

All Lanes OPEN

Summer
2024



In This Issue...

Guardian Angel Lights & NOCO Battery Jump Starters | Page 3

Employee Spotlight - First Sergeant John Pietanza | Page 4

2024 National Work Zone Awareness Week & Unity Ride | Page 6

Maryland State Police Traffic Incident Management Unit's First Year | Page 10

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Last year, six highway workers lost their lives due to a crash along I-695, the Baltimore Beltway. This year, another six highway workers lost their lives when the Key Bridge, a bridge that connects two counties along that same beltway, was struck, causing it to fall into the water. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the families of all those impacted.

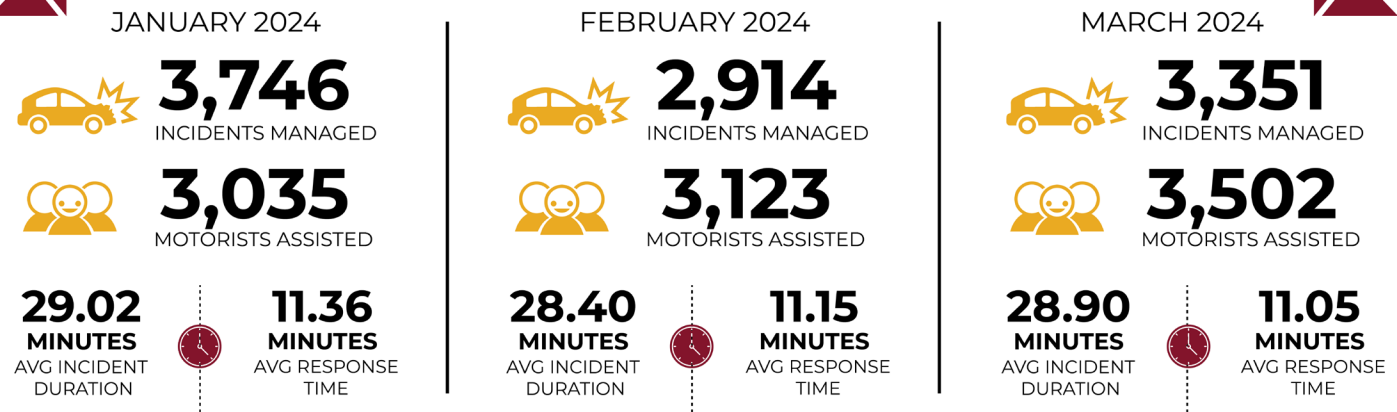
The quick action by Maryland Transportation Authority Police saved many other lives that day. The Key Bridge incident has required the involvement of Maryland’s entire incident response community from every discipline. All of our inter-agency and inter-disciplinary training together immediately paid off and showed why it is important that we don’t wait for tragedy to strike to plan, train, and connect. And we don’t wait. In fact, by the time this issue is published, the Metropolitan Area Traffic Operations Coordination (MATOC) program, a co-sponsored effort among Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, will have hosted its traffic incident management conference in partnership with The Eastern Transportation Coalition.

Despite the feelings of shock, loss, and grief at the Key Bridge incident, I’m also not sure if there has ever been a time that I’ve been prouder to be a part of this response and transportation community. To see our response, our resolve, and our commitment to our community and each other has been awe-inspiring. It was a reminder of why I love what we do every day. To quote Governor Moore, “we are Maryland tough and Baltimore strong.”



Jason Dicembre
 Director – Office of Transportation
 Mobility & Operations (OTMO)

CHART MONTHLY STATISTICS



NEW HIRES

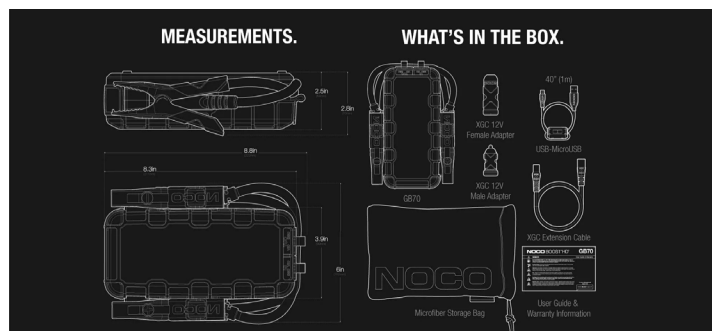
Welcome to the Team:

- **Jasmine Brown** - Highway Operations Technician (TMC Operations)
- **Christian Kean** - Highway Operations Technician (TMC Operations)
- **Alyssa Sabellano** - Highway Operations Technician (TMC Operations)

GUARDIAN ANGEL LIGHTS & NOCO BATTERY JUMP STARTERS

In an effort to enhance safety during night-time operations, all CHART patrol operators have been issued amber/green “Guardian Angel” lights that attach to their person. The lights flash so that drivers are made aware of the operator’s presence, and the amber/green colors are intended to contrast with the night-time lighting at incident scenes. OTMO first became aware of this technology at the Tow Show and pilot tested it via OTMO’s Equipment Committee. This technology has so far proven successful and is being considered for MDOT SHA’s Maintenance staff.

Another innovation that the CHART Regional Operations Division has adopted is the NOCO portable lithium battery jump starter, which has been issued to each operator. This implementation was guided by the realization that the lifespan for the CHART fleet’s previous portable jump starters was ending and the fact that the NOCO jump starters take up much less space on CHART vehicles. Similar to the Guardian Angel lights, this technology was successfully pilot tested via OTMO’s Equipment Committee.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

FIRST SERGEANT JOHN PIETANZA

The CHART Program is based upon the close working relationship among the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA), Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA), and the Maryland State Police (MSP). CHART's primary mission includes responding to incidents in a timely manner and removal of obstructions from the highway. Coordination and communication among participating agencies have been critical to ensure quick and effective incident response, and this relationship is central to CHART's purpose. To this end, MSP has assigned a liaison officer for SHA at the Statewide Operations Center (SOC), who represents the MSP on many matters of mutual concern regarding transportation issues. The liaison officer is responsible for responding to long-term lane closures and major incidents; coordination of traffic management for special events and seasonal traffic operations; assisting CHART staff with new employee selection processes;



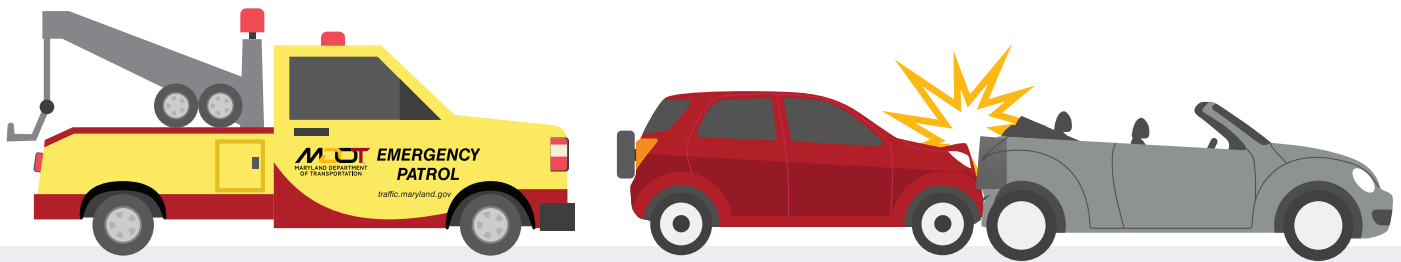
coordinating MSP/Allied Agency Training Academy Tours and second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2) TIM training instruction; representing MSP at CHART Board meetings and various other state and national Traffic Incident Management (TIM) committees; reviewing daily operations of events managed by CHART to help find improvements to the program; drafting and reviewing memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between SHA and MSP; responding to citizen and law enforcement inquiries; providing input and resources to SHA on legislative affairs; and functioning as a direct resource to SHA District Engineers, the Office of Traffic and Safety (OOTs), and the Administrator of the Escort of Oversize and Overweight Load Program.

First Sergeant (F/Sgt.) John Pietanza is the SHA Liaison Officer and has been a state trooper since 2001, entering the Maryland State Police Academy at age 31 to pursue a career in public service. He always knew he wanted a public service profession but first followed career paths as an auto mechanic, a carpenter, UPS driver, soccer referee, and finally a small business owner as a licensed private detective. He later saw an MSP trooper on a traffic stop in the Washington area and decided that was the career he had been looking for.

F/Sgt. Pietanza began his MSP career in the Field Operations Bureau in the Forestville Barrack, where he personally handled 3,306 calls for service; closed 74 criminal investigations, maintaining a 100% closure rate; and was ranked #1 out of 22 troopers at the barrack. From there, F/Sgt. Pietanza joined the Criminal Investigations Division – Auto Theft Task Force, quickly received promotion to Trooper First Class – Auto Theft Unit and later joined the Baltimore Regional Auto Theft Team as a Corporal. He then returned to the Field Operations Bureau quickly being promoted to Shift Commander, then Active Detective Sergeant, and then Detective Sergeant of the College Park Barrack.

In addition to the many responsibilities noted above, F/Sgt. Pietanza is working on several major projects, including expansion of the MSP Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) (drone) Program, updating MSP’s Tow Policy, work zone safety concerns and upgrading policies for work zones, updating the MOU for MSP/SHA regarding the Escort Program, and collaboration with MSP’s Automated Crash Reporting System (ACRS) team to enable ACRS to help support the goals and objectives of tracking TIM data.

We are grateful to have F/Sgt. Pietanza as a part of our team!



CONTACT US

7491 Connelley Drive
Hanover, MD 21076

otmo@mdot.maryland.gov

(410) 582-5605

OTMO WEBSITE

roads.maryland.gov



SUBSCRIBE

otmo@mdot.maryland.gov



MDOTSHA



MDSHA



marylandstatehighwayadmin

NEWS FROM CHART

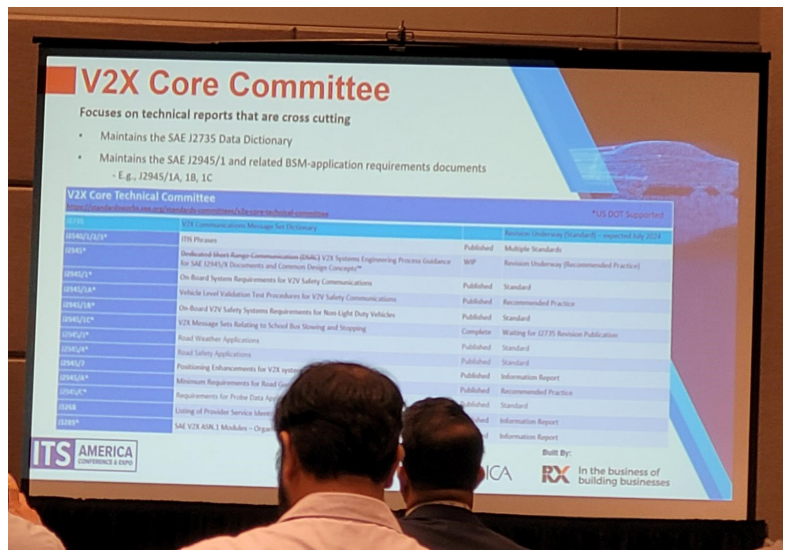
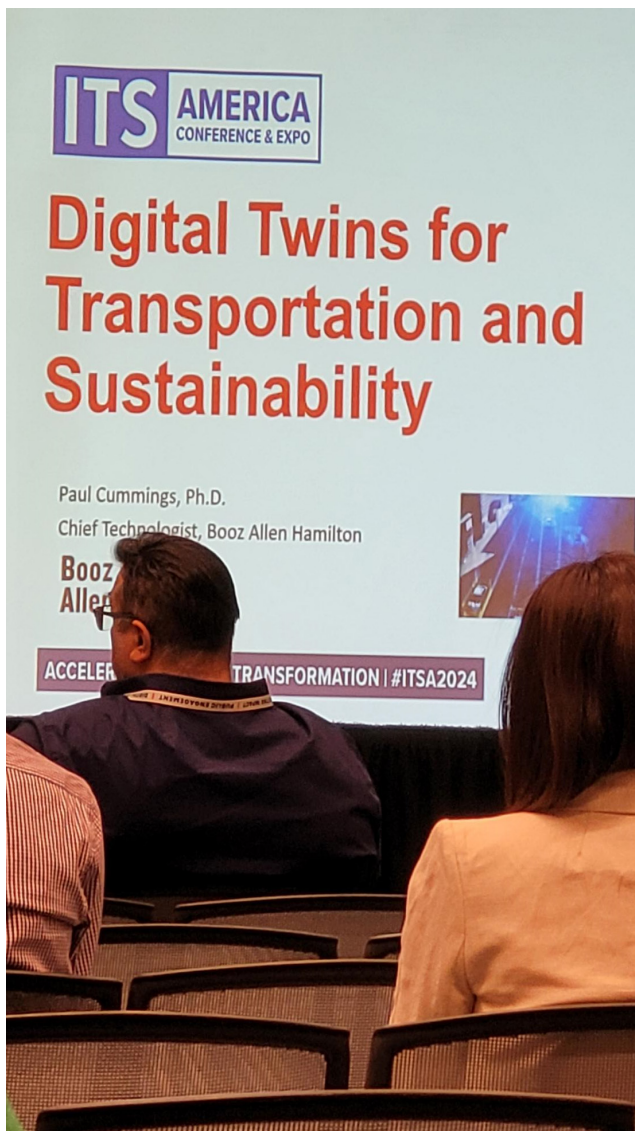
2024 National Work Zone Awareness Week & Unity Ride

National Work Zone Awareness Week (April 15-19, 2024) is an annual campaign that is held at the beginning of the construction season each spring to encourage safe driving through highway work zones. This year, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) hosted the event with the theme, "Work Zones are temporary. Actions behind the wheel can last forever.", which featured a kick-off press conference that took place on the westbound I-70 bridge over I-695 (Baltimore Beltway) in Woodlawn overlooking the site of the March 2023 fatal work zone crash as well as a Work Zone Safety Awareness Unity Ride. The Unity Ride consisted of approximately 350 state and contractor trucks that proceeded beneath the press conference all the way to the State Fairgrounds in Timonium. At the front of the procession on its way were trucks staffed by contractors who have had employees that were killed in work zone collisions. Maryland State Police (MSP) and CHART coordinated traffic holds and ramp closures to allow for safe travel. A similar event is being considered to honor those who died in the Francis Scott Key Bridge Collapse.



ITS AMERICA CONFERENCE & EXPO

OTMO Intelligent Transportation Systems Division (ITSD) Chief Dave Rineholt and ITSD Assistant Division Chief Willy Gayle participated in this year's ITS America Conference and Expo which took place in Phoenix, AZ from April 22nd until April 25th. This year's event featured technical tours of the Maricopa County Department of Transportation's (MCDOT's) SMARTDrive Program Connected Vehicle Test Bed as well as Arizona DOT's and MCDOT's Traffic Management Centers. It also featured autonomous vehicle demo rides; sessions covering new Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) provisions to support safe ADAS (advanced driver assist systems) and ADS (automated driving systems) deployments, updates regarding SMART Grant recipients, testing wireless communications technologies for ITS applications, and the effect of emerging technology on traffic incident management; a State DOT Round table that discussed ways to provide more efficient, affordable, and accessible transportation options; and multiple vendors showcasing the newest ITS equipment (network switches, flood sensors, etc.).



TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (TIM) TRAINING

Over the past several months, OTMO employees have been busy obtaining varying levels of training to further enhance services provided to Maryland citizens and visitors. This past fall, members of the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), Traffic Management Center (TMC) Operations and Regional Operations Divisions were certified by the National Safety Council in basic first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and automated external defibrillators (AED). Upon completion of the programs, OTMO deployed 75 ZOLL Plus automated external defibrillators (AED) in all its vehicles and OTMO facilities. Since the implementation in late January, the agency has utilized one of the devices in the field to attempt to revive an incapacitated motorist. In addition, personnel received Stop the Bleed training. The STOP THE BLEED® program was developed by a group called the “Hartford Consensus” and followed several world events. In 2012, 20 children and eight adults were casualties of a tragic mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT. STB teaches individuals how to control bleeding using direct pressure, wound packing with bleeding control gauze (hemostatic), and tourniquets. Combat Application Tourniquets were issued and placed with each assigned AED.

In January, all Regional Operations staff received their American Traffic Safety Services Association Flagger Certification. Special thanks to MDOT SHA's Office of Homeland Security and Occupational Safety (OHSOS) District 6 OSH Compliance Specialist Jay Goodman for making the trek to the Hanover Complex and providing multiple training sessions. These classes provide instruction on not only proper flagging techniques but also best



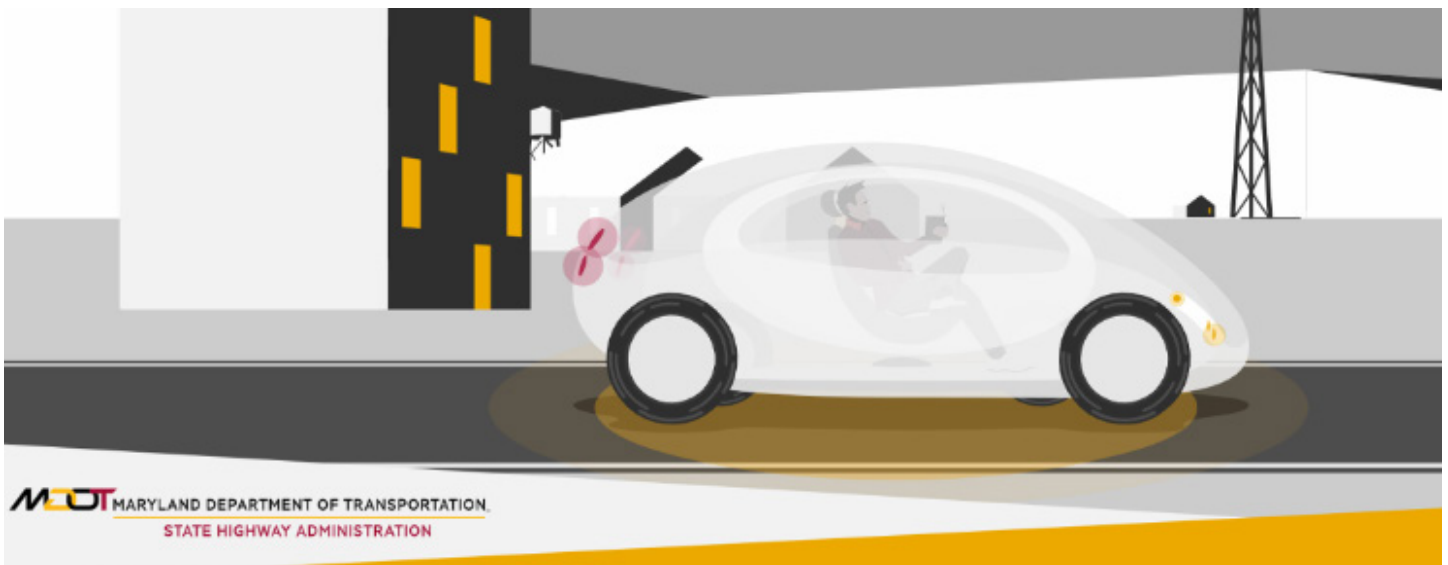
practices to operate safely in a work zone. Regional Operations (CHART) personnel often patrol work zones and can assist in identifying hazardous situations which can be remedied prior to an incident occurring. In April, Regional Operations and Maryland State Police Traffic Incident Management (TIM) team members participated in the Stihl Professional Instruction Program. This training is provided to professional landscaping, tree services and public utility service groups. Information presented to Emergency Response Technicians and State Troopers included a product introduction and safety demonstration, equipment maintenance, product applications, personal protective equipment, starting techniques and operating methods and fuel mixing and storage tips.

The training concluded with a practical evaluation where participants utilized various types of chain saws cutting various wood products. Thanks to the SHA Glen Burnie Shop for hosting and providing training resources for the classes.

Several TIM classes were offered to various agencies, both internal and external, over the past quarter. An updated version of the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2) 4-hour National Traffic Incident Management program is expected to be released later this month. The 4-hour National Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Responder Training course teaches every responder community how to safely and quickly clear traffic incidents. Traffic incident responders include emergency medical service (EMS), transportation and public works, fire and rescue, law enforcement, towing and recovery, and other professionals who support traffic incident management. If you are interested in hosting the 4-hour, SHRP2 traffic incident management responder course, please contact CHART's Regional Operations Training & Certification Manager, Kevin Fox at (410) 582-5608 or KFox@mdot.maryland.gov to schedule.

CAV LUNCH & LEARNS RESUME

On May 8th, OTMO resumed its Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) Lunch and Learns for the first time in almost a year. This Lunch and Learn covered Connected/Smart Work Zones and was facilitated by OTMO's Bashan McLeod (Mobility Planning and Engineering Division (MPED)) and featured Peter Rafferty and Katie Piskai of Cambridge Systematics as the presenters. They discussed what Maryland is doing in this area, emerging national practices, and implications for MDOT SHA; engaged the participants by asking them poll questions (e.g., What CWZ (connected work zone) application would you most like to see? and Where in Maryland would you most want to see CWZ applications?); and answered questions from the participants. The next CAV Lunch and Learn will cover identifying safety hot spots using CV data and its potential effect on the agency's fleet and is scheduled to take place on June 12th.



MARYLAND STATE POLICE TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT UNIT'S FIRST YEAR

As of February 1, 2023, the Maryland State Police (MSP) has a dedicated motorcycle unit to act as CHART's Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Unit, which has been working directly with the CHART Field Patrol Units and communicating directly with CHART traffic management centers (TMCs) during the bulk of in-service hours and special events, helping to alleviate pressure on local MSP barracks. The unit consists of a combination of both motor unit and vehicle patrol troopers, which may range in rank up to a first sergeant and is managed by an MSP lieutenant. This unit also serves as a point-of-contact for response to MDOT SHA Departmental crashes in several of its Districts and as a point-of-contact for the coordination of MSP resources during special events (funeral processions, football games, etc.). It is able to handle reports and investigation in most cases, giving SHA more direct access to information quickly.

The Unit has been performing well so far and has already demonstrated that its vehicles can maneuver more nimbly in traffic and clear lanes more efficiently. In its first year, the TIM Unit has responded to 730 total events with an average response time of three-and-a-half minutes and an average lane clearance time under 26 minutes. It has also demonstrated its value through its operations during two major incidents:

On March 4, 2023, a tractor-trailer hauling gasoline veered off US 15 in Frederick, Maryland and exploded. The crash, which unfortunately proved fatal, set fire to a residence and multiple unattended passenger vehicles. Off-duty MSP TIM units quickly responded from their residences and served as a conduit between SHA and all other responding agencies. They were essential in helping SHA units relieve the trapped traffic and provided a police escort for a vacuum truck from the Maryland/Pennsylvania line to the crash scene, which helped expedite the recovery process. The Unit then worked rapidly to re-open all lanes on southbound US 15 as quickly as possible to relieve the traffic pressures imposed on the City of Frederick during this national news event.



The second major event occurred on March 22, 2023 on I-695 north of Security Boulevard in Baltimore County in which a passenger vehicle slammed into a work zone and killed six SHA contractors. The MSP TIM Unit responded rapidly in force along with multiple SHA Shop resources, assisting with traffic mitigation as well as with the rapid and accurate relaying of information to SHA executive leadership. Their assistance during this second national news event was invaluable.

Based on these experiences, the future of the partnership between MSP and CHART remains strong, and the implementation of the TIM Unit exhibits a forward-looking approach to traffic incident management.

