



All Lanes Open: Moving Maryland

Issue #1 - Spring 2019

Message from the Deputy Administrator

Welcome to the inaugural issue of MDOT SHA's Coordinated Highways Action Response Team (CHART) Traffic Incident Management Newsletter! Our CHART program focuses on the safety and efficient movement of people and goods on Maryland's highways and, on average, saves Maryland travelers more than \$1.5 billion in delay and fuel costs every year by responding to incidents and clearing the road so traffic can resume normally. We truly are Moving Maryland...

This quarterly newsletter puts the spotlight on our agency's traffic incident management staff, systems, methods, and technology, while also highlighting stories from our partners and customers. As MDOT SHA continues to innovate, modernize, communicate, and focus on the customer experience, our Emergency Traffic Patrols and Emergency Response Technicians are at the forefront of keeping our roadways and drivers safe, and providing excellent customer service to those in need.

With a focus on incorporating Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategies and solutions to improve safety, mobility, and reliability, traffic incident management plays a huge role in maintaining MDOT SHA's systems for drivers all across the State. We are proud of the work we do and the people doing it, and are happy to share our news, updates, and stories with you as we make progress towards the goal of expanding our incident management activities. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Tim Smith, Deputy Administrator/Chief Engineer for Operations
MDOT SHA

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About CHART Traffic Incident Management (TIM)

Emergency Traffic Patrols (ETPs) and Emergency Response Technicians (ERTs) have been helping motorists whose vehicles have become disabled and assisting at incidents along Maryland's highways since the 1980s. Although most people associate the yellow trucks with motorist assistance, their primary function is Traffic Incident Management. CHART enhances responder safety, coordinates the quick clearance of Maryland's travel lanes, improves interagency communications, provides updates to travelers, and reduces secondary crashes, all in an effort to keep motorists safe and Maryland moving on our roadways!

**CHART operates 43
Emergency Patrol vehicles**



**Covering more than 2,000 lane
miles of Maryland highways**

Our ETPs and ERTs:

- ✓ Assist a motorist every 16 minutes - more than 37,400 assists a year
- ✓ Manage traffic at an incident once every 22 minutes
- ✓ Contribute to the prevention of an estimated 225-250 secondary incidents each year
- ✓ Contribute to drivers saving \$1.5 billion annually in fuel and delay costs

Incident Response by the Numbers

January-March 2019

INCIDENTS

5,943

Total

66

Daily Average

DISABLED VEHICLES

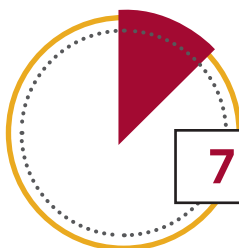
8,079

Total

90

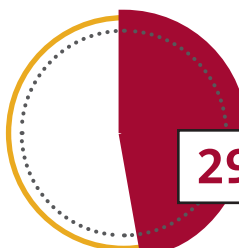
Daily Average

**AVERAGE
RESPONSE TIME**



7:36

**AVERAGE
LANE CLOSURE TIME**



29:31

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

Emergency Responder Technician (ERT) of the Year



MICHAEL MEEK

Michael Meek began his career with MDOT SHA in 1988, and has been working as a full-time ERT since 2006. He has been consistent with attendance, customer service, traffic incident management, and maintains a great relationship with both internal and external partners. He is always a team player who steps up to ensure shifts are covered. He is supportive of his peers, supervisors and the management team. In 2017, Mike assisted 2,154 motorists and handled 1,222 incidents.

The Customer Experience: One of the motorists assisted by Mike during a tire blow out, Michael from McLean, Virginia, had the following to say about him:

"People like Mike Meek are extremely important in organizations; they remind us of what human beings are capable of. I hope you will escalate this message to his supervisor, and up to the governor...because Mike Meek is a great citizen, a great man, and a great Marylander."

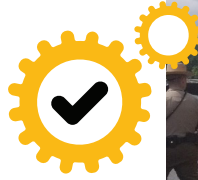
Congratulations, Mike, on being selected as an ERT of the Year, and thank you for your hard work and dedication to MDOT SHA and the drivers on Maryland's highways!

Past ERT of the Year Awardees:
Eric Meredith (2016), Bryan Walker (2015),
Danny Rice (2014)

Safety Minute: Maryland's "Move Over Law" Expanded to Protect Roadside Workers

In the Fall of 2018, Maryland's "Move Over Law" expanded to include service vehicles (transportation, construction, utility, and waste/recycling) parked along a roadway in addition to emergency response vehicles and tow trucks. Drivers should attempt to move over if they see any of these vehicles pulled over or parked on the side of the road. If changing lanes cannot be done safely, motorists should slow down to a safe speed.

Recently, CHART ERT Danny Rice's vehicle was parked along I-270 during an incident response when a tractor trailer not only didn't move over, but weaved onto the shoulder. Thankfully, Danny was not in his vehicle at the



time and was safely out of harm's way, but his empty vehicle bore the brunt of the impact and luckily, shielded the responding Maryland State Police trooper from being hit. Please remember to slow down and move over when you see vehicles on the side of the road for everyone's safety!

ALL LANES OPEN ▶ Innovative Recovery on I-97

On March 5, 2019, an incident on Interstate 97 near Maryland Route 100 involving an overturned and loaded truck tractor/trailer combination and passenger car was cleared in less than three hours despite all of the challenges involved. The box trailer was fully loaded with paper products and became separated from the truck tractor, and the resulting crash caused two people to be transported to the hospital. The initial response by the Maryland State Police, Maryland Department of the Environment, CHART, and the MDOT SHA District 5 maintenance team closed three of four northbound lanes and half the southbound lanes.

Two towing companies arrived less than an hour after the accident, and a plan was devised to remove the damaged vehicles. The Maryland State Police agreed to conduct a post-crash inspection at an off-site location, and soon after the arrival of the tow companies, recovery began.

The trailer, still fully loaded, was dragged from the median to the right shoulder, where a specialty trailer was remotely



lowered and carefully backed under the damaged unit. This precision operation continued until the entire trailer and its contents were safely transferred and secured to the recovery trailer. All this work was orchestrated from lane #1 and the left shoulders in both directions of I-97. In less than three hours, all responders and damaged vehicles were cleared, and all lanes were re-opened before the afternoon rush hour - great job to all involved!





MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Driving Forward: MDOT SHA's Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) Program

MDOT SHA recognizes that a comprehensive approach that balances additional capacity and optimized use of our existing system is needed to improve operations on Maryland's roadways. This new way of thinking, known as Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), is our integrated approach to optimizing and integrating our planning, engineering, operations, and maintenance. TSMO enables us in developing, implementing and managing new and existing multi-modal systems, services, and projects to preserve capacity and improve the security, safety, and reliability of Maryland's transportation system. TSMO strategies include:



TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT



WORK ZONE MANAGEMENT



TRAVELER INFORMATION SERVICES



ROAD WEATHER MANAGEMENT



MANAGED LANES



RAMP METERING



INTEGRATED CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT



TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION



ELECTRONIC TOLL COLLECTION



FREIGHT MANAGEMENT

Through our collective efforts, MDOT SHA will advance the TSMO Program through the implementation of the 2018 Strategic Plan and 2019 Master Plan, hard work, collaboration, and innovation to improve Maryland's multimodal transportation network for the benefit of all users.

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For more information, please visit: <https://chart.maryland.gov>
Please email: TIMNews@mdot.maryland.gov to subscribe to future issues or submit an idea/content for an article



UPCOMING EVENTS

→ **June 4-7, 2019**
ITS America Annual Meeting
Washington, DC
www.itsamerica2019.org

→ **June 5, 2019**
Traffic Incident Management for Baltimore Region (TIMBR) Committee Meeting, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
<https://baltometro.org/community/committees/traffic-incident-management-committee>

CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

"He stopped when I had run out of gas. He gave me enough gas to get to the station and advised me my tire was going low. It was freezing cold and I would have had to wait an hour for help to come. He was a lifesaver and I can only say how GREAT your program is. Please continue or expand it. It was a real lifesaver for me. Driver Bryan Walker – absolutely fantastic. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I can hope you have more emergency response techs as good as him. I can't thank him enough. The ratings below cannot go high enough. He was a 100 on a scale of 1-10."

Joseph, February 17, 2019

"He changed my flat tire, located a repair facility, and directed me to a safe place to wait until the facility opened for business. He was wonderful and gave me peace of mind, considering I am not from Maryland and was traveling alone."

Elena, March 12, 2019