



March 25, 2016

Good day,

Never before in the history of the National Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Program have we had so many involved in building local capacity, institutionalizing TIM, working with partnering organizations and disciplines, focused on responder and motorist safety, and committed to quickly clearing the roadways during and after a crash. FHWA's leadership, my team and I are awed by the enthusiasm of the field practitioners and program administrators as they work toward improvements.

We continue to tackle some of the greatest challenges to the TIM Program yet. And, in spite of the challenges, the future looks oh, so bright for reaching goals outline in the National Unified Goal for Traffic Incident Management: clearance is quicker thanks to the proliferation and sharing of good practices and ideas; responder and motorist deaths and injuries have begun a slow, but significant decline; communication among responders in the field; between responders and their operations centers and dispatchers, and between traffic management centers and emergency operations centers continue to make advances that improves the quality of life in all communities.

Building TIM Capacity

As you are aware, we have focused many resources and energy in deploying the TIM Responder Training Course, designed by TIM practitioners for TIM practitioners and as an effort under the Second Strategic Highway Research Project (SHRP2). The Transportation Research Board, the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials and FHWA continue to tout the successes of this one project under the SHRP2 umbrella. About 170,000 TIM responders from all disciplines have been trained in either a classroom environment or a web-based version offered through FHWA's National Highway Institute. However, all good things must come to an end and while the official "SHRP2" program is slowly transferring the tools and products designed through this effort to partners which will continue to promote and support the use of these tools, FHWA will continue to be responsible for delivering this foundational course to all who must step on the roadways to aid those in need. Many of our efforts over the past several months focus on how to continue delivering this course with the same enthusiasm and interest as it currently has. For example, we met with the National TIM experts—from Law Enforcement, Towing, Fire, Rescue, EMS, Public Works, Traffic Reporters, and more—in late January to obtain ideas on how to keep the momentum going and continue to ensure that all TIM responders possess the critical knowledge needed to open lanes quickly, thus reducing secondary crashes and line of duty deaths (LODDs) or struck-by injuries for responders and death and injuries to drivers and their passengers. The National Fire Academy, located in Emmitsburg, Maryland, home of the National Fallen Firefighters' Memorial and the U.S. Fire Administration, hosted the event with FHWA. The meeting

proceedings will be shared shortly. However, there were some great thoughts shared on how to improve the program and continue training responders. We have received enough anecdotal feedback that this knowledge is saving lives out there.

Imagine eliminating **9 out of every 10** car crashes.

That's the bright promise **driverless technology** holds over the next 30 years.

1-The Blue Book, A Summary Document of Beyond Traffic 2045, USDOT.

Connected and Autonomous Vehicles and Dramatic Decrease in TIM Responder and Motorist Deaths

Furthermore, the full adoption of new technologies being built into vehicles and trucks—connecting them to each other and the infrastructure—promises to greatly reduce the number of deaths and injuries associated with crashes. Technology, even today, is addressing the problem with “D” drivers¹ with things like breathalyzer locking the ignition of a driver does not pass. And, self-driving vehicles open opportunities for those with various physical challenges get out and moving. USDOT engaged in a public dialog to discuss the vision of transportation in 2045. I highly encourage readers to go to the following sites to www.dot.gov/beyondtraffic to read the blue paper and the study. USDOT addresses this vision through five questions:

How will we move?

How will we build a transportation system that doesn't just let a growing population travel – but lets them travel SAFER than ever?

How will we move things?

How will we reduce freight chokepoints that drive up the cost of owning a business?

How will we move better?

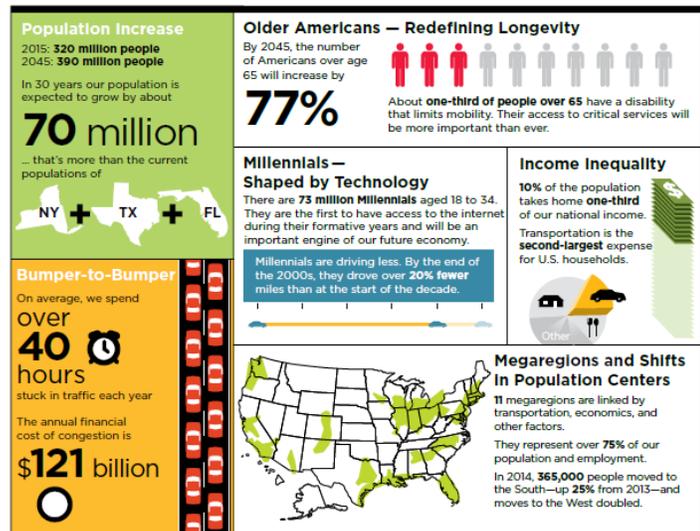
How can we knock down barriers to new technologies that promise to make travel safer and more convenient?

How will we adapt?

How do we make our infrastructure more resilient for a time when weather events like Hurricane Sandy will occur with increasing frequency?

How will we align decisions and dollars?

How can we invest the trillions of dollars our transportation needs in the smartest way possible?



2-Infographic sharing summary findings in "How Will We Move?"

¹ “D” Drivers-Drowsy, Drunk, Drugged, Distracted, Developing (Youth), Distinguished (Elderly) and just plain Dangerous

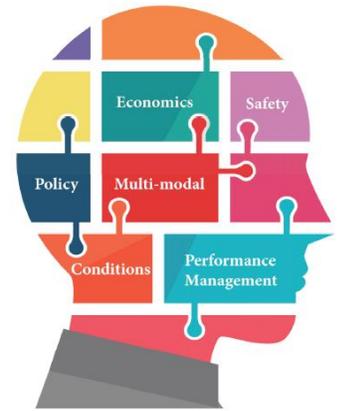
USDOT continues to take suggestions so all are welcome to share their ideas. FHWA held a small work group to discuss potential changes and the results of the discussions and research will be available this summer. At that time, I will write a stand-alone article on Visioning TIM in the future.

2016-The Year of TIM Institutionalization

As we have dedicated much time and many resources in helping local, regional, Tribal and State governments build their field-based TIM capacity—which improves their public safety professionals’ readiness for larger events—FHWA now plans to work with TIM program administrators to strengthen their capacity as well. Far too often, we have seen set-backs in TIM programs built on the shoulders of one or two champions only to backslide when the champions retire or who are no longer able to maintain the energy to blaze a trail for the TIM program. The TIM Self-Assessment, the new TIM Capability Maturity Framework, and the NUG highlight the elements that make a good TIM program. A secure funding source, an appreciation from senior leadership—whether political or career—for the important work being done on our roadways and the risk taken by responders each time they venture out on a call.

 **Institutionalizing Training:** We are preparing to meet with Associations that influence training and standards for TIM disciplines. The meeting is expected in May. We will discuss the growing trend for fire, rescue, law enforcement, and towers to require this course be taken before personnel are assigned to a response and towers are given contracts to clear crashes. We hope to obtain advice on how we should reach our goal of training one million responders and how to keep the training momentum going, including how and when responders should return for refresher course. The success of this program has led to several questions about whether we could build a National Incident Management System training program that becomes increasingly more specialized, particularly for those who serve in field management or even as Incident Commanders or members of a Unified Command. FHWA is exploring how this may be done by inventorying the “TIM-relevant” courses already offered, how we can work with National Preparedness at FEMA to link to their NIMS training effort, and identify gaps where—we hope—others from the public and private sector step up to design a curriculum.

🌟 **Measuring Field Performance & Collecting Data While Boots Are Still on the Ground:** The office is also delving into the “Big Data” area, both through involvement on a new National Cooperative Highway Research Project (NCHRP), a part of the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academy of Sciences, and through FHWA’s own TIM Performance Measurement program. We have worked with practitioners to define three pieces of data that will demonstrate progress being made in building TIM capacity that will work faster at opening lanes, reduce the risk of secondary crashes, reduce the amount of time responders remain vulnerable working on the roadway with little protection, and the numbers of TIM workers killed or injured in the line of duty. The first three elements address the Safe, Quick Clearance objective of the NUG, while the last addresses progress being made toward the NUG’s Responder Safety objective.



3-Age of Big Data and TIM

🌟 **Knowledge Collection and Sharing:** Another key component of Institutionalization is sharing information. We have a National TIM Knowledge Management System that is administered through the TIM Network. Anyone is welcome to share tools, good practices, lessons learned, reports (including planning or after-action), etc. We are also exploring a partnership with the AASHTO Transportation Operations Center of Excellence and the U.S. Fire Administration Knowledgebase to ensure that information is available no matter where you seek it as a discipline. We are also exploring the integration of the www.safequickclearance website developed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs on behalf of our TIM Responder Training program. This site includes information on where instructors are for the Trained Trainers and where classroom courses may be held.

There is a lot more going on that I will share in coming months. But for now, I wish to recognize Elizabeth LaBelle, Sam McClain of Safe Highway Matters, and Joey Sagal of the FHWA Resource Center for making a small observation into an action that today is linking together Safety Service Patrols. I especially wish to thank all of the wonderful speakers and participants who keep the sessions lively and engaged. Safe Highway Matters and FHWA recognized that a forum did not exist and Safety Service Patrols—by whatever name they take—operated independently. Other than Liz and Sam’s website and e-Newsletter that defines their target audience as the Safety Service Patrols, there is no association that provides a voice for them. FHWA has provided the tools, but the many engaged SSP operators and leaders defined an agenda and we have held 3 quarterly webinars touching on the topics outlined in their list. If you wish to see the presentations from the various sessions on standard operating procedures, performance measurements, and training, please follow this link: <http://www.safehighways.org/additional-resources/fhwa-safehighways-org/>. This is their forum, we just provide the tools to bring everyone together. Liz and Sam also post meeting notes on their website very soon after each call. This is just one example of how a one individual mentioned the need to me and we took action that has truly filled a gap.

TIM is your program, please get involved. Your thoughts and ideas make a difference! And, as I sign off for the month, I want you all to consider helping us with ideas, support, tools, etc., in the coming months. WE will hold the first Traffic Incident Awareness Week in mid-November. This year will involve a few small events to capture the public's attention, but we will be looking for help to provide tools in the hands of the field practitioners who interact with the public, thoughts on how to organize a media event, etc. We began a work group about 1 year ago, but recently received the "green light" to move forward. Eric Rensel and Rusty Jones will be working with you to organize a work group, but any and all ideas are welcome. Please send them to me at Kimberly.vasconez@dot.gov.

Thanks for all you do and the risks you take on behalf of motorists throughout the Nation. You are truly unsung heroes.

Very respectfully yours,

Kimberly "Kim" C. Vásconez, Team Leader, Traffic Incident & Events Management, Office of Transportation Operations, FHWA