

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Why Is National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week Important?

Studies conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) show that public education is important to advancing the cause of safer travel. Safety and operations education programs focused for years on seat belts, impaired driving, and distracted driving. Coupled with engineering advancements, and improved responder education and actions, crash deaths and injuries trended down for a time.

A dramatic rise in injuries and deaths in the past several years means that more traffic incident scenes require more responders. That means more drivers are traveling near work areas that are set up by the various emergency response partners, with temporary traffic control that is not entirely like the work zones set for planned work. Sadly, drivers and responders are dying, needlessly.

A shared awareness is needed, recognizing that safer Traffic Incident Response is everybody's responsibility.

## Why was November chosen?

FHWA selected this week for two reasons. It coincides with the USDOT Secretary and FHWA Administrator's messages to be especially safe during the holiday season by driving sober and without distraction, using seatbelts, and being aware of those around you. Secondly, it is the anniversary of the adoption of the National Unified Goal (NUG) for Traffic Incident Management (TIM), which was Nov. 20, 2007.

TIM experts developed a National Unified Goal for use in the United States and obtained approval from 23 member associations of the National TIM Coalition. This included AASHTO securing an approval by all State DOTs. FHWA has used the NUG as an organization tool to determine the strength of TIM programs and help jurisdictions develop an action plan using the NUG Goals and 18 Strategies to enhance TIM programs throughout the nation. The goals are simple, and in summary address responder safety, safe and quick clearance of incidents, and communications that is prompt, reliable, and interoperable.

## What Is Happening Around the Nation?

Local teams, regional programs, and states are planning to conduct events to raise awareness and begin preparing for the third official National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week in 2018.

Some example ideas from 2017:

- Ride-alongs with freeway service patrols and other responder vehicles
- Traffic Management Center tours and open houses
- Video displays in welcome centers and rest areas
- Increased social media presence
- Regional media events/press conferences
- Targeted messages on Dynamic Message Signs
- Website focus on TIM messages
- Sporting event educational presentation
- Video production
- Governor proclamation



*Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao recognized Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week in 2018 and signed a proclamation with partners.*

At the national level, the TIM Network formed a working group, based on FHWA's request, and began collecting materials to post on a dedicated site on their website for individuals to come to collect items being used. The website, <http://timnetwork.org/traffic-incident-response-awareness-week/>, is being populated with materials being used by other organizations and TIM programs again in 2018.

## **RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM TIM NETWORK**

The following have been collected by the National TIM Network's Traffic Incident Response Week Work Group.

- The TIM Network also organized a Social Media campaign independent of FHWA's plan. It developed the following:
  - The hashtags #SafeIncidents, #MoveOver, and #MoveOverSlowDown have been created to spread awareness through Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.
  - The tag line "Traffic Incident Response: Everybody's Responsibility!" was created for awareness.
- Links to safety statistics
- Public Service Announcements
- Other resources regarding Move Over Laws

- IACP & FHWA training video for Traffic Reporters
- Safety Highlight and Training Videos
- Printed Materials
  - Safety Service Patrol Fact Sheet
  - Traffic Management Center Fact Sheet
- “How-to” tip sheets on events that can be tailored to any organization
- Sample press release

**How Can I Share My Events, Products Developed for the Week, and Lessons Learned with Others?**

Individuals may report their activities to FHWA’s Office of Transportation Traffic Incident & Emergency Operations team by emailing Traffic Incident Response Week staff at [cyorks@gfnet.com](mailto:cyorks@gfnet.com). The items will be posted on the National Traffic Incident Management Network webpage specifically designed for sharing information on preparedness for Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week or activities accomplished to date.

**How Can I Become Involved?**

Consider signing up with the National TIM Network, <http://timnetwork.org/register/> or Emergency Responder Safety Institute, at <http://respondersafety.org>. Follow the TIM Network on Twitter @The\_TIM\_Network.

