

PIMA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
**2030 REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLAN**



July 2003

In late 2002, the **Pima Association of Governments (PAG)** initiated an extensive 3-year planning effort to develop a new long range transportation plan for eastern Pima County and the Tucson metropolitan area. The initial phase of public involvement for this plan, known as the **2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**, was aimed at identifying the community's core values for a good quality of life. Safety for drivers of vehicles, riders of buses, pedestrians and cyclists was among the top three issues* identified through this public involvement effort. PAG hosted two forums aimed at improving the region's understanding of transportation safety issues: a Regional Transportation Incident and Emergency Management Forum in April 2003 and a Regional Transportation Safety Forum in May 2003.

This Fact Sheet focuses on

Regional Transportation Incident and Emergency Management.

What is Regional Transportation Incident and Emergency Management?

What key steps are involved?

What information is available from the PAG Regional Transportation Incident and Emergency Management Forum?

PAG is developing a new long range transportation plan for eastern Pima County and the Tucson metropolitan area that will identify transportation needs, potential solutions, and funding requirements through the year 2030.

The **2030 RTP** program for public education and outreach includes a series of educational forums and/ or seminars. This is one of a series of informational Fact Sheets related to the 2030 RTP educational events.

WHAT IS REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INCIDENT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT?

To put it simply, incident and emergency management consists of techniques that public safety agencies may use when an incident (such as a traffic accident) or an emergency (such as a flood) impacts the transportation network. The management of these situations calls for:

- Communication – not only among agencies (jurisdictional law enforcement and fire departments both public and private) but also with the public (through television/radio announcements and variable sign boards)
- Cooperation and coordination – move beyond communication to establishment of protocols on how to work together to manage the situation, protect the public and address transportation mobility issues
 - Training – to ensure that public safety officers have the understanding, knowledge and training needed to handle emergency situations as they arise.

WHAT KEY STEPS ARE INVOLVED?

- Detection and verification of incidents – early detection and verification of incident details help maintain safe and efficient traffic flow.

* The top three issues were: Safety; Cross Town Mobility and Traffic Flow; and Transit and Multi-modal choices

- Site and traffic management – public safety agencies must establish a safe incident site while also ensuring that secondary collisions are avoided and that traffic is kept moving.
- Clearance – prompt removal of wreckage or debris at incident sites improves safety and restores roadway capacity.

WHAT INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FROM THE PAG REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INCIDENT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FORUM?

In April 2003, Tucson area transportation and emergency response professionals participated in a Regional Incident and Emergency Management sponsored by PAG and the Pima County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. The forum served as a venue for stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to incident and emergency management and to access the latest information on Federal and State activities related to incident and emergency management. The agenda included discussion on:

1. Communication - interagency and public

Concerns regarding communication covered agency to agency communications, communications at traffic incident sites, and interoperability of data and radio systems. Included in this are issues related to communications between EMS/law enforcement and transportation operators. In addition, more effective communication with the public is hoped to reduce secondary crashes and decrease delays by having motorists avoid becoming part of the congestion related to incident locations.

2. Coordination and cooperation

Improved coordination and cooperation covers a wide range of inter-agency activities. By looking at successes elsewhere, it may be possible to solve some coordination and cooperation issues through development of Memos of Understanding (MOU), policies, and procedures. Essential to success in this area is a clear understanding of agency roles and responsibilities related to incident management.

3. Quick clearance protocol

Quick clearance legislation is only the start of this process. Policy development based on the law, training for all responders about the purpose behind the law and of the safety advantages for responders and motorists, is an important part of implementation.

4. Multi-agency training

Training for responders and transportation personnel can yield impressive results in reducing the duration and impacts of all types of traffic incidents. A very good method to instill interest in this process may be a field exercise highlighting the newest methods of unified command, investigative techniques, and clearance methods. Within the PAG region, given the lack of alternate routes for Interstate 10, an exercise based on a blocking incident on that facility in or near Tucson could also test the ability to maximize use of the few alternates that do exist. Moreover, an exercise based on a blocking incident of a key arterial intersection could also serve to improve understanding and of effects of alternate routing, information dissemination to travelers, and on-site command.

Other agenda items included regional response to the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Traffic Incident Management Assessment and an update on the Statewide Incident Management Plan.

NEED TO KNOW MORE?

AZ Department of Public Safety (DPS): <http://www.dps.state.az.us/welcome2.htm>

Pima County Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security for information on emergency preparedness, terrorism updates, and other safety issues:

<http://www.pimahealth.org/emerg.asp>

To stay informed or get involved in PAG planning activities:

- Visit the PAG website at www.pagnet.org
- Add your name to PAG's 2030 RTP mailing list by calling PAG at 792-1093, Extension 502
- Schedule a speaker for your next meeting