakeholder Agencies

The annual communications survey of HIM stakeholders will seek to generate input on a host of topics regarding the subject. Stakeholders will be questioned as to what improvements in communication have been most beneficial, where communication deficiencies remain, and what improvements they would like to see in the coming year.

Performance Measures

There is no way to quantify the improvement of communication through statistical means, therefore, an annual survey of responder agencies will be utilized to see what progress is being achieved in regard to this objective. This survey will help to identify what steps might be needed to improve communication from year to year. This might involve the implementation of new technology that had not previously been utilized in Hampton Roads.

Action Item

Improve External and Internal Communication Related to HIM

Due to the use of different communication systems and/or frequencies, first responders are not always able to communicate effectively with one another. Having all agencies utilize the same frequency on the same network would be in and of itself problematic, but other possible solutions such as utilizing the Hampton Roads Traffic Management Center (HRTMC) as a contact point for multiple agencies could be a solution to be explored. In terms of internal communications, regularly scheduled meetings of the RCTO Working Group could serve as forums for each participating agency to relate their own internal communications problems and receive feedback from other agencies on possible improvements.

Action Item

Explore the Possibility of Multiple Agencies Being Co-Located at the HRTMC

Face-to-face communication is an effective means of sharing incident notification and status information and also for coordinating response. To take advantage of this more personal mode of communication, several facilities across the nation blend transportation and public safety operations under one roof. Having multiple agencies operating at a facility such as the HRTMC increases the potential for more readily pooling resources and information, thereby benefitting multiple HIM stakeholders. This pooling of resources could be applied to endeavors such as training or the purchase of equipment that could be shared among agencies.



FACT

"In Northern Virginia, 81 percent of travelers are trapped in congestion during their drive to work, wasting more than a two week vacation each year. In Hampton Roads, congestion costs taxpayers \$467 million each year in lost time and fuel costs."

- 2007 Annual Urban Mobility Report

OBJECTIVE 5

Identify Existing Regional Incident Management Resources and Establish Plan for Inter-Agency Utilization and Acquisition

The RCTO seeks to increase utilization of existing resources by multiple agencies. This will provide a significant cost benefit moving forward in the sense that each agency will not have to expend capital for duplicate equipment such as total stations. If multiple agencies can take advantage of the same equipment and training resources, this will serve the benefit of further increasing the collaborative spirit that is so important to HIM.

TARGET

Identify Resource Arrangements, Mutual Training Agreements and Information Sharing, Annually Updating for All Stakeholder Agencies

The RCTO Working Group will take an active role in facilitating the more formal interactions between responder agencies, such as those involving written agreements concerning sharing of resources and training. Most importantly, these agreements will be revisited on an annual basis to ensure that their usefulness is maintained.

Performance Measures

The sharing of resources and the formation of agreements outlining arrangements is very important to the RCTO. The tools to identify these arrangements must be established and maintained by the RCTO Working Group in order to provide benefits beyond the lifespan of the current RCTO. Documentation must be updated in a timely fashion once conditions warrant a change to be made. If these responsibilities are not met, this will be viewed as a failure to meet minimum performance expectations for this objective.

Action Item

Conduct Cross-Agency Training

Cross-agency training that includes management and field personnel will ensure that all responders have their roles and responsibilities clearly defined. This type of training will emphasize the importance of unified command and reinforce the national and statewide standards which governing agencies have formulated regarding HIM. The RCTO Working Group will strive to ensure that training of this nature represents a cross section of the entire HIM spectrum, including medical examiners, tow truck operators, and SSP Operators. This type of inclusiveness will enable cross-agency training to achieve its maximum benefit. The RCTO Working Group will seek to ensure that cross-agency training reflects national trends and policies regarding HIM, including the National Unified Goal (NUG) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NUG is a national policy developed under the leadership of the National Traffic Incident Management Coalition (NTIMC), which encourages agencies to adopt unified, multi-disciplinary policies, procedures, and practices that will dramatically improve the state of HIM. NIMS was developed by the Office of Homeland Security, providing a consistent nationwide template to enable all government, private-sector, and nongovernmental agencies and organizations to work together during domestic incidents. See <http://timcoalition.org/?siteid=41>, <http://www.i95coalition.org/>, and <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/media/press/2008releases/052108.shtml>.

Action Item

Provide More Total Station Equipment to be Utilized in Investigations

Investigators employ the total station survey method during an accident investigation to obtain horizontal distance measurements through an infrared electronic distance meter. A significant reduction in investigation time will be achieved with the use of the total station survey methods as opposed to a more traditional means of investigation. Depending on the location of an incident within the region, a VSP investigator may not have immediate access to total station equipment, thus increasing incident duration.



FACT

“The Hampton Roads Highway Incident Management Committee adopted the NUG on March 14, 2007, and the Hampton Roads Fire Safety Officials Committee adopted the NUG on the same day.” - National Traffic Incident Management Coalition (NTIMC)





OBJECTIVE 6

Establish a Regional Incident Management Pro-Active and Post-Incident Review Consortium

The post incident review process provides an opportunity to learn lessons from the most problematic incidents that occur on highways in Hampton Roads. If optimally used, these reviews exist not to lay criticism, but to objectively use the lessons learned from a specific incident as a means of improving HIM. This forum is important in determining whether certain situations arising from an especially problematic incident are adequately reflected in the training that each agency receives, and more importantly, in any cross-agency training programs these agencies participate in.

TARGET

Maintain a (Multi-Agency) Major Post-Incident Review Process and Schedule Routine Regional Incident Management Awareness Committee Meetings

Stakeholder buy-in is crucial to the Hampton Roads RCTO. Consistent and meaningful participation on the part of all agencies within the Hampton Roads HIM community is necessary for the initiative to meet its objectives.

scheduling of all post incident review meetings, as well as making sure that meeting minutes are posted to the RCTO Web Site in a timely fashion. It will also provide the initial Hampton Roads Incident Responders Contact, Jurisdiction and Resource Guide at an agreed upon time and subsequently be responsible for all its needed updates. If these responsibilities are not met, this will be viewed as a failure to meet minimum performance expectations for this objective.

Action Item

Hold Meetings of the Post-Incident Review Consortium Following any Problematic Incidents

In terms of conducting an effective post-incident review, everyone involved with the actual response, management, or recovery effort related to the incident in question should be provided the opportunity to supply input. The post-incident review consortium will consist of members from other jurisdictions and agencies who did not participate in the actual incident, providing a clear perspective.

Post-incident review meetings could be sporadic in nature because major incidents do not occur at regularly scheduled intervals. There could be a period of several months between incidents which require such a review. It is still important for the post-incident review consortium to meet at regularly scheduled times in order to maintain the spirit of collaboration needed to help make the RCTO a success. As a result of these analyses, it is hoped that the results will be institutionalized to better train responders in the future to effectively respond to accidents.

Action Item

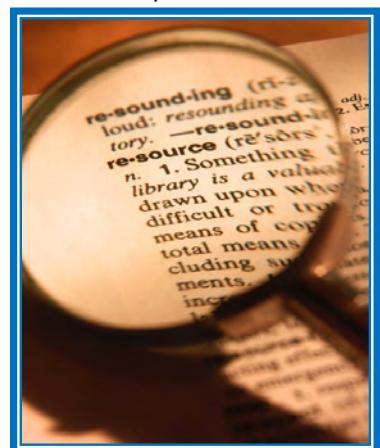
Creation and Maintenance of the Hampton Roads Incident Responders Contact, Jurisdiction, and Resource Guide

In terms of strengthening the relationships within the Hampton Roads HIM community for the purpose of meeting the targets laid out in the RCTO, one of the most important factors for all participating agencies will be to know more about one another. Creating a Resource Guide will help to accomplish this. There is no database or guide available that defines jurisdictions, existing resource arrangements and training agreements, physical resources, and responder contact information. Jurisdictions will provide this information, and as a result, users will gain a clearer picture of the resources, arrangements, and important contacts related to HIM in the region.

Performance

Measures

The RCTO Working Group will be responsible for the



FACT

“More than 150 U.S. law enforcement officers have been killed since 1997 after being struck by vehicles along America's highways.”
 - National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund

SECTION 7. TOOLS

The following tools will aid in the process of attaining the objectives which were laid out in the previous sections. These tools are intended for the RCTO process itself rather than being tools which directly impact HIM.

MOUs

The intent of an MOU is to acquire commitment from the participants to work towards the initiatives and coordinate with one another in improving the state of HIM within Hampton Roads. The cooperative nature of the MOU concept fits nicely into the collaborative framework that the RCTO is trying to achieve.

RCTO Web Site

A comprehensive Web site can serve as a means by which stakeholders track the progress of the RCTO. It can play a number of other roles as well, including being a clearinghouse for HIM related reference materials, hosting a region-wide HIM training calendar and possibly serving registered stakeholders as a forum for online discussion regarding HIM-related issues.

Presentations

The use of presentations to engage elected officials and responder management would be an effective means of helping the RCTO achieve its objectives. In order to achieve maximum effectiveness, these presentations would have to be made by an authority figure that is active in the RCTO process and already familiar to those being presented.

Publicity Campaigns

Publicity campaigns can be an effective tool in terms of increased awareness about specific laws or the need to pay more attention to responder safety (<http://www.respondersafety.com/>). In terms of target audiences, such campaigns can be directed at daily commuters who frequent the region's highways or to captive audiences such as those people renewing their licenses at DMV offices.

Legislation

In order for the RCTO to reach its full potential, it will have to go beyond simply influencing practices and procedures at the incident site. It also needs to influence elected officials and responding agency leaders who are in the position to lobby policy makers for any legislation which might arise from the process.

Data Sources

In some instances, there are no data sources available for some of the key metrics that need to be tracked as performance measures for the RCTO. Developing a means of effectively capturing that data is a key to the success of the initiative. Collaboration among stakeholders is especially important in terms of defining who can track certain data, how that data will be captured, and who will end up analyzing it.

Training Opportunities

The desire for cross-agency training is one of the key action items related to the RCTO. For instance, HAZMAT training across jurisdictions would have a very positive impact on the HIM community in Hampton Roads. The logistics of making such training feasible will have to be addressed by the RCTO Working Group, both from a funding and logistical standpoint.



“Traffic events are a major source of both highway congestion and safety problems. Traffic events are estimated to cause about half of all traffic delays. Collisions that result from other traffic events account for approximately 16 percent of all crashes and cause 18 percent of freeway deaths.”

- www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov

SECTION 8. RESOURCE ARRANGEMENTS

The RCTO framework does not seek to simply define objectives, it also provides the strategy and tools by which to achieve them. This includes defining sources and use of funding, which is particularly important to this particular RCTO. As mentioned earlier in this document, transportation agencies such as VDOT are struggling with funding issues. But these funding issues can also be seen in responding agencies such as VSP, which currently faces a manpower shortage in the Hampton Roads region.

In the current economic climate, identifying and obtaining sources of funding is especially challenging, especially for local agencies which do not have the resources in place to actively pursue funding resources such as grants. A collaborative effort such as this RCTO dictates that the resource arrangement element include plans for participating agencies to jointly apply for funds. In doing so, the participation of an agency like the HRMPO in the RCTO process is especially important in terms of providing guidance for the pursuit of funding. See <http://www.hrpdcva.gov/>.

CMAQ

One funding resource is The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program (CMAQ), which was created under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991. Lawmakers established the program to help fund regional and local efforts to achieve compliance with national air quality standards set under the Clean Air Act. CMAQ projects are selected by the State or the MPO. The HRMPO would serve as an excellent resource in terms of applying for CMAQ funds which could help in achieving the targets laid out in this RCTO.

Grants

While programs such as CMAQ are an excellent funding avenue to pursue, there are other avenues available as well. One that has gone largely unexplored in the HIM realm in Hampton Roads has been applying for grants. A cooperative grant writing/application agreement could be put into place to identify opportunities such as these. This effort could be monitored and directed via a Hampton Roads ITS Committee delegate or the HRMPO.

Existing Training Resources

Another resource arrangement is the utilization of training entities which are already in place in the region. Each agency has its own dedicated training professionals who could be utilized to train other agency personnel at minimal expenditure or no cost.

Defining Champions

The Hampton Roads RCTO will identify “champions” who have a vested interest in its outcome and who could assist in pursuing any legislative measures which would help the initiative achieve its targets. These champions might be high ranking elected officials within the region who understand the benefits that Hampton Roads would realize through improvements in HIM.

Each objective identified in the RCTO will benefit greatly from the stewardship of a champion. The RCTO Working Group will identify such people from within its own ranks and elsewhere in the Hampton Roads HIM community. Once a champion takes ownership of a tactical objective, he or she will assume a leadership role in terms of the planning needed to achieve it. Subsequently, this champion will monitor the progress of the objective and provide updates at meetings of the RCTO Working Group.



“Federal Highway Administration’s Strive for Excellence Team Award for VDOT’s first-of-its-kind Wounded Veteran Internship Program that provides transportation industry training and job opportunities for military veterans who are injured or unable to resume their former jobs when returning from service.” - Secretary of Transportation Pierce R. Homer

SECTION 9. MOVING FORWARD

The organization of the RCTO will benefit greatly from having a centralized repository where all pertinent materials related to the endeavor will be housed. Material related to the RCTO will be living documents. As a result, the need to maintain those is of great importance. Moving forward, the following represent those materials which the RCTO Working Group will have to pay the closest attention to in terms of ongoing maintenance.



The Hampton Roads Incident Responders Contact, Jurisdiction, and Resource Guide

The practice of HIM is an extremely time sensitive endeavor. The longer an incident is blocking lanes, the greater the impact will be on the region's transportation network. The Hampton Roads Incident Responders Contact, Jurisdiction, and Resource Guide will serve as a one stop shop for responders who want to quickly identify which agencies possess needed equipment. As a living document, the Resource Guide will contain the most accurate and up-to-date contact information for each participating agency.

Utilization of Tools

The RCTO process is not limited to simply identifying problems, its strength lies in providing stakeholders the tools to achieve their objectives. This is where the RCTO Working Group can play an important role in terms of providing guidance and motivation. For instance, memorandums of understanding (MOUs) can help agencies and jurisdictions within the region to better coordinate their resources in regard to HIM. The RCTO Working Group will go beyond simply identifying MOU opportunities and work with the involved parties to agree on things such as scope and wording. By playing an active role such as this, the RCTO Working group ensures that tools are not just identified, but are utilized to their fullest extent for the purpose of helping the initiative achieve its objectives.

Semi-Annual Performance Measure Reports

Semi-annual performance reports based on metrics and will highlight the progress of the RCTO and provide insight into whether or not targets related to the initiative are being met. These reports will help to keep participants engaged and identify areas where improvement will be needed in order to reach certain targets. The delivery of all performance measurement reports will be done via the RCTO Web Site in order to ensure that all stakeholders involved have the easiest access possible.

Coordinated Training Sessions

Cross-agency training exercises have already been identified as a key action item for the RCTO. Each agency has its own dedicated training professionals who could be utilized to train other agency personnel at minimal expenditure or no cost. For Example, the HRTMC employs a full-time training staff which teaches a wide range of courses related to HIM. Courses being taught at the HRTMC could set aside a few slots to accommodate personnel from other agencies.

Maintain an Active RCTO Working Group

The weight of the RCTO rests on the shoulders of its Working Group. The RCTO Working Group is the engine that will propel the initiative forward by keeping the stakeholders engaged in their pursuit of objectives, especially those people who have been identified as champions. It is extremely important to maintain an active Working Group that is representative of stakeholders' interests. In the final analysis, the RCTO Working Group is the steering committee that will play the biggest role in helping the initiative meet its objectives.



"The Towing and Recovery Association of America (TRAA) endorses the National Unified Goal and is strongly committed to its implementation."
- Mike Scott, Chairman of the TRAA Education Foundation

