

WSDOT STATUS REPORT

The following are the significant freeway operations developments in Washington State during the past six months, listed by WSDOT region.

NORTHWEST REGION (INCLUDES SEATTLE)

- Nine new data stations consisting of approximately 20 RTMS detectors will be installed on the Alaskan Way Viaduct (SR 99) in Seattle to provide traveler information. The Viaduct is the only alternative to I-5 for north/south travel through Seattle and this will be the first section to have detectors installed to provide speed and congestion information.
- Video clips, seven seconds in length, are now available over the Internet for 12 cameras in the Seattle area. The video clips are about one minute behind real time.

OLYMPIC REGION (INCLUDES TACOMA)

- A congestion notification system for truckers traveling to the Port of Tacoma is operational. Video detection on the main ramp serving the Port of Tacoma has been installed to detect queues on the ramp. When a queue is detected, an alarm is triggered in the Olympic Region TMC and an operator activates the flashing lights on a sign that tells truckers to use another approach to the Port when the light is flashing. Funding has been received to apply this system to the three other ramps that serve the Port.
- Four RTMS detectors have been added to the 9 Traficon detectors in operation on I-5 in the Tacoma area providing congestion information on the Internet.

EASTERN REGION (INCLUDES SPOKANE)

- The Spokane Regional Traffic Management System is under construction. The video wall, computers and the software have arrived and are being installed.
- A pilot project is underway to have the Spokane area incident response vehicle on roving patrol for 4 hours in each morning and afternoon peak period, five days a week.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION (INCLUDES YAKIMA)

- The TMC in Yakima started 24 hours a day/7 days a week operation in November 2001. The TMC will move to a new location in the Washington State Patrol building in Union Gap, near Yakima, as soon as additional radio equipment is available.
- Six new LED signs have been installed on I-90 to inform drivers of requirements for traction devices due to winter weather conditions. Two new VMS are being installed on I-82 that can divert traffic to or from SR-821, a parallel two-lane road that runs in the Yakima Canyon along the Yakima River.

SOUTHWEST REGION

- The Vancouver, WA area TMC started 24 hours a day/7 days a week operation on December 1, 2001. The TMC will be connected by fiber optic cable to Oregon DOT's TMC in Portland as soon as a final link can be completed in a few months.
- Four new VMS have been installed for southbound traffic on I-5 and two new VMS have been installed for southbound traffic on I-205 in the Vancouver, WA area to inform commuters heading to Portland, OR.
- A part-time HOV lane has been implemented on I-5 for southbound traffic heading from the Vancouver, WA area to Portland. The lane is reserved for HOVs from 6:00 to 9:00am.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Local fire departments are often very interested in obtaining the video from freeway and arterial traffic cameras. Video from an incident scene often helps with emergency vehicle routing and can help emergency responders prepare for what will be encountered at the scene. The Tacoma Fire Department has been a valuable partner in the installation of the fiber network in the Tacoma area.**

STATEWIDE

OPERATIONS INITIATIVE

- WSDOT has developed a seven point Operations Initiative to help with congestion relief. The seven points are:
 - Expand service patrols
 - Improve accident scene clearance
 - Minimize impacts of construction and maintenance activities
 - Expedite the movement of freight by expanding the CVISN program
 - Improve signal timing on congested arterials and interchanges
 - Improve traveler information
 - Improve winter maintenance procedures

rWEATHER

- The rWeather web site has been revised and renamed the Traffic and Weather Web site. It is available at www.wsdot.wa.gov/traffic/ The new site has been revised in response to usability testing conducted over the past year. Additional information, including corridor profiles of weather and road surface temperatures for all of I-5 have been added.
- The sixth issue of an FHWA funded RWIS newsletter is available at www.wsdot.wa.gov/eesc/atb/rwisnews/frames.html

LIGHT LANES

- The Light Lanes project, a resource-sharing project that allows access to interstate highway rights-of-way in exchange for fiber optic communications services, has been terminated.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

NORTHWEST FREEWAY OPERATIONS GROUP

- The tenth meeting of the Pacific Northwest Freeway Operations Group was held in December at the Washington State DOT, Northwest Region Headquarters Building in Seattle. Representatives from three WSDOT regions attended the meeting. Representatives from the British Columbia, Canada Ministry of Transport, Oregon DOT and WSDOT's Southwest Region participated by teleconference. The group exchanged information on the status of freeway operations projects, which was used to prepare this report.

For further information on these projects, please contact:

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