

All Lanes Open: Moving Maryland

Issue #4 - Winter 2020

Message from the Director

From a historical perspective, it was planned that I would highlight the successes we achieved and challenges we faced from a typical Maryland winter season in this edition. From a highway operation and snow budget perspective, we were blessed with a very temperate season with only a few minor accumulations of wintery precipitation. MDOT skated through the season with relatively low-impact to mobility in Maryland.

However, the current conversation across the nation is also the focus of Maryland responders today, and for the near future – Coronavirus (COVID-19.) Governor Hogan, MDOT, and CHART continue to keep the health and well-being of our employees at the forefront of their thoughts, decision making, and actions. Protecting them, their loved ones, and our workspaces is paramount as we continue to forge ahead and provide mission critical functions to our incident responders and the motorists in Maryland.

As many of you have, we have dusted off our Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans and adjusted to a new threat. Not only are we considering the unavailability of a facility, in the traditional sense of COOP, but now we address the potential shortage of personnel while still providing continuous, life-saving services. We will always focus first on our most precious resource – our people.

Stay well and stay safe,

Joey Sagal

Director, MDOT SHA Office of CHART and ITS Development

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Emergency Response Technician (ERT) Steven Stinchcomb Receives Several Awards

On October 2, 2019 Senior ERT Steven Stinchcomb responded to a chain-reaction crash with rescue involving a tractor-trailer tanker, a car, and an SUV on the outer loop of I-695 at Charles Street. As he arrived on the scene, he realized that the SUV's engine compartment was on fire, and was able to extinguish it as the driver was removed to safety. Steven saw that the driver was bleeding profusely from her leg, and quickly applied a tourniquet, slowing the loss of blood until the Baltimore County Fire Department arrived and took over. The driver was transported to Sinai Hospital's Trauma Center, and she and the driver of the car, who also had to be removed from their vehicle and transported, both survived their injuries.

Because of his quick assessment of the incident, lack of hesitation, multi-tasking, and maintaining his focus under pressure, Steven was presented the American Red Cross Lifesaving Award on January 21, 2020. He was also recognized for his heroic efforts at the latest MDOT Excellerator meeting on Monday March 2, 2020, where he was given the Governor's Extra Mile Award. Congratulations Steven, and thank you for all your hard (and life-saving) work on behalf of CHART!

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE



STEVEN STINCHCOMB

Senior ERT, Steven Stinchcomb is awarded the American Red Cross Lifesaving Award at the American Red Cross Headquarters in Washington, D.C.



Carroll County Sheriff's Office Provides Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Training to All Responders

Congratulations goes out to the Carroll County Sheriff's Office for becoming 100% TIM Responder Trained! Sergeant Brandon Holland, Academy Director for the Carroll County Sheriff's Office Training Academy, and his staff of instructors were instrumental in having all street personnel trained in the SHRP2 TIM Responder course through in-service training while providing the class to new recruits during their entry-level training program. The entry-level academy trains law enforcement officers from several agencies, which helps spread the TIM program across the state.

Testimonials

While traveling on I-70 during rush hour, I encountered a large object that hit my vehicle. Mr. Stonestreet of the SHA Emergency Patrol came to my assistance, as my car suffered damage causing me to be stranded alongside the road. He was very kind and assisted with getting my vehicle off the highway safely. This experience made me aware of the danger these individuals place themselves in everyday to assist others. Especially, as heavy traffic was moving past us at very high rates of speed. I plea, when you witness a disabled vehicle, please move to the opposite side of the road and reduce your speed. Let's do our best to keep everyone safe!

Lisa
February 4, 2020

I had a flat tire on my car. I called my roadside assistance and was given a 90 - 120 minute ETA. Richard Smith pulled up behind me and greeted me with the warmest smile. In less than ten minutes, Richard had my spare tire on my car and the flat stowed in my truck. I offered Richard a \$50 bill as a gratuity. He refused to accept the money and said that he was happy to help. I can't thank Richard enough for his help and relaxing manner that really eased my mind.

Habib
January 27, 2020

I had a flat tire on I-70, called the State Police and they sent a service truck to help me. Christian Diaz came to my rescue. I was half on the grass, half on the shoulder in the dark, alone, with cars and trucks zipping past me way too fast. He directed me to move my car off the grass so he could get the jack under the car to lift it. In a matter of 10 minutes I was back on the road. What a service. I will be forever grateful to State Police Sergeant Vincent and Christian Diaz.

Donna
January 17, 2020

New Equipment Improves ERT Response and Safety

In Traffic Incident Management, we often have to cut and remove fallen trees after storms or crashes, remove sections of guardrail or highway signs, and clear large amounts of debris from the roadway as safely and efficiently as possible. A majority of our trucks carry chain saws, metal cut saws, and blowers to achieve this goal. In the past, most of this equipment was gas powered, and it was often unreliable because we encountered difficulty getting it started and/or keeping it running, and it was very heavy and bulky, which is difficult for our technicians, and takes up much needed space in the vehicle.



By replacing gas powered equipment with battery powered, we will reduce the cost of maintenance and downtime for our handheld power equipment. The newer battery powered equipment is lighter and takes up about half the space as the gas powered equipment. When comparing gas and battery equipment side by side, we found the batteries would last about the same amount of time as a tank of fuel in each piece of equipment. During a test, a blower on a fully charged battery ran for a continuous 15-20 minutes, and when moved to a chain saw, still had enough power to make 32 cuts on a 12 inch pine log. Each truck we've assigned this equipment to has a power inverter, two batteries, and a rapid battery charger that can fully charge the batteries in 45-60 minutes.

To help proactively spread the message about the "Move Over, Slow Down" law, our Traffic Incident Management trucks are being outfitted with "Move Over, Slow Down" mud flaps. Our trucks are on the road 24/7, so this should increase awareness and action.



An Unusual Recovery

In the early morning hours of Saturday, March 14th, CHART's Western Region team assisted the Maryland State Police with a rather unusual escort. A decommissioned United States Air Force C-130 Hercules was moved from the Frederick Municipal Airport across town, to the grounds of Fort Detrick, where the Hercules model will be on display. Even with the removal of the wings and tail, the permitted load still weighed 60,000 pounds, was 82 feet long, and 36 feet wide.



CHART actively provided traffic control as the plane was towed and it soon became evident that personnel and equipment would need to be used to "recover" the power unit and military package. First, as the power unit became stalled when it entered the ramp from southbound US 15 to Rosemont Avenue, and then again as it was backed into the gates, leading to its final resting place, CHART units provided that extra pull. A CHART tow truck hooked to the front of a USAF C-130 Hercules, a sight likely to never be seen again.

Hardware as a Service (HAAS) Alert Pilot

In early January, MDOT SHA piloted the HAAS Alert system, which delivers real-time digital alerts to motorists via Waze. The HAAS Alert system allows MDOT SHA to notify approaching drivers using the Waze mobile navigation app that emergency vehicles are on-scene ahead of their expected travel path.

The pilot consisted of equipping three different MDOT SHA vehicles with an on-board unit (OBU) that is connected to the vehicle's existing equipment. The OBUs were attached to a CHART emergency response vehicle, flatbed truck, and an OOTS bucket truck. Specific to this pilot, the alert was triggered when the operators turned on the vehicle's flashing lights or the boom on the bucket truck. The message then traveled to the HAAS Alert online "Safety Cloud" where it was added to the Waze data stream in real-time.

The HAAS Alert was first put to the test the day after installation during a full lane closure along I-95 northbound. The pilot continued for two weeks, during which over 50 alerts were reported through the system to the Waze platform. MDOT SHA staff noted that the public noticed these alerts especially when units were first on site – they acknowledged our presence via "Likes" in the app. This real-time alerting of MDOT SHA's presence on our roadways is just one way we hope to improve customer service and enhance the safety of our operators out in the field – expect more to come in the next few months!

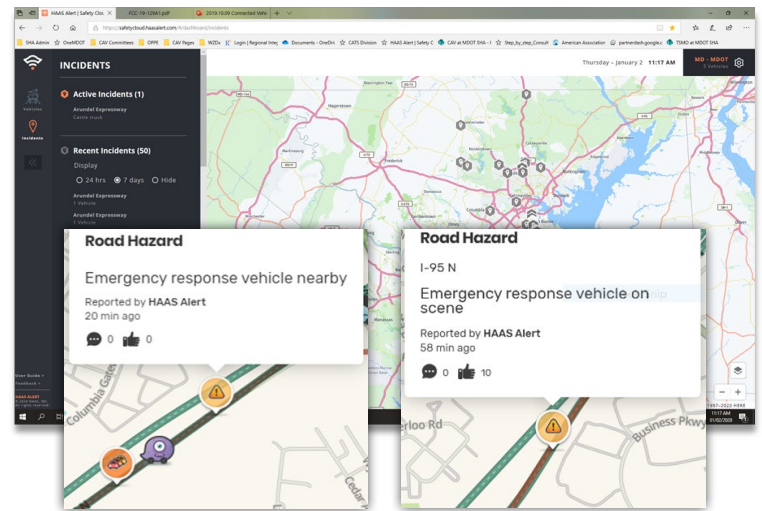


CHART Hosts Work Zone Management Workshop

In December 2019, CHART hosted a Work Zone Management (WZM) Capability Maturity Framework (CMF) Workshop, facilitated by the FHWA Resource Center, that included a number of key MDOT SHA office and District representatives in addition to staff from the Office of Homeland Security and Maryland FHWA. The main objectives of the Workshop were to assess MDOT SHA's current capacity to effectively manage the safety and mobility impacts that result from work zones and identify actions needed to improve MDOT SHA's work zone management capabilities.

Through a number of facilitated activities and discussions, existing program strengths, weaknesses, and challenges were identified, as well as areas of future focus and action items. In the coming months and years, a focus on Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategies and solutions to improve work zone safety will be explored and implemented. These could include the use of Smart Drums (with connectivity and communication capabilities) for active work zones; smart panel boards on protection vehicles; and real-time data feeds to third party stakeholders to improve awareness of and safety in MDOT SHA work zones around the State.

