

Frequently Asked Questions

Why Is Traffic Incident Response Week Critical?

Two NHTSA studies indicate that educating the public is essential. While safety and operations programs, like seatbelt use, impaired and distracted driving campaigns, vehicle enhancements and improved responder operations brought down crash deaths and injuries for a decade. However, a dramatic rise in deaths in 2015, or a 7.2% rise, constituted the deadliest year in 50 years. About 35,100 people perished in crashes on U.S. roads in 2015, or 2,348 more fatalities than in 2014. This was the largest single year jump in nearly 50 years.

The next year was more sad news, with a 6% rise to 40,200 deaths. We must educate drivers, using traffic reporters, high school and court-mandated driving schools, and license testing at Departments of Motor Vehicles, to familiarize motorists with their obligations and laws when involved in a crash. And it must occur now.

Based on thousands of discussions with TIM practitioners and the recently conducted Gap Analysis for TIM, we found that often drivers are not aware of various Quick Clearance Laws promulgated by their States, especially Move Over and Slow Down and Driver Removal (aka Move It) laws. About 81% of crashes result from human error, particularly motorists who drive drowsy, drunk, drugged, or distracted or otherwise impaired. In 2016, an average of 110 persons died each day. Standard emergency management statistics warn that for every death, there are 20 injured. Sadly, we are also losing responders. And the disciplines that suffer the most from line of duty deaths or struck-by injuries are those driving amber lighted vehicles...our safety service patrols, towers, or transportation or public works maintenance crews.

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, the 10th Anniversary of the adoption of the National Unified Goal for Traffic Incident Management (TIM) will occur on November 20, 2017. Following a 2005 Scan Tour through Europe, 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.

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 second official Traffic Incident Response Week in 2017. In 2016:

- Iowa DOT and Missouri DOT hosted Ride-along events with their Safety Service Patrols and law enforcement agencies are spreading awareness materials to educate the public on how to react at incident scenes or driving around roadway operations.
- Wisconsin DOT hosted ridealongs and opened its Traffic Management Center for tours.
- Pennsylvania hosted senior-level TIM leaders and practitioners to discuss statewide institutionalization of TIM. Tennessee, Ohio, Maryland, and New Jersey lent specific expertise.
- Florida used short tags on Variable Message Signs and shared the sayings with the nation.



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 2017.

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: We're All in This Together!" 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. The items will be posted on the National Traffic Incident Management Network webpage specifically designed for sharing information on preparedness for Traffic Incident Responder 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, or check the Facebook page for National Traffic Incident Management Network.

