

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)

- The service patrol pilot program that is in operation on I-5 in both Seattle (NW Region) and Tacoma (Olympic Region) will probably be extended for another biennium. It appears that the best method of providing service patrols in the Puget Sound area is to use a mix of services provided by the Washington State Patrol (WSP), private tow companies and WSDOT. WSP and WSDOT will cover the critical areas where incident response type services are usually needed (like bridges with no shoulders) and WSDOT will contract with the private companies to patrol the other areas.
- Two ramps in the Puget Sound area are operating with an additional metered shoulder lane; providing two metered lanes during the peak periods. The metered lanes are 11-foot wide. One of the ramps has an additional HOV by-pass lane that is in operation at all times. No data on throughput or accidents are available at this time.
- An archive of a full year of Internet traffic congestion maps is now available on the WSDOT web site.

OLYMPIC REGION (INCLUDES TACOMA)

- Two HARs are being installed on I-5, north of Tacoma. Upon completion of these installations, there will be HAR coverage on I-5 from the King/Pierce Co. line (the Olympic Region border with the Northwest Region) to Olympia, a distance of about 40 miles.

EASTERN REGION (INCLUDES SPOKANE)

- The Spokane Regional Traffic Management System has selected the ICONS software provided by Siemens Gardner Transportation Systems for use in the Spokane area.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION (INCLUDES YAKIMA)

- The Region has installed a wrong-way surveillance system at an interchange on I-82 near Toppenish. The system has detected several wrong-way drivers in the two months that it has been in operation. The wrong-way drivers have attempted to enter an exit ramp at a partial cloverleaf interchange during daylight hours. Several minor design changes are being considered to remedy this problem.

STATEWIDE

rWEATHER

- The rWeather web site is available at www.wsdot.wa.gov/rweather
 - A detailed road surface and weather profile for I-5 in the central Puget Sound area was added to those for SR-2 and I-90 (the two major winter-time routes across the Cascade Mountains.) These corridor views allow users to get a 24-hour forecast of road surface temperatures.
- The fifth issue of an FHWA funded RWIS newsletter is available at www.wsdot.wa.gov/eesc/atb/rwisnews/frames.html

LIGHT LANES

- This is a resource-sharing project that allows access to interstate highway rights-of-way in exchange for fiber optic communications services. WSDOT and UCN are still in negotiations over the phasing of installation of the system. The first phase to be constructed would be on I-82 and I-90 between Yakima and Seattle.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

NORTHWEST FREEWAY OPERATIONS GROUP

- The ninth meeting of the Pacific Northwest Freeway Operations Group was held in June at the Oregon DOT Traffic Management Center in Portland. Representatives from ODOT and four WSDOT regions attended the meeting. Representatives from the British Columbia, Canada Ministry of Transport 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:

Peter Briglia, ITS Program Manager
Washington State DOT, 1107 NE 45th Street, Suite 535, Seattle, WA 98105-4631
Phone 206-543-3331/Fax 206-685-0767
E-mail: briglia@u.washington.edu