
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Executive Order No. 58 (2013)

Establishing a Statewide Traffic Incident Management Committee

As the chief executive officer for the Commonwealth of Virginia, I hereby issue this Executive Order to the Executive Branch Cabinet members, agency heads, managers, supervisors, and employees in order to formally establish an advisory committee to public safety leaders and transportation experts committed to the management of traffic incidents. Nothing in this Executive Order should be construed as imposing an unfunded mandate on any independent or non-executive branch agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Background and Importance of the Initiative:

Virginia has a vested interest in reducing traffic congestion and promoting traffic safety. Traffic congestion not only has a negative impact on the quality of life and safety of its citizens, it also has a significant financial impact. The U.S. Department of Transportation listed traffic congestion as "one of the single largest threats" to the Nation's economic prosperity and way of life. In the 2009 Urban Mobility Report published by the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), data calculated in 2007 reported that traffic congestion in the top 439 urban areas in the United States amounted to 4.2 billion hours of wasted time and 2.8 billion gallons of wasted fuel. This equaled approximately \$87.2 billion in lost revenue. In 2009, that amount had increased to \$115 billion.

In 2009, Virginia had the sixth highest commute time to work in the nation. According to a study conducted by TTI that same year, the metro area around Washington, DC, had the highest average number of hours of delay (70) per traveler in the nation. Even minor disruptions in traffic flow have significant impacts on congestion. The National Traffic Incident Management Coalition (NTIMC) estimates that 4 minutes of travel delay time result for every minute a highway lane is blocked due to an incident.

While there are many factors which contribute to congestion (i.e., road capacity and condition, commuting demands, lack of public transportation, and population), other unpredictable factors also create traffic problems. In Virginia, it is estimated that more than half of all congestion is non-recurring – caused by crashes, disabled vehicles, adverse weather, work zones, special events, and other temporary disruptions to the transportation system. Compounding the problem is the issue of secondary crashes. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 36% of all crashes on the Capital Beltway in Virginia and Maryland are secondary crashes. The Federal Highway Administration estimates the likelihood of a secondary crash increases by 2.8% for each minute the primary incident continues to be a hazard.

Traffic incidents also present a tremendous hazard for first responders. According to the NTIMC, traffic crashes and "struck-by" incidents are leading causes of on-duty injuries and deaths for law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and towing and recovery personnel. Reducing incident clearance times will improve first responder safety.

Better management of traffic incidents is one key to reducing congestion and improving safety. In the 2009 Urban Mobility study, TTI calculated that in the 272 urban areas where improved incident management procedures were implemented, the resulting reduction in incident-related congestion saved 143.3 million hours and \$3.06 million in revenue.

Historically, first responder incident management procedures have been focused on responder safety at the scene with limited consideration for the benefits derived through the utilization of quick clearance strategies.

In November of 2010, in response to concerns regarding coordination of efforts to address Traffic Incident Management (TIMs), the Governor established, through the Secretary of Public Safety in cooperation and partnership with the Secretary of Transportation, the Virginia Traffic Incident Management Committee. The Statewide TIMs Committee began to meet in December of 2010 to discuss strategies to reduce traffic congestion and secondary crashes by better managing incidents when they occur. The Committee began by reviewing the National Unified Goals (NUG) of responder safety, quick clearance of incidents, and improved interoperable communications between responding agencies. The TIMs Committee unanimously agreed that these principles should be promoted and employed in any traffic incident management strategy, training, or policy the Commonwealth adopts.

Over the last two years, the Statewide TIMs Committee has put forth three primary initiatives which will promote better traffic incident management through the use of these NUG concepts. The first initiative includes the promotion and promulgation of the NUG concepts at existing local TIMs groups and creating new groups where none previously existed. These local TIMs groups are made up of first responders who are charged with looking for ways to better manage traffic and traffic related incidents in their respective jurisdictions. A significant number of the local committees have been in existence for many years, with the most established groups being located in or around population centers such as Northern Virginia, Tidewater, Richmond, and Roanoke.

Currently, representatives from the Department of State Police, Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management lead or participate in over 60 of these local TIMs groups across the Commonwealth. The use of local TIMs groups has provided an effective and logical way for the Statewide TIMs Committee to promulgate initiatives and provide guidance to local first responders. It is through the local TIMs groups that the Statewide TIMs Committee has introduced or reinforced the NUG concepts to our local emergency response stakeholders. It has also created a forum for all responding stakeholders to meet in non-emergency settings to discuss strategies, scene communications and individual stakeholder procedures.

Second, the Statewide TIMs Committee reached out to the Federal Highway Administration, which subsequently selected Virginia as one of the first states to pilot a multidisciplinary TIMs "train-the-trainer" course which emphasizes the application of NUG concepts in traffic incident management. In June 2012, approximately 30 trainers from all first responder disciplines received this training and will begin to hold TIMs training for all first responders across the Commonwealth beginning January of 2013.

Finally, the Statewide TIMs Committee created and is currently reviewing and finalizing for distribution a Statewide Traffic Incident Management Manual which emphasizes the NUG concepts. Once adopted by the TIMs Committee, this manual will provide uniform classification of incident types and seriousness while defining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders when responding to and mitigating incidents on the highways of the Commonwealth.

The Statewide TIMs Committee, in conjunction with the local TIMs groups throughout the Commonwealth, has proven to be a productive and efficient method of managing and coordinating the important issue of traffic safety.

Consequently, as Governor, I believe this approach should continue and I therefore in accordance with the authority vested in me by Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and by §2.2-134 of the Code of Virginia, create the Statewide Traffic Incident Management Committee in this executive order.

Formalization of the Committee:

The Statewide Traffic Incident Management Committee shall consist of the following individuals or their designee:

Chair:

Superintendent, Virginia State Police

Members:

Commissioner, Virginia Department of Transportation
State Coordinator Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Executive Director, Virginia Department of Fire Programs
Director, Department of Criminal Justice Services
Representative, Virginia Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services
Executive Director, Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police
Executive Director, Virginia Sheriffs Association
President, Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads
President, Virginia Fire Chiefs Association
President, Virginia Professional Fire Fighters Association
President, Virginia Association of Towing and Recovery
President, Virginia Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials

Any other person(s) and such support staff whom the Secretary of Public Safety deems necessary and proper to carry out the assigned functions.

Roles and Responsibilities of Committee:

The Statewide Traffic Incident Management Committee serves as an advisory committee to public safety leaders and transportation experts committed to the management of traffic incidents.

The committee will promote activities that include developing a comprehensive traffic incident manual to be completed by July of 2013.

The committee will promote traffic incident management by promoting the NUG for TIM, including responder safety, safe, quick clearance, and interoperable communications; encouraging the development of TIM regional teams, promoting collaboration, communication and cooperation among the Commonwealth's emergency responders; and keeping emergency responders up to date on national rules, regulations and trends related to safe roadway incident operations.

The Statewide Traffic Incident Management Committee shall solicit best practices to improve the response of Virginia agencies charged with the prevention, and mitigation of traffic incidents. These guidelines should be used to create local and regional traffic incident management (TIM) plans consistent with the NUG objectives of responder safety, safe quick clearance, and prompt, reliable incident communications.

Staffing and Funding:

Staff necessary for the Committee will be provided by the respective agencies participating on the Committee. The estimated direct cost of the Committee is \$1,000. Costs associated with implementing the guidelines developed will be determined and potential funding sources shall be identified by the Committee.

Effective Date of the Executive Order:

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and, pursuant to §2.2-135 of the Code of Virginia shall remain in force and effect for a year or until superseded or rescinded.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 4th day of February, 2013.

/s/ Robert F. McDonnell, Governor

Attest:

/s/Janet V. Kelly, Secretary of the Commonwealth