



All Lanes Open: Moving Maryland

Issue #5 - Summer/Fall 2020

Message from the Deputy Administrator

2020 has been an active lesson in adapting to change. I've watched as our team here looks to our life-saving work for some source of normalcy. Despite the unusual season, some things have remained as steady anchors for us. Our Statewide Operation Center was opened in August of 1995, the first of its kind in the nation. As we mark the 25th anniversary of the SOC I reflect on the role it played in helping to manage the many crises along our roadways, remembering my first visit to the Center as a new member of SHA in 1998. It amazed me that we could monitor that much. Now we begin to look towards the future as our SOC undergoes its first major reconfiguration to modernize it. At the same time, I start a new chapter accepting the role of Deputy Administrator for our Hanover Offices, encompassing not only OTMO but the Office of Traffic & Safety, Office of Maintenance, Office of Construction, Office of Materials & Technology, and Office of Homeland Security and Occupational Safety. I'm excited for our future, knowing that it involves more synergy and partnerships from all of these offices to bring in the next generation of TMC to Maryland.

Stay well and stay safe,

Joey Sagal
Deputy Administrator for Operations - Hanover

IN THIS ISSUE

- ➔ Maryland State Police Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Program **Page 2**
- ➔ Office of Communications Ride Along, Part 1 **Page 3**
- ➔ CHART and Regional Transportation Operations Center (TOC) Assist with Locating Silver Alert Subject **Page 3**
- ➔ CAV Program Updates **Page 4**
- ➔ CHART Celebrates Long Time Employee Retirements **Page 4**

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Maryland State Police Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Program

The Maryland State Police have instituted a UAS program, supported by CHART, to reduce the time it takes to map and diagram a crash scene requiring reconstruction. Crash reconstruction is used in high profile, serious or fatal crashes and is a thorough investigative process that is highly scientific and accurate. While reconstructions occur in a relatively few number of events, the duration for which travel lanes are impacted, can be inordinately lengthy.

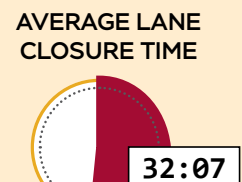
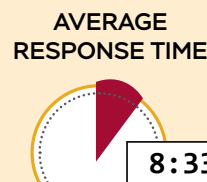
The addition of UAS, commonly called a drone, and aerial photogrammetry to the Crash Team's investigative arsenal will revolutionize their ability to exactly map and determine causation of a crash to hold those at-fault accountable and to provide the victim's family precise information. In addition, it is anticipated that the use of UAS for this purpose will reduce lane closure duration by as much as 75%! This will increase the investigator's safety by reducing their time on the roadway, and it will increase mobility for all motorists traveling on Maryland's roadways. Congratulations to the Maryland State Police, and the thirteen troopers who have successfully completed their FAA Part 107 Pilot certifications, as well as other law enforcement agencies that employ this technology.



INCIDENT RESPONSE BY THE NUMBERS (January - November 2020)

INCIDENTS MANAGED
23,047
 69
 Daily Average

MOTORISTS ASSISTED
25,616
 76
 Daily Average



Office of Communications Ride Along, Part 1

Throughout the next few issues of Moving Maryland, we will take you along on an overnight ride with the Coordinated Highways Action Response Team (CHART).

A representative from MDOT SHA's Office of Communications met Sean Frederick right outside the I-70 Park and Ride on a stormy night to begin a journey up and down the highways of Maryland. Sean patrols the highways of Maryland nightly from 9:00 pm to 5:00 am as a CHART Field Supervisor, while at the same time managing two CHART technicians designated to his patrol area. Despite the weather and the high volume of traffic during the first few hours of the evening, we were fortunate to mostly just handle the changing of a few tires and marking a few abandoned vehicles for towing. While relatively uneventful for Sean, these activities were still highly dangerous since he was working within inches of highway traffic.

Sean also undertook what he considers to be his most important job - supporting his team. Throughout the night, Sean set up lane closures to assist his team with changing tires and responding to crash scenes and disabled vehicles. The cohesion between CHART technicians is something that Sean loves about the job. While partnership and teamwork are always important, he finds that during the overnight shift, they come at a greater need. With just 3 technicians covering an area, as well as the additional dangers that nighttime brings including limited visibility and the higher potential for impaired drivers, all the CHART technicians must do everything in their power to be there for one another.

Testimonials

"Our car overheated with a lot of steam late at night. We were not sure whether by adding water we could continue to drive the car. Kyle Knowles pulled up behind us and examined the engine using a very bright torch to see what was happening. He said that it looked like a water line was leaking and that it would not be safe to try driving the car and that it would need to be towed. He put a green sticker on the car so that we could come back the next day in the daylight to get it towed - which we did. Kyle was great - very personable and thorough. Thank you State Farm and MDOT SHA for making the Assist Patrol available."

- John S., November 2020

"My rear tire exploded on the highway and Brian Libby just happened to be driving behind me when it happened. I pulled over immediately and noticed that he pulled in right behind me. I had a spare tire but no lug wrench or operable jack. He had both and proceeded to change my tire for me and would not accept a tip. I had no idea that this service even existed, and I am extremely lucky that it does. I would have been stranded for hours and it would have cost me a couple of hundred dollars at least. Mr. Libby was so polite and extremely helpful. I feel very lucky that he was there to help and that the state of Maryland has programs like this set up. I consider it a Thanksgiving Miracle and don't have enough kind words to describe Brian Libby - thanks for everything!"

- Brandon W., November 2020

CHART and Regional Transportation Operations Center (TOC) Assist with Locating Silver Alert Subject

Back in March, a unit from CHART's contractual partner Autobase, responded to a disabled vehicle stopped on the right shoulder of the Outer Loop of I-695 near Wilkens Avenue. They immediately noticed a motorist outside of the vehicle and stumbling around. The Baltimore Region TOC communicated with the State Police Golden Ring Barrack, recognizing the vehicle information as the subject of an active Silver Alert. State Police and emergency medical services responded to treat and evaluate the motorist. In March 2019, a motorist who spotted the vehicle associated with a Silver Alert displayed on a dynamic message sign, contacted State Police who were then able to locate the subject. Maryland's Traffic Management Centers activate Silver Alert messaging several times a week, and these locates as a result of our assistance, are a good reminder that even CHART's standard responses save lives.

"I was waiting for over an hour with a flat tire for my dealer's roadside assistance. It was getting darker and closer to rush hour, so I called 911 as I was getting nervous. When your driver pulled up behind me, he was an answer to my prayer!! Honestly, he was the most thoughtful and considerate gentleman that I immediately felt at peace with and safe!! He assured me that he'd take care of my flat tire and get me on my way ASAP! Thank goodness for Mr. Upton Hildebrand, I also would like you to know that I tried to tip him as I felt so grateful, and he would not accept it!! He was amazing!!"

- Susan C., December 2020

CAV Program Updates

Incident management, connected and automated vehicles, and webinars? That's right! On August 11th, the statewide Maryland CAV Working Group held a webinar on the national and statewide efforts to advance emergency response strategies related to CAV in Maryland. Speakers from the Transportation Safety Advancement Group, US Department of Transportation CARMA, Maryland State Police, Emergency Responder Safety Institute, CHART, and representatives from Maryland's Emergency Responder CAV Subgroup presented their perspectives on how CAV can improve safety on our roadways. National perspectives identified the need to focus on the interaction of emergency responders with CAV. Local speakers noted CAV solutions could help prevent crashes (such as end of queue and breaches into work zones), and elevated the concern of how to manage autonomous vehicles when they encounter conditions outside their normal operations (such as crossing the double yellow when an officer detours the vehicle.) All speakers agreed on one clear takeaway - CAV solutions should be proactive in order to try and prevent crashes in the first place. For further details on speakers and presentations, please visit: <https://mva.maryland.gov/safety/Pages/MarylandCAV.aspx>

CHART Celebrates Long Time Employee Retirements

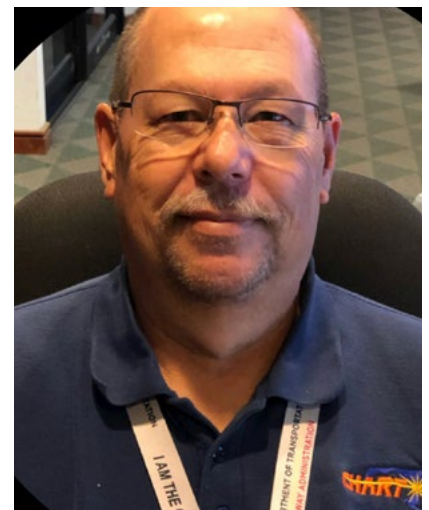
Rick Greenwell, started his MDOT SHA career back in 1976 as a facility maintenance technician at the Glyndon State Highway Shop (since removed and now the Owings Mills SHA Facility). In the early 80's, Rick was one of the first to join "Reach the Beach" and was an instrumental part of the program blossoming into the Coordinated Highways Action Response Team. He was one of the first Emergency Response Technicians hired full time into CHART.

Rick is a rare breed for sure. He already had 30 years of service, and did not let a near death experience hold him back from getting back in the saddle with his CHART family on the road helping others. He has achieved a well-earned and deserved 42 ½ years of service retirement providing top notch service, not only to our motoring public, but to all those allied agencies he worked with and those MDOT/CHART employees that were blessed enough to work alongside him all these years. Rick is the epitome of selfless service and an all-around Class "A" gentleman who was (and still is) a valuable member of the MDOT/CHART Family! We wish and hope that Rick enjoys his retirement and that he remains SAFE on his new endeavors. He will be missed.

Edward (Ed) Coffman began his career with MDOT SHA in March of 1989 as a Facility Maintenance Technician in the Glen Burnie Maintenance Facility where he operated CHART's part-time Emergency Traffic Patrols before becoming a permanent CHART Emergency Response Technician in 1999. In 2005, he transferred to Traffic Management Center (TMC) Operations, serving as a TMC Supervisor, with stints at the National Capital Region Operations Center and the Statewide Operations Center. Thank you, Ed for nearly 32 years of service - you will be missed!



Rick Greenwell retires after 42 ½ years of service.



Ed Coffman retires after 32 years of service.



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