RURAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS AND BEST PRACTICES

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Urban Freeway Incident Management

- Ample Law Enforcement, Fire, EMS and Towing Resources
- Rapid Response - 2 to 8 minutes
- Quick Clearance - 30 to 60 minutes
- Multiple Detour Options
- High Percentage of Local Motorists
Rural Freeway Incidents

- Few Law Enforcement Personnel
- Typically Volunteer Fire Departments
- Limited EMS Coverage
- Heavy Duty Towing/Recovery Equipment Often Limited
- Poor Detour Opportunities
- High Percentage of Unfamiliar Motorists
Rural Freeway User Profile

- Vehicle approach speeds 70+ mph
- High percent of commercial traffic
- No expectation of stopping or delay
- Often mildly distracted
Rural Incident Problems

- Freeway often closes
- Motorists stuck in queue
- Motorists initiate haphazard u-turns or cut-thru’s
- Trucks detour down dead end roadways
- Freeways become small temporary communities of trapped people
Rural Incident DOT Priorities

- Provide warning to approaching motorists
- Establish a viable detour
- Remove the trapped traffic
- Re-evaluate the traffic control as situations improve
Advance Warning

- Provide advance warning using portable signs or message boards
- Warning placed well before decision points where possible
Re-routing Traffic

- Detouring motorists is just as vital for the first car as the last
- Missouri’s “Incident Bypass Route” signing
Removing Trapped Traffic

- Pass by the Scene
- Controlled median U-turn
- Contra-flow on closed section
Median U-Turn Method

- Must be done at an established crossover
- Requires lane drop in opposing direction
- Does not accommodate tractor trailers
Contra-flow Method

- Close highway at previous interchange
- Traffic trapped between the ramps clears first
- Traffic downstream of the on-ramp turns around
- Cars first, tractor trailers second
Evacuation Plans

Removing Trapped Traffic From an Interstate Highway
Missouri Department of Transportation Emergency Response

1. Evacuated traffic exits right. Stopped traffic exits left. Movement is engaged.
2. Evacuated traffic merges with stopped traffic before the stop sign.
3. Traffic remerges left.
4. 119* for emergency services.
5. NOTE: Evacuated traffic exits at a speed of approximately 25 mph.
6. When stopped traffic exits, the speed limit is reduced to 20 mph.
7. Evacuated traffic continues straight at the stop sign.
8. Evacuated traffic exits at the stop sign.
9. Evacuated traffic proceeds to the right.

*119* is the emergency service number for Missouri.
SITUATION

- All eastbound lanes of I-44 are closed between Route 133 & AB (Exit 145) and Route 7 & P (Exit 150)
- Traffic delays are expected to exceed one hour.
- All westbound lanes are open to traffic.

ALTERNATE ROUTE(S)

- ALT-1E Eastbound traffic exits at Route 133 & AB (Exit 145), turn right and go east on Route AB for approximately 6 miles to Route 17. Turn left and go north 2 miles to I-44 (Exit 153.)
  - Total bypass length 8 miles. (See Route Map Figure 1)
Working the Incident

- Specially equipped vehicles minimize DOT response time
- Put salvage and property rights where they belong – at the bottom of the list
- Treat the highway the same as we would a utility and get it restored as soon as possible
Incident Response Trucks

- Dedicated ¾ or 1 Ton Trucks
- Equipped with traffic control and other basics
- Taken home by the assigned personnel
- Located approx. every 30 miles along corridor
- Consistent operating procedures and level of service to other responders
- Roll-off truck, preferably with pup trailer
- 2 or more roll-off dumpsters
- 10 Ton+ Knuckle boom crane
- Track-type skid-steer loader with attachments
Commercial Truck Crashes

- Truck and trailer are a loss
- Cargo is a loss
- Salvage of damaged property is **not** a reason to maintain a freeway closure
- Salvage and Recovery is a planned event and **not** an emergency
Rural TIM Teams

- Local responders - Fire, Tow, Law Enforcement and EMS
- Quarterly meetings/debriefings
- Traffic and incident pre-plans
- Mutual Training on removal and detours
- Cross-deployment of traffic control resources
Basic Steps

- Take inventory of your assets
- Identify detour routes
- Build relationships and communicate with Emergency Responders
- Identify expectations for quick clearance
- Be willing to participate in the solution